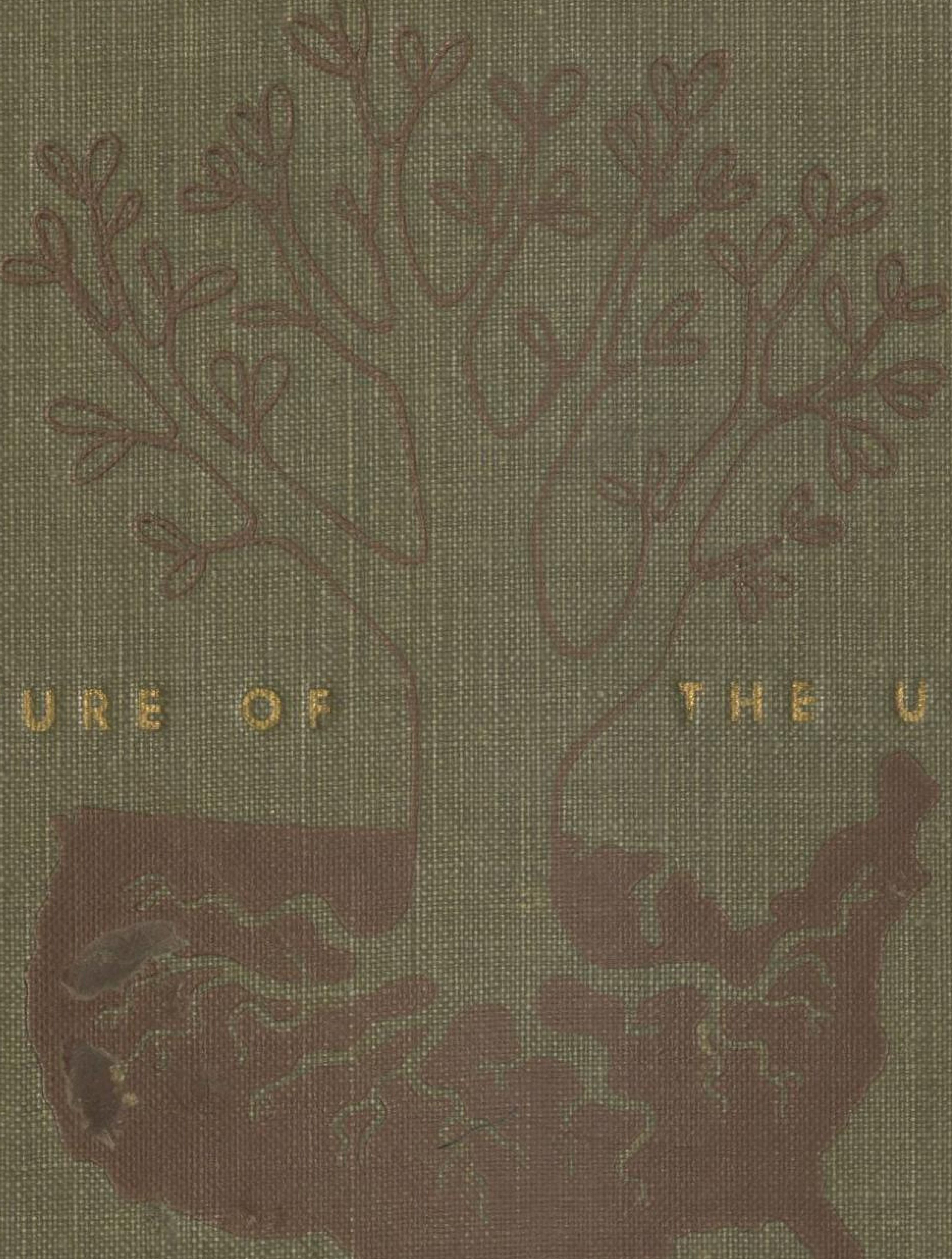
THE LITERATURE OF THE UNITED STATES



The Literature of the United States

An anthology and a history

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Volume I From the Colonial Period through the American Renaissance

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On American Literature Today

When the three of us first met to plan *The Literature of the United States,* German armies were pushing eastward across Soviet Russia, and Roosevelt and Churchill had just issued the statement now famous as the Atlantic Charter. During the intervening years, like other Americans we have cherished the hope which that Charter expressed—for a peace "which will afford to all nations the means of dwelling in safety within their own boundaries, and which will afford assurance that all the men in all the lands may live out their lives in freedom from fear and want." Today it is clearer than ever that if this hope is to be translated into lasting reality, it will have to be by the will and intelligence and international understanding of peace-loving peoples of all the nations.

Some may feel that this is an inappropriate time to insist upon the importance to Americans of their national literature. We should feel so ourselves if we believed that the literature of the United States is narrowly nationalistic. It does not seem so to us. We think, on the contrary, that Americans can best discharge their heavy responsibilities in the years ahead by recognizing more fully than ever before the richness of their heritage. The literature of this nation is, in our judgment, a humanizing rather than a chauvinistic force—the record of the ideals and struggles of many peoples who have become one people and who have, despite frequent setbacks and failures, battled with inspiring persistence for the principle of "equal and exact justice to all men, of whatever state or persuasion, religious or political." Americanism, in the best sense of the word, needs no apology; Americans cannot but hope that they are on the threshold of an era in which the principles of democracy will be reinforced at home and extended abroad. Nothing less can justify the years of global war.

As teachers of literature, we do not pretend to know all the answers to the questions which the future will pose. It is obvious, however, that the young men and women who are passing through college classrooms are going to need all the strength of character, all the humility and tolerance and humor, all the intelligence which they can muster. We think that American literature can be of help. To generalize is dangerous, but we are pretty sure that students will not find American writers cut to any single pattern. The literature of our country has been written by inhabitants of many different localities, representatives of many different levels of society, products of many different racial, religious, and occupational influences. American writers are not agreed on any one way to salvation, any one philosophy, any single explanation of this puzzling world. But they have told of finding life well worth the living, these United States full of good food, good fun, good thoughts, and good people. They have never believed that people should be shot for political reasons, or that the world cannot be improved by tireless application of intelligence. "There is nothing to fear but fear" is a typically American attitude.

We hope that something of this spirit will be absorbed from this book. We realize, however, that American literature may be taught, and taught well, in many different ways. Both in the selections and in the editorial apparatus, we have tried to provide the materials for different kinds of courses or a course with several emphases—the chronological survey, the careful analysis of the work of major authors, the study of literary types, and the examination of the development of significant ideas. Our guiding belief has been that although limited fields of study and specialized approaches are desirable in texts to be used in advanced courses, an introductory text fails unless it shows the great range of the riches of our literature and the several ways of appreciating these riches.

Hence the *selections* are comprehensive. The writers included amply represent the whole range of American literary history, from the colonial period down to the

present day. Major authors are given generous space, but the more interesting minor writers have not been neglected. Complete works have been given preference over unilluminating excerpts. Particular care has been taken to include folklore, humor, the drama, and the novel, all of which are often subordinated in anthologies to the more manageable essays, poems, and short stories. In addition to primarily artistic literary works, this book includes numerous examples of utilitarian types such as the sermon and the political tract. Throughout, however, we have tried to include only work likely to have lasting literary interest and value.

Hence, also, the *approaches* to these writings are varied. Chronological tables and introductory chapters on "Intellectual Currents" in the six periods of our plan are designed to indicate the intimate relationship between American literature and American history. Biographies of individual authors and occasional introductory notes suggest how a knowledge of the writer's life can often add to the interest and understanding of a particular selection. Sections on "Literary Trends" and numerous analytical notes emphasize the importance of the study of literary forms, techniques, and values.

Although we have consciously sought to emphasize variety, we have not ignored the desirability of coherence. By frequent conferences and by correspondence we have sought ways and means of integrating the history of ideas, the history of forms, the biographies, the selections, and the notes. We are jointly responsible for the plan of the book as a whole, and for what we hope will be found a satisfactory unification of enormously varied materials.

To indicate our individual responsibility, however, we have initialed the introductory chapters, and we are individually responsible for the biographies, introductions, texts, and notes as follows:

Volume I

W. B. (Walter Blair): John Smith, Sarah Kemble Knight, William Byrd, Samuel Peters, Singers of the Revolution, Hannah Foster, Richard Henry Wilde, Samuel Woodworth, Robert Bailey Thomas, Morgan Neville, Edgar Allan Poe, Henry Wadsworth Longfellow, Oliver Wendell Holmes, James Russell Lowell, Seba Smith, Charles Augustus Davis, Singers of the West.

T. H. (Theodore Hornberger): Thomas Hariot, John Winthrop, George Alsop, William Bartram, Thomas Shepard, Roger Williams, Cotton Mather, Jonathan Edwards, Charles Chauncy, Benjamin Franklin, Michel Guillaume St. Jean De Crèvecoeur, John Woolman, John Adams, Jonathan Boucher, Thomas Paine, Thomas Jefferson, Alexander Hamilton, George Washington, H. H. Brackenridge, Andrew Jackson, William Ellery Channing, Peter Cartwright, Philip Freneau, Timothy Dwight, Joel Barlow, William Cullen Bryant, Royall Tyler, Washington Irving, James Fenimore Cooper, Caroline Matilda Kirkland.

R. S. (Randall Stewart): William Bradford, Samuel Sewall, Anne Bradstreet, Edward Taylor, Ralph Waldo Emerson, Henry David Thoreau, Nathaniel Hawthorne, Herman Melville, John Pendleton Kennedy, William Gilmore Simms.

The illustrative material is intended to aid materially in showing students how captivating our literature has been throughout its history. A detailed consideration of the sources of the illustrations and the work of the artists follows this preface.

Some of our many debts to the work of scholars in the field of American literature are acknowledged in the introductions and notes. Since we have avoided burdening the student with too large a mass of scholarly citations, we add here our general appreciation of the large contribution to our interpretations and criticism by our fellow-workers. American literary scholarship is relatively new, but it is growing rapidly and already bulks large in the preparation of any such book as this. Here and there, we trust our work has added to its store of facts and generalizations.

In addition there have been countless conferences, letters, telephone calls between our publishers and ourselves as we have settled the many adjustments, big and little, in the preparation of the manuscript. We feel, in short, that *The Literature of the United States* is something more than another textbook. For us it has been a coöperative venture engaged in by many hands, many pairs of eyes, and many minds.

WALTER BLAIR

THEODORE HORNBERGER

RANDALL STEWART

Lives and Times in Pictures

The literature of the United States has been created by men and women living in a real world—a world of nature, of towns and cities, of homes. To apprehend this fact is very important if the student is really to know and to appreciate American literature. Yet the earliest authors and even some of our contemporaries may easily become remote from the student's understanding. To bring closer to the reader the men and women who wrote and the times in which they have lived, we have adopted a program involving the extensive use of interpretative illustrations.

Realizing that these illustrations would be worthless if they were not authentic, we have spent hours in research and the careful study of detail, to assure their accuracy. The artists, sharing our zeal for accuracy, have been equally careful: at times they have made extensive revisions in order to include only authentic materials and in order to keep the drawings consistent with the book as a whole. In addition, they have shown great skill, we believe, in working these many details into compositions distinguished for their artistry.

The illustrations designed and created especially for *The Literature of the United States* are of three types. The lives and times of the major authors included in the book have been illustrated in "panels" by GREGORY ORLOFF ("G. O.") The material in these drawings has its source in authentic historical documents, portraits, views of landscapes, of settlements, towns, and cities, and (now and then) illustrations from early editions of works. Other panels are devoted not to single authors but to the schools that have been recognized in the organization of this book—the groups of men and women whose writing seemed to have a common background, regional or stylistic, or a common moral, political, or artistic purpose.

The smaller drawings falling within the body of the selections are the work of HELEN NOEL ("H. N.") and were planned to point up details and to give a feeling for the life of the various periods. Particular emphasis has been placed on the homes and surroundings of the authors, the places about which they wrote, the particulars of the background of their everyday lives.

Each chapter is introduced by a two-page panorama which we hope will give a general picture of America's development in the span of years covered in the chapter. These two-page drawings have been done by BRINTON TURKLE ("B. T."). In them are found illustrations of the architecture, the costume, the military tactics, the political life, the transportation, and the industrial and territorial expansion of each period.

In striving further for authentic pictorial material heightening the interest of the literature, we have supplemented the work of our present-day artists with direct reproductions of contemporaneous illustrations of certain American writings. Such illustrations as those by Augustus Hoppin for Lowell's "The Courtin'" and by Felix O. C. Darley for Irving's "Rip Van Winkle" and "The Legend of Sleepy Hollow," which have long enhanced the reader's understanding and enjoyment of the literature, appear here. Where we have thought them to be of particular interest, facsimiles of signatures, original manuscripts, or title pages have also been included.

A complete catalogue of the illustrations follows.

(A description of the details in each of the biographical and school panels is given in a footnote on the page where the panel appears. Contemporary sources have been used throughout, and are indicated in detail wherever they are of unusual interest.)

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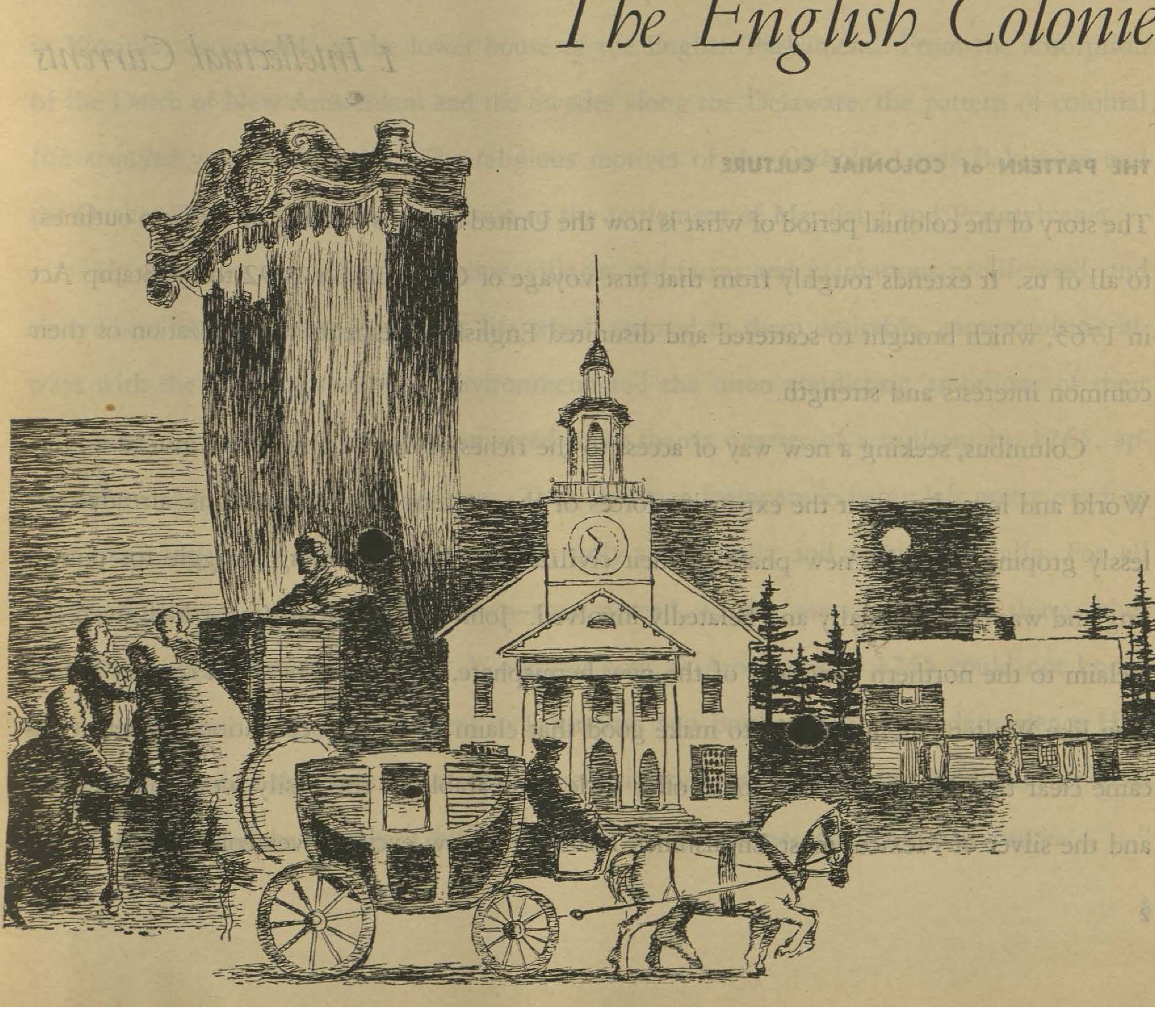
Two details in editorial procedure require explanation: 1) The text of each selection is, in the judgment of the editors, the best available. The text has been specified, however, only when there has been some problem about the version to be adopted. 2) The first date following each selection is that of composition; the second date is that of publication.


COLONIAL SETTLEMENTS
Salem
Boston
Plymouth
Providence
New York
Philadelphia
Jamestown
Roanoke Island



Chapter One

The English Colonies



Chapter 1

The English Colonies 1588 · 1765

TO TREAD AND PLANT THAT GROUND. "Who can desire more content that hath small meanes, or but onely his merit to advance his fortunes, than to tread and plant that ground he hath purchased by the hazard of his life. . . ."
— John Smith

I. Intellectual Currents

THE PATTERN of COLONIAL CULTURE

The story of the colonial period of what is now the United States is familiar, in its main outlines, to all of us. It extends roughly from that first voyage of Columbus in 1492 to the Stamp Act in 1765, which brought to scattered and disunited English settlements the realization of their common interests and strength.

Columbus, seeking a new way of access to the riches of the Orient, found instead a New World and loosed upon it the expansive forces of the western European nations, already restlessly groping toward a new phase of their civilization. In the ensuing struggle for power, England was only gradually and belatedly involved. John and Sebastian Cabot had given her a claim to the northern continent of the new hemisphere, but it was nearly a century before men like Walter Raleigh sought to make good that claim by actual occupation. When it became clear that North America could offer little comparable to the easily won gold of Peru and the silver of Mexico, most Englishmen refused to grow excited over colonies, and many

were openly scornful of such costly failures as that at Roanoke Island in 1585. Ultimately, however, their patriotism—a curious blend of nationalism and Protestantism—their renewed awareness of their rôle as a seafaring people, and their longing for wealth accounted for the tenuous successes of permanent settlements at Jamestown in Virginia in 1607 and at Plymouth in Massachusetts in 1620.

Thereafter the shape of things to come was perceptible to shrewd and well-informed men. From the Puritan Migration of 1628-1640 New England acquired a population of perhaps twenty-five thousand persons, enough to give her a long-enduring economic and cultural leadership in British America. From the difficulties of administering a colony at a distance of three thousand miles there developed representative assemblies (the first of them in Virginia) comparable to the lower house of the English Parliament. From the absorption of the Dutch of New Amsterdam and the Swedes along the Delaware, the pattern of colonial life acquired variety and color. The religious motives of the Catholic Lords Baltimore and the Quaker William Penn lent distinction to the settlement of Maryland and Pennsylvania.

Up and down the Atlantic coastline, villages and farms and plantations proliferated, and everywhere men sought to build that life which seemed to them desirable, compromising always with the hard facts of their environment and the often conflicting ambitions of their neighbors. By 1700 the colonists numbered more than a quarter of a million; by 1765, approximately a million and three quarters. They had been fortunate in being left pretty much to their own devices, or being interfered with only sporadically and unsystematically. For all their differences—and they had many—they agreed, in the mass, upon one thing: they wanted to control their own affairs. We know now, as Americans in 1765 could not know, that the road from such an agreement to Lexington and Bunker Hill and Independence Hall was inevitable, that the essential truth of their situation lay in Thomas Jefferson's epochal words: "When, in the course of human events, it becomes necessary for *one people*. . . ."

One people! Such the colonists in British America eventually became. Why and how they did so are still puzzling questions, despite the many words which have been written to explain the Revolution. The disintegrative forces of the colonial period were seemingly as powerful as those which operated for cohesion and unity. Intercolonial travel by land was difficult and uncommon. Personal and commercial connections between one colony and England were often closer than those between colony and colony. Marked religious differences prevailed, from Congregational New England to the Anglican establishments in Maryland, Virginia, and the Carolinas. Outside of New England there was little homogeneity of background, for by 1765 one out of every three Pennsylvanians was German, every other North Carolinian was of Scotch-Irish ancestry, Negro slaves made up almost half the population of Virginia, and in South Carolina and Georgia the whites were actually outnumbered. Nevertheless all were Americans, with characteristic political and social institutions and with a literature of their own, which tells much of what they thought and argued and dreamed about.

Language, folklore, learning, the arts, literary tastes and types, legal, political, and educational institutions—everything except the land itself and a few skills acquired from the Indians—had been brought across the Atlantic Ocean. The process of transplantation had been by fits and starts and by devious routes; it had never been smoothly regular, almost never simple. Always involved in it had been change, adaptation, modification to meet the peculiar circumstances of the new environment. The old ways never worked quite perfectly under the new conditions. Men came who knew how to build houses, but they had to work with the building materials they found—lime for plaster, for example, was hard to come by—and they had to meet the exigencies of climates unlike those to which they had been accustomed. Physicians arrived, their minds stored with botanical medicine, only to discover that America had a flora of its own, whose medicinal use had to be discovered by experiment or learned

from the aborigines. Traditions lingered, but necessity forced the quicker-witted to depend upon first-hand knowledge, and there was a sufficient variety of problems in the lands from Maine to Georgia to call forth all the ingenuity that experience could develop. Decade after decade the processes of transplantation and adaptation were repeated, with infinite minor variations. New men and women came from Europe, bringing new tools and talents and opinions and adapting them as best they could to what they found. Frontier succeeded frontier as immigrants pushed up the streams toward the mountains to find new farms and found new villages. In the growth of the colonies there were few breathing-spaces; stability was short-lived, change incessant.

Nor was Europe static. In almost every field of human thought the period was tumultuous, full of conflict and revolutionary change. In economics, the feudal system was giving way to modern capitalism. In politics, the theory of the divine right of kings was dying under the blows of constitutional and contractual concepts. In religion, the schisms and sectarian rivalries which were the aftermath of the Protestant Reformation were hardly yet softened by the principle of toleration, which was eventually to bring a measure of amity. In science, revolution was continuous as Copernicus, Galileo, Bacon, Descartes, Boyle, Newton, and their associates and disciples changed both the world-view of western man and his method of advancing his exact knowledge of the world in which he lived. In literature and the arts, the creative outpouring of the Renaissance was succeeded by the more orderly but by no means barren reign of Neoclassicism.

The colonial era of the United States coincided, in short, with the germinal period of what we call the modern world. Europe, of necessity the chief constant factor to the people who settled in America, was itself becoming a new world. The more intelligent colonists, busy as they were with their own concerns, did not forget that they were participants in affairs of mighty moment, in the rebuilding of an old as well as in the creation of a new society.

Colonial literature was consequently written as often for European readers as for American. It was produced out of necessity rather than leisure, by men and women who wrote because they had some immediate pressing purpose, economic, religious, or political, which could be furthered by writing. Our first concern must be to understand those purposes.

THE ECONOMIC PROMISE

The first and the greatest promise which the New World held out to Europeans was freedom from want. To landless men whose ancestors had been bound for centuries to the soil, America offered room to raise food and clothing, to attain the security of well-stocked barnyards and overflowing granaries. As Captain John Smith put it, "Who can desire more content that hath small means, or but onely his merit to advance his fortunes, than to tread and plant that ground he hath purchased by the hazard of his life." If Americans have always wished to live well—too well, according to those critics who count materialism our foremost national sin—they have come by their desire for an ever higher standard of living quite naturally. Few Europeans came to America without expecting to improve their economic status.

Colonial literature is therefore rich in accounts of the economic resources of the New World. The prospective immigrant wanted to know, in as much detail as possible, about his chances to earn a living. He did not always find accurate information, because the books about the colonies were often written by promoters whose evaluations were rosily optimistic rather than sober or cautious. From the explorers, travelers, and settlers, however, as well as from the promoters, there came in the course of time an enormous body of information on the topography, soils, plants, animals, and minerals of the various regions of British America. These writings told what would and would not grow. They paid particular attention to timber, because England needed ship supplies and her great forests were playing out. They commented in detail on game and fur-bearing animals, on fisheries, on the probabilities of mines.

The first selection in the present chapter is from the earliest English survey of what is now a part of the United States—Hariot's *Virginia* (1588). Thomas Hariot was Raleigh's friend and a member of the Roanoke expedition of 1585; his book is not merely the first but also one of the fullest and most accurate prognostications of the various ways in which a living might be earned in the New World. Many of John Smith's writings were of the same nature as Hariot's, and both his *Map of Virginia* (1612) and the *Description of New England* (p. 66) were read carefully by men who were considering emigration. No colony was launched without a similar "Map" or "True Report" of economic possibilities, followed by a local literature of promotion which was in turn succeeded by reports of progress. George Alsop's *Character of the Province of Mary-Land* (p. 97) is an example of this later material. Of the many other books that might be named, the most important are Francis Higginson's *New England's Plantation* (1630), William Wood's *New England's Prospect* (1634), Thomas Morton's *New English Canaan* (1637), John Hammond's *Leah and Rachel; or, The Two Fruitful Sisters, Virginia and Mary-Land* (1656), Daniel Denton's *Brief Description of New-York* (1670), William Penn's *Some Account of the Province of Pensilvania* (1681), Thomas Ashe's *Carolina* (1688), and Gabriel Thomas' *Historical and Geographical Account of the Province and Country of Pensilvania* (1698). These books made it clear that the fundamental needs of food, clothing, and shelter could be satisfied rather more easily in America than in Europe, and they suggested that industry and ingenuity could produce surplus and wealth beyond anything of which the common man in Europe dared to dream.

From the first discovery, indeed, the New World seemed to many a land of marvels, of limitless economic opportunity. The state of mind it created had been germinating over manv centuries. The ancients had harbored traditions of wonderful western lands: the Elysian Fields, where happy souls went after death; the Islands of the Hesperides, where golden apples grew; Atlantis, that island continent swallowed up by earthquakes long before the time of

Plato. In medieval times men had written of fabulously wealthy islands—Antillia and O'Brazil—somewhere in the western ocean, and the news had slowly circulated that the Norsemen had found a new, rich western continent called Vinland. These stories, combined with the ineradicable conviction that America was close to the legendary treasures of India, China, and the Spice Islands, had prepared the European mind for wonders, and it was duly delighted with the strange new plants and animals and humans of which the explorers wrote. Anything could happen in this New World.

There were only a few skeptics. Samuel Purchas, for example, in *Purchas His Pilgrimes* (1613), expressed the conviction that America was not so wonderful as some people seemed to think. "For what haue they," he wrote, "to oppose to our Elephants, Rhinocerotes, Camels, Horses, Kine, &c. Neither are the naturall fruits of America comparable to those of our World. Whence are their Spices, and best Fruits, but from hence, by transportation or transplantation? As for Arts, States, Literature, Diuine and Humane, multitudes of Cities, Lawes, and other Excellencies, our World enjoyeth still the priuiledge of the First-borne. America is a younger brother, and hath in these things almost no inheritance at all, till it bought somewhat hereof of the Spaniards, with the price of her Freedome." In the eighteenth century there were like-minded men, such as the Comte de Buffon and the Abbé Raynal, who were convinced that the American climate was enervating so that men and beasts degenerated there. Jefferson devoted much effort to refuting them by compiling tables of the comparative weights of European and American animals and by assembling for Buffon, in his apartments in Paris, the skeleton of an American mastodon.

Most Europeans, however, were more than willing to look to America with unbounded optimism, especially when, as often happened, they grew impatient with the state of things in their own civilization. The prevailing temper was that of the English philosopher George Berkeley, who pictured a Muse disgusted with Europe, waiting a better time

In happy climes, where from the genial sun
And virgin earth such scenes ensue,
The force of art by nature seems outdone,
And fancied beauties by the true.

Man was to be better treated by Nature in the western hemisphere. He was, in fact, to rise to new heights, far more impressive than mere economic abundance could attain.

Westward the course of empire takes its way,
The four first Acts already past,
The fifth shall close the Drama with the day;
Time's noblest offspring is the last.

Only the presence of a savage people stood in the way of New World greatness. The Indians, it is true, were not very numerous and, with some exceptions, not very dangerous. Some observers saw the hand of God in the plague which had decimated the New England tribes just prior to the English settlement in that region; others argued that a few heathens should not be allowed to stand in the way of living-room for good, civilized Christians. The prospective settler wanted, of course, to know about the Indians. They were an economic fact to be reckoned with—a possible source of wealth, through trade or conquest, and a probable source of danger, if they resented, as they easily might, the invasion of their hunting grounds by land-hungry Europeans. The Indians therefore have a large place in almost every book which surveyed New World resources. Hariot devoted one fourth of his book to their description. Smith was always anxious to estimate their military strength. It cannot be said that the English always dealt justly with the aborigines; Roger Williams and William Penn were exceptional in their concern about obtaining land by purchase and treaty. Most of the settlers proceeded upon the expedient conviction that the Indians who stood in their path were treacherous and inferior animals to be eliminated with as little compunction as the rattle-

snakes, the wolves, and the bears. The story of the gradual dispossession of the Indians is one of the blackest chapters in colonial annals.

Other than economic considerations appear in the literature about the Indians. Their novelty, the unsettled problem of their origin (were they, for instance, descendants of the lost Ten Tribes of Israel?), their uncanny skill in woodcraft, their strange social and political organization, their stoic endurance of pain and their sadistic pleasure in torture, their heathen faith—all created an interest which amounted to fascination. The Pocahontas legend, whether or not Smith invented it out of whole cloth (see p. 69), epitomizes the tendency to create a "noble savage." There developed in connection with the Indians the attitude known as primitivism, the glorification of the unspoiled simplicity of the "uncivilized." Primitivism was in the main based upon objection to the complexities and maladjustments of European life. In the colonial period it is more common in the books of Europeans than in those written by persons who had actually been in contact with the savages, although Morton's *New English Canaan* is a notable exception. Later, in the eighteenth century, primitivism appeared in the poems of Freneau (p. 436), the essays of Crèvecoeur (p. 283), and the *Travels* of William Bartram (p. 118). It continued well into the nineteenth century and is an essential part of the philosophical background of Cooper's Leather-Stocking tales (see p. 586) and Longfellow's *Hiawatha.*

Colonial literature also records the economic processes by which simple home industries were gradually supplanted by a more specialized industrial life. The references to mining and ironworks in the writings of John Winthrop (see p. 82) and William Byrd (see p. 110) suggest something of the beginnings of industrialization, which was not to become general, of course, until many years after political independence had been achieved.

Most of us will agree that the New World fulfilled its economic promise. Like the man in the folk tale whose three wishes were fulfilled, but never quite as he expected them to be,

the first Americans did not attain freedom from want as effortlessly as some of them had expected. They had to learn patience and thrift and the most efficient use of their vast new environment, and, as we shall see in a later chapter, they had to adjust themselves to other than merely local circumstances. But attain it they did, in good measure, and colonial literature reveals both the nature and the realization of their desires.

THE RELIGIOUS LIFE

Next to getting a living, the chief concern of great numbers of the colonists was religion. Some of them, indeed, regarded the saving of souls—their own and those of other people—as the most pressing matter of existence. To understand the men and women who established the pattern of American life we need to know with some precision their religious and theological background and its reflection in literature.

The first thing to remember is that most of the colonists, whatever their church, were *keenly aware of the Reformation.* The Bible had been in the hands of Englishmen, in their own language, only since 1535, and to most of them it was a fresh and inexhaustible revelation of the will of God. The persecutions of the reign of Queen Mary, the fear of a Spanish invasion (which it was believed would have been swiftly followed by an Inquisition in England), the memory of the Gunpowder Plot of Guy Fawkes, the vexed problem of the royal succession, and the endless series of debates about church government and ritual—all were as close to the English in the early seventeenth century as the events of the period since 1865 are to present-day Americans.

The earliest attempts to colonize reflect the rivalry between Catholics and Protestants. Both Hariot and Smith emphasized the heathenism of the Indians, implying that it was the sacred duty of the English to convert them to the true faith, that is, to Anglicanism, before they could be led astray by the Catholic Spaniards or French. Obviously, however, the settlers who came to America with any such altruistic intentions were few and far between.

Six English colonies—Plymouth, Massachusetts Bay, Maryland, Rhode Island, New Haven, and Pennsylvania—were nonetheless founded by religious groups or leaders to whom economic considerations were clearly secondary. Why this was the case can be understood only by reference to the peculiar circumstances of the Reformation in England.

Between Henry VIII's break with the Pope and the end of the reign of Queen Elizabeth, the Church of England had arrived at a *status quo* justly described as moderate Protestantism. The break with Rome was complete. The ruler was the acknowledged head of the English Church; monastic orders had been abolished and most of the lands accumulated over the centuries by the Church had been nationalized; church services were held in English rather than in Latin; and the people had been provided with the English Bible and the English *Book of Common Prayer.* On the other hand, much that seemed "papist" to the more extreme Protestants remained—the hierarchy of parish priests, bishops, and archbishops, intimately connected with the structure of the civil state; richly ornamented churches and vestments; and set forms of prayer and worship.

English dissent consisted of innumerable groups and individuals who believed that the Reformation had not gone far enough. Some wanted to remove all vestiges of Catholic practices and rituals, placing more emphasis upon the sermon and the Bible as the chief means of bringing souls to Christ—these were ordinarily called Puritans. Others desired to substitute a measure of lay control for the system of benefices, bishops, and archbishops—they were the Presbyterians. Still others wished each congregation to decide for themselves what form of worship they were to follow—these were the Separatists, Independents, or Congregationalists, also sometimes called Brownists, after their first spokesman, Robert Browne (1550?-1633?). In addition, there were many shades of opinion regarding the proper forms of worship and the most desirable form of church government. With the passage of time differences of opinion about these matters multiplied rather than diminished.

The Anglican leaders sought continuously to enforce conformity to the *status quo.* As early as 1604, James I, speaking of the Puritans, announced, "I shall make them conform themselves or I will harry them out of the land, or else do worse." With the accession of Charles I in 1625 the more militant bishops had the support of a king with absolutist leanings, and unremitting efforts to insure conformity began. Under William Laud, Bishop of London from 1628 until 1633, and thereafter Archbishop of Canterbury, Primate of England, until his execution in 1645, clergymen who failed to follow the prescribed forms of worship were brought into church courts, tried, and punished, most often (as in the case of Thomas Shepard, p. 127) by being forbidden to exercise any clerical functions. Among them were many of the men who became the leaders of the New England colonies.

The Pilgrims who came to Plymouth were Separatists. Some of them had emigrated to Holland, found the atmosphere there too "foreign" for their taste, and determined to settle in America. They were poor and would not have been able to make the voyage in the *Mayflower* had not the necessary capital been provided by a group of "merchant adventurers" of London. William Bradford (p. 73) was the mainstay of the settlement and church which they founded in Massachusetts. In 1692 Plymouth became a part of the Province of Massachusetts Bay.

The Puritans of the Massachusetts Bay Company came to New England only when it became clear that reform within the English Church was impossible. They took care to bring their charter with them, and they intended to establish a state in which the kind of church they wanted might thrive. In contrast to the Pilgrims, they were wealthy and well-educated, many of them being substantial property-owners or professional men, university-trained as was their governor, John Winthrop (p. 80). Furthermore, they were numerous; between 1628 and 1640 there was a constant stream of immigrants. Not all of them were as earnest in their religion as Winthrop and the ministers, but Bay Colony leadership was shrewd.

Social, political, and educational institutions were so securely established that no study of the genesis of American life can ignore the Puritan tradition. Before the Puritans had been long in New England, they agreed upon a form of church government which was partly Congregational, partly Presbyterian—the *Cambridge Platform* of 1649. By that time the Westminster Assembly had effected changes not wholly dissimilar within the Church of England, although they were to be largely annulled by the Restoration in 1660.

Puritanism, however, was more than an attitude toward forms of worship and church government. It was then, as it is now, a word used to describe a strait-laced way of life, a concern with moral conduct so great as to lead some individuals to attempt what we now think of as unwarranted control of the personal lives of their neighbors, a rigid repression of sins and fashions that are now thought venial. Such was Puritanism at its worst. At its best it provided men with a sense of social responsibility, an earnestness about life which had in it both intellectual conviction and intense, sometimes even mystic, piety.

Underlying Puritan earnestness was Calvinism, a stern and legalistic theology constructed by the Genevan reformer, John Calvin (1509-1564). Calvinism portrayed God as a sovereign whom man, in the person of Adam, had disobeyed, thereby breaking an inexpressibly sacred and solemn covenant. Upon Adam and all his race retribution had justly fallen. Through Christ, however, man had been given a second chance, although that chance was extended only to those men whom God had "elected" to be saved. Most men were predestined to damnation, as they deserved. Although one could never be wholly sure of being among the fortunate few for whom salvation was foreordained, life was to be lived in a search for the divine will, as it might be expressed in one's own struggle for serenity, through one's spiritual growth, or as it might be interpreted from events in the external world. To walk uprightly in the sight of God, and to seek to follow His will—these were the aims of the Calvinist and the origin, as has often been remarked, of the "New England conscience."

1609), who held that one could achieve salvation in part through "good works," that is to say, through living a moral and upright life. It was regarded by the Calvinists as derogatory to the sovereignty of God and was one of the "errors" which Edwards was most anxious to refute in his *Freedom of the Will* (p. 182). When the evangelical preachers of the eighteenth century took religion to the masses of the people, "good works" formed a far more concrete appeal than more abstruse theology, and the Methodist movement particularly became deeply tinged with Arminian thought.

Quakerism is the only one of the many radical Protestant opinions of the seventeenth century which has continued in its original form to be influential to the present day. The folk who first called themselves "Children of Light" and, later, the Society of Friends, organized under the leadership of George Fox (1624-1691) in the late 1640's. Their popular name was given them in jest, after Fox had asserted that even magistrates would come to "tremble before the word of the Lord." The Friends believed that the duty of man is to follow the Bible and the "inner light," that "pure wisdom" which comes from above. With a quietistic listening for the "openings" from God they combined the social control of "speaking out" in meeting, by which the promptings of the inner light were communicated to and passed upon by other Friends—a control which preserved them from the Antinomian lawlessness. They believed that all men are brethren, that all violence (and especially war) is evil, that worldly distinctions of class and dress are meaningless, that the taking of oaths is blasphemous. They had no professional clergy, and they tended to distrust higher learning. Bitterly persecuted in New England as late as 1677, they established themselves in New Jersey and Pennsylvania, where they became a powerful force for the abolition of slavery and for social reform of many varieties. They produced relatively few writers (for the greatest of them, John Woolman, see p. 298), but their equalitarianism and humanitarianism have always been influential in American life. Whittier was their chief spokesman in nineteenth-century American litera-

ture, but the Quaker influence may easily be discerned in the work of Walt Whitman and many lesser figures.

Deism is ordinarily dated from the writings of the English philosopher Lord Herbert of Cherbury (1583-1648). Herbert approached the problem of religion from a purely rational point of view, similar to what we would now call the comparative method. He found that in all ages and in all times, whether pagan or Christian, men had agreed on five axioms: (1) that there is a God; (2) that He ought to be worshiped; (3) that piety and virtue are the essentials of worship; (4) that man ought to repent his sins; and (5) that there are rewards and punishments in a future life. Veneration of the Bible as the revelation of God is wholly absent from this rational conclusion, and it is the rejection of revelation which is the distinguishing mark of Deistic thought. In the latter part of the seventeenth century, rationalism spread rapidly, in part as a result of the scientific advance, and there was widespread acceptance of the Deistic view that religious truth could be obtained by the use of reason. Although the Deistic controversy was primarily an English affair, Increase and Cotton Mather were attacking the Deists before the end of the century, and Edwards' *Divine and Supernatural Light* (p. 172) would scarcely have been written had it not seemed important to refute the Deistic emphasis upon the place of reason in religion. The best-known Deistic work by a colonial American is Benjamin Franklin's *Dissertation on Liberty and Necessity, Pleasure and Pain* (1725), which its author accounted an "erratum" (see p. 244). No reader of Franklin's writings will be long in doubt, however, of his fundamental agreement with Lord Herbert of Cherbury. The Deistic principles of many of the leaders of the Revolution, including Washington, Jefferson, Hamilton, and Ethan Allen, lend credibility to the picture of an American "cult of reason" in the late eighteenth century, but that, together with the mare's nest stirred up by Thomas Paine's *Age of Reason* (1792), must await discussion in another chapter.

Toleration and revivalism, perhaps the most characteristic features of American religious

life, also have their origins in the colonial period. Both are still, after all these years, matters for the thoughtful concern of every American.

Roger Williams (p. 136) founded Rhode Island in 1636 as a tiny island of refuge for "heretics" like Anne Hutchinson and the Quakers. He was far ahead of his time, for not until the chartering of Pennsylvania in 1681 was there a second colony ready to receive all victims of religious persecution. Maryland, to be sure, passed a Toleration Act in 1649 as a protection for the Roman Catholics, but Jews and Unitarians were not desired. George Alsop's comments on the situation in Maryland (see p. 98) are worth examination in this connection. The American colonies, some of them none too willingly, bowed to the provisions of the Toleration Act passed by Parliament in 1689, and thereafter the principle of religious freedom was given at least lip service. Nonconformists to the dominant pattern of religious life were by no means safe, however, although in later years anti-Catholic, anti-Semitic, and anti-this-and-that feeling is usually explainable in part by economic competition.

Revivalism, while not wholly native, has probably never flourished elsewhere so consistently as in America. Its origins are to be sought in the religious situation of colonies founded by earnest and pious folk who saw their children slipping away from the faith as life became easier and more secular. This situation developed in New England shortly after 1650 and is signalized by the adoption of the Half-Way Covenant of 1662, which admitted the children of church members to church membership (although not to communion) without the previously required confession of "religious experience." For most of the sixty years thereafter New England clergymen seized upon every possible opportunity to expound the decadence of religion, the necessity of a return to the ways of the founders, the dangers of apostasy, and the innumerable evidences of divine disfavor in comets, witchcrafts, earthquakes, fires, and storms. Mrs. Knight's *Journal* (p. 101) is evidence of the trends which were viewed with alarm in Samuel Sewall's *Diary* (see p. 90) and in innumerable writings by the Mathers.

Cotton Mather's *Magnalia Christi Americana* (p. 149) is the best known complaint of the decline of religion and the diminishing influence of the clergy.

After 1720, however, religion was reinvigorated by what is known as the "Great Awakening," widespread revivals which reached the younger folk and the lower classes in all the colonies. Through the awakening, religion found new leaders and a somewhat broader base; it became perceptibly less intellectual and more emotional. The revivals are believed to have begun with certain Dutch Reformed churches of New Jersey in the 1720's; they soon afterward appeared in the Scotch-Irish Presbyterian churches of Pennsylvania; by the 1730's they had arrived in New England, where Edwards was soon absorbed in their strange phenomena. Six times between 1729 and 1770 the colonies felt the impulse of the preaching of George Whitefield (1714-1770), an English evangelist who had been associated with the Wesleys in the development of Methodism. Whitefield, who had the advantage of Calvinistic convictions, preached to vast crowds, often out of doors, and invariably aroused great enthusiasm. The Baptists and the Methodists also extended their ranks through highly successful revivals, particularly in the Southern colonies, in the decades just before the Revolution.

The literature relating to revivalism is enormous; one scholar estimates that there are more than thirty-five thousand separate pieces which refer to the awakening. Best known, probably, is Edwards' *Some Thoughts concerning the Present Revival of Religion in New England* (1742) and Charles Chauncy's answer thereto (p. 185).

The effect of revivalism was to make religion more the personal concern of the common man than it had been before, and it is not an accident that its development coincided in time with the spread of a humanitarian concern for the poor and the unfortunate. It has remained characteristic of American Protestantism, although often frowned upon by settled clergymen and the higher economic levels of society. The objections of Chauncy can still be applied to

camp meetings, tent revivals, and the thousand and one varieties of missions and tabernacles which dot the streets of the larger American cities. The value of revivalism is a debatable question which each individual must answer for himself. Doubtless it has tended to divide churches and has lent itself to the self-seeking of unscrupulous evangelists. On the other hand it has kept its appeal through recognition of the importance of emotional release. Religion does not appeal to the rational mind alone.

COMMONWEALTH-BUILDING

A third great concern of the colonists and theme of colonial literature, intimately connected with the economic and the religious, is the political "new deal" which the New World promised. Americans were thinking, from the first, of the possibility of a new kind of state.

John Smith was not alone in observing a parallel between Europe in his time and the declining years of the Roman empire (see p. 67). Although England had become a great and strong nation under Queen Elizabeth, there seemed to be more distressing poverty, more selfish wealth, more injustice and social unrest than there had ever been before. We can now see that feudalism was disintegrating slowly, that hereditary and class privileges had survived longer than serfdom, and that capitalism had not provided men with sufficient social responsibility. Smith is clear enough in his conviction that "rich men for the most part are growne to that dotage, through their pride in their wealth, as though there were no accident could end it, or their life." In America, a land of greater plenty, he believed that merit and industry might find their fair rewards and that all men might work together for the common weal.

Smith's frequent use of the word "commonwealth" is significant, for to his generation a commonwealth was a state in which all citizens—not merely a few—had an interest in the government. This is not to say that Smith was a democrat, for he was not. He vaguely expressed the general dissatisfaction of his time with the political *status quo.* The Renaissance was the age in which American political philosophy was born. Men were dreaming of

an ideal commonwealth, as they had not been dreaming since Plato in the fourth century B.C.

The political climate of opinion of the age of geographical discovery is suggested by More's *Utopia* (1515-1516) and Bacon's *New Atlantis* (*c.* 1617). Their dreams of a new society were paralleled by the nostalgia of the primitivists, who looked back to a Golden Age in which men lived in amity, untroubled by such bickerings as those produced by the Reformation and the new national rivalries. Talk of a "brave new world" was in the air, and it was not silenced by American experience. So many folk were thinking of a better state that Shakespeare, in *The Tempest* (*c.* 1610), created an "honest old counsellor," Gonzalo, whose satirical remarks are worth recalling:

I' th' commonwealth I would by contraries
    Execute all things; for no kind of traffic
Would I admit; no name of magistrate;
    Letters should not be known; riches, poverty,
And use of service, none; . . .
    All things in common nature should produce
Without sweat or endeavour; treason, felony,
    Sword, pike, knife, gun, or need of any engine,
Would I not have, all foison, all abundance,
    To feed my innocent people. . . .
I would with such perfection govern, sir,
    T' excel the golden age.

At least eight American colonies—Plymouth, Massachusetts Bay, Maryland, Rhode Island, New Haven, Carolina, Pennsylvania, and Georgia—show traces of their founders' thinking in terms of an ideal commonwealth. In most of them religious and economic motives were

also involved, but these, too, have their place in the history of political experimentation. The communistic beginnings of the Pilgrims (see p. 76), the theocracy of Massachusetts Bay and New Haven, the toleration principles of Rhode Island, Maryland, and Pennsylvania, John Locke's "ideal" constitution for Carolina, and James Oglethorpe's notion of a refuge for debtors in Georgia—all had political implications. The most discussed experiment is that of Massachusetts Bay.

The full story of the transformation of the dream of an ideal commonwealth into the workaday institutions of British America, not ideal but on the whole far less aristocratic than those of Europe, is highly involved. We should remember, however, that colonial literature reflects at least three processes or developments: (1) the familiar pattern of transplantation and adaptation, in this case of English political and legal institutions; (2) the relative freedom from interference which was the result of unsettled problems of political authority in the mother country; and (3) the growth of democracy and local control, usually attributed to the influence of Separatism, which trained humble folk to share in church government.

All are well illustrated in the picture which Winthrop gives us (p. 81) of the conflict between aristocracy and democracy in the Bay Colony. The aim of Winthrop and his companions was to found a theocracy, a state of which the head should be God, the fundamental law His word, the Bible. They wished a Bible commonwealth in which civil authority should contribute in every possible way to the welfare of the Puritan church. As John Eliot said, in *The Christian Commonwealth* (1659), "there is undoubtedly a form of Civil Government, instituted by God himself in the holy Scriptures"—a conviction which, rather than any statutory provision, accounts for the leadership of the clergy in the seventeenth century. The magistrates consulted the "elders," that is, the ministers, in every important debate on policy. But Winthrop had too much of the lawyer's respect for statute and for precedent to throw overboard the common law and the example of England, and it was not long before

Massachusetts had a bicameral legislature and a legal code drawn, not from the Bible, but from experience. Because the Bay Company founders had the foresight to bring their charter with them, their government survived the chaotic conditions of the Civil War in England. The independent attitude of the town of Hingham, moreover, shows the early strength of the ideal of local autonomy in an era which had adopted a modified form of Separatism.

Bradford and Williams reveal in their writings much the same background. From Plymouth, the original Separatist community, we have the *Mayflower Compact* (see p. 76), earliest of American written constitutions and, like Winthrop's speech on liberty, a reflection of the development of Calvinism which is called "Covenant" or "Federal" theology. In it the Pilgrims agreed to "solemnly and mutually in the presence of God, and one of another, covenant and combine our selves togeather into a civill body politick, . . . and by vertue hearof to enacte . . . such just and equall lawes . . . as shall be thought most meete and convient for the generall good of the Colonie, unto which we promise all due submission and obedience." The *Compact* has a well-deserved distinction, and every American will do well to review occasionally its significant phrases. It was Separatism, too, which led Williams to assert his doctrine that the power of the civil state must not serve the purposes of a single church (p. 138). Other colonies copied the idea of a social compact, and other colonies came gradually to recognize the value of toleration.

The conflict between the ideal of government by the few and the ideal of government by the many runs throughout American literature. In the colonial time it is to be seen in a vast body of writings relating to the theocracy in Massachusetts and the various attempts of men like Cotton Mather to return to the "New England Way." The belief of the ruling classes that things were not going well may be felt in Sewall's *Diary* and Mrs. Knight's *Journal*—the common people were often rowdy and obstreperous. William Byrd felt much the same way about the North Carolinians (p. 107). Occasionally the common man

found a defender, of whom the most notable was John Wise (1652-1725). In his *Churches' Quarrel Espoused* (1710) and *Vindication of the Government of the New-England Churches* (1717) he blasted a Mather-sponsored effort to give the clergy greater power. Wise's works had important political implications and were widely quoted when the Revolution called forth all the ammunition that could be collected.

The colonies did not achieve the ideal commonwealth, but they present a consistent picture of an effort to serve the common interest of all, according to the lights of the men who led them. "Their Cheif Red Letter day," Mrs. Knight said truly of the inhabitants of Connecticut, "is St. Election, which is annually Observed according to Charter, to choose their Governor; a blessing they can never be thankfull enough for, as they will find, if ever it be their hard fortune to loose it."

SUPERSTITION and SCIENCE

The reader of colonial literature cannot fail to notice that most writing of the era is punctuated with "It pleased God" and "a special providence of God appeared"—recognitions of the immediate concern of the Deity for His universe and His people. Although most conspicuous in the historical works and diaries of the Puritans, these expressions may easily be found in the reports of such hard-bitten gentlemen of fortune as John Smith.

In Bradford, Winthrop, Sewall, and Mather, however, such references are often accounted superstitious by latter-day readers, who live in a world wherein the uninterrupted order of nature is taken for granted and a scientific world-view prevails. We need to reflect briefly, therefore, upon the place of science in the thought of colonial Americans, especially when we encounter Sewall's comment (see p. 92) on Mather's pulpit exposition of the Copernican hypothesis: "I think it inconvenient to assert such Problems."

The age unquestionably accepted the providential order of nature, a world in which the Lord intervened not merely to mark the sparrow's fall but to reward and punish in

accordance with His inscrutable ends. Before scorning this acceptance as sheer superstition, we should consider how often we moderns fall back upon "luck" or "fate" or "accident" to account for the puzzling and inexplicable turns of events which we all encounter. Things happen to all of us which no amount of foresight or care can help us avoid. Belief in divine intervention had the advantage of giving direction to men's lives, however much we may question the results of the Puritans' incessant search for an understanding of the divine will.

What we must not conclude too easily is that the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries were deliberately unscientific. On the contrary, they were the age of Bacon, Boyle, Descartes, Newton, Laplace, and many other first-rank scientists, whose search for truth was emulated, although not of course with such brilliant success, on this side of the Atlantic. Benjamin Franklin was not the first American to study natural phenomena.

Colonial literature shows both a persistent scientific curiosity and the universal economic motive for the investigation of nature. Hariot impressed the Indians with mathematical instruments, the lodestone, and spring clocks (see p. 60), and Smith fascinated Opechakanough with his sign-language exposition of astronomy and geography (see p. 70). Both men, moreover, classified and described natural phenomena in accordance with the best methods at their command, as did their innumerable successors among the travel writers and promoters. Bartram was a skilled botanist. Bradford, as likely as anyone to perceive the hand of God in all events, found room to "leave it to naturallists to judge" the value of his hypothesis of the results of earthquakes, and did not find his view of providence inconsistent with the search for natural causes for the immoralities of 1642 (p. 79). Byrd's journals abound in medicinal, botanical, and zoölogical observations; both he and Cotton Mather were members of the Royal Society of London and contributed to its *Philosophical Transactions,* the foremost scientific periodical of the age.

There is abundant evidence, in short, that the sense of the nearness of God and the operation of His providence did not outlaw the study of nature. Sewall's "inconvenient" was probably not the expression of opposition to scientific knowledge, but the not uncommon feeling that science and religion ought not to be mixed. Despite the dominance of theology, actual distrust of science is rarely encountered in the colonial era.

THE FINE ARTS

Painting, sculpture, music, and architecture, which now lend much to the richness of life and literature, were of relatively little interest to the colonists and are mentioned only seldom in their writings. We need not review the details of their beginning, but we should remember that they existed and that they manifested both the invariable pattern of transplantation and adaptation and the dominance of religion in the daily life of the people.

Painting was devoted almost exclusively to the portraiture of much-loved clergymen or the members of well-to-do families. There were portraits painted in New England as early as 1641; one of the best known is that of Samuel Sewall made by a native amateur sometime before 1730. The first portrait engraving known to have been made in the British colonies was a woodcut of Richard Mather dating from 1670; the first line engraving on copper, a portrait of Increase Mather made about 1701; the first mezzotint for framing, a portrait of Cotton Mather made in 1727.

Sculpture was confined, prior to the nineteenth century, to the carving of angels, death's-heads, and other devices upon tombstones, and, if it is admitted as sculpture, to carving in wood. This is not so insignificant as it may sound, for the visitor to colonial graveyards often comes away with a clearer notion of our ancestors' surprising fearlessness of death.

Music at first consisted of the singing of psalms, in which the Puritans took great pains. The first book published in America was the famous *Bay Psalm Book* (1640). The historians of music make much, also, of the instrumental performance of religious compositions among

the early German settlers in Pennsylvania. Secular music was rare before the Revolution, even in the South.

Of all the arts, architecture is most closely related to the life of the people, and, together with such crafts as weaving, dyeing, silverworking, and cabinetmaking, it is most interesting to the student of colonial civilization. Houses and their furnishings were made by craftsmen without the guidance of architects and decorators, and ordinarily with native materials. The styles of the Old World were carried over and adapted to the new materials and climates with such variety as might be expected in a people drawn from all the corners of Europe. In architecture, to take a single example, such eclecticism was produced as may be observed by a half-hour's stroll through any modern subdivision. Here may be found the architectural legacies of the half-timbered gables of Renaissance England, the multiple-flued chimneys of the Jacobean era, the small, slanting dormer windows of Dutch New Amsterdam, the stuccoed walls of Spanish St. Augustine, and innumerable other importations. But it is the steepled church, perhaps, which is the most characteristic production of colonial America, where men admired or remembered the many London churches built by Sir Christopher Wren after the Great Fire of 1666.

THE CIRCUMSTANCES of LITERARY PRODUCTION

In addition to a knowledge of the intellectual and social backgrounds of colonial times, we need to have some conception of the circumstances of literary production in the years before 1765, for the state of printing and the book trade often determines the status of literature. Among the factors which merit examination are the extent of literary connection with Europe, the spread and quantity of printing, the place of periodicals, and the nature of the reading public.

As we should expect, the greater number of important books written by or relating to the colonists were published in Europe. Of those represented in the following pages,

the works by Smith, Alsop, Peters, Shepard, Williams, and Anne Bradstreet were all first printed in London, as was Cotton Mather's *Magnalia.* Bartram's *Travels,* Mather's *Wonders of the Invisible World,* and Edwards' works were all reprinted quickly in Great Britain. The colonial author wrote not merely for his neighbors but for the larger world. In many cases he found a more sympathetic audience abroad than at home.

For a time it would have been impossible for books to be published in the colonies, and it was always difficult. Printing was established in Massachusetts in 1639, in Maryland and Pennsylvania in 1685, in New York in 1693, and in all of the other original colonies before 1763. It was based usually upon the necessity for copies of the laws and other public papers. Almanacs, school textbooks, legal and business manuals, newspapers, and other useful but scarcely literary productions accounted for the bulk of the work. Lengthy books were expensive to manufacture, and very few of them were printed in the colonies. Sermons, pamphlets, and small volumes of poems were fairly common. One very common practice for those who admired a particular sermon was to subsidize its printing and then distribute copies to appreciative friends, as Samuel Sewall liked to do. Such distribution of a funeral sermon was evidently regarded as a suitable memorial to departed relatives. Much of the material was reprinted from English editions. There is reasonably good evidence that the proportion of theological literature was greatest in New England, that of belles-lettres and political literature greatest in the middle colonies, and that of legal literature greatest in the South. In general, the production of the colonial printers was strongly utilitarian. Of the books represented in the present chapter only eight—Bartram's *Travels* (not really a colonial imprint, since it appeared in 1791), Cotton Mather's *Wonders of the Invisible World* and *Manuductio ad Ministerium,* Edwards' *Divine and Supernatural Light* and *Freedom of the Will,* Chauncy's *Seasonable Thoughts,* and the second edition of Anne Bradstreet's poems—were printed by American workmen. Evidently it was not easy for colonial authors to rush

into print. The book-buying public was relatively small; the average edition of books and pamphlets in the early part of the eighteenth century was probably between three and five hundred copies. As a matter of fact, much of what we now read as colonial literature, including the works here printed from the pens of Bradford, Winthrop, Sewall, Mrs. Knight, Byrd, and Edward Taylor, was not even in print before 1765.

Newspapers, although they were unknown for a large part of the period, constituted the staple work of colonial printers by 1750. *Publick Occurences,* which appeared at Boston in 1690, was suppressed after a single issue, so that the *Boston News-Letter,* established in 1704, is usually regarded as the first American newspaper. Other important early newspapers include the *American Weekly Mercury* of Philadelphia (founded 1719), the *New-England Courant* of Boston (1721), the *New York Gazette* (1725), the *Maryland Gazette* of Baltimore (1727), the *Pennsylvania Gazette*—Franklin's paper and the best of colonial newspapers —(1730), the *South Carolina Gazette* of Charleston (1732), and the *Virginia Gazette* of Williamsburg (1736). Most of these papers were of very modest size at first, and it was many years before there was much space for literary material. Sometimes, as in the case of James Franklin's *New-England Courant,* a printing-shop became the center of an informal club of literary-minded gentlemen, and Benjamin Franklin used the *Pennsylvania Gazette* to promote the coöperative and political ends which he so often had in mind. Gradually newspapers began to find room for letters to the editor, political articles, discussions of science and technology, even familiar essays and poems. None of the selections in the present chapter, however, had a newspaper origin. Magazines were even less significant than newspapers, although both Benjamin Franklin and his chief rival, Andrew Bradford, issued short-lived magazines in imitation of London periodicals in 1741.

The colonial printer was often postmaster and bookseller as well. Many books were imported, and as time went on, their distribution was accomplished by peddlers and auctions

as well as by bookshop sales. A few of the more ambitious books were sold by subscriptions obtained before they were actually printed. All in all, it seems certain that most readers, like most serious authors, looked abroad for their literary life.

American traditions about censorship and control of the press had their beginnings in this time. There are incidents of action against printers by governors or councils throughout the period, but it seems probable that the colonial press was as free or even freer than that of England. As early as 1696 a Massachusetts jury refused to convict a printer for publishing a work which had offended the officials and the clergy, and in 1735 the famous trial of Peter Zenger in New York enhanced the precedent that libel laws were not to be readily used to suppress freedom of speech and freedom of the press. By the beginning of the Revolutionary period the colonial press was in a position to play what from some points of view may be regarded as a decisive part in the drama of political action. T.H.

II. Literary Trends

Moses Coit Tyler, in his *History of American Literature, 1607-1765* (1878), classified colonial books in two groups: those written for English readers and those composed for the Americans themselves. In the former group he perceived six types of material: (1) books whose purpose was to send home tidings of "welfare or ill fare"; (2) those written to appeal legal or financial matters to superior tribunals in the homeland; (3) apologetics, designed to defend the colonies against injurious aspersions by their enemies; (4) those writings particularly devoted to the Indians; (5) "descriptions of nature in America"; and (6) accounts of gradual innovations in politics, laws, creeds, and religious and domestic usages. Among the writings composed for the colonists themselves he found four types: (1) sermons and

other religious treatises; (2) histories; (3) poems; and (4) prose with miscellaneous purposes.

Tyler's classification is still useful, but its fundamental distinction violates a conviction of later scholars that the colonists seldom wrote merely for themselves. As we turn now to the problems of literary forms and excellence, we can describe the bulk of colonial writings under seven classes. The principle of division is still that of content, but we shall consider particularly the structural problems which faced colonial writers, and their solutions in: (1) accounts of voyages; (2) promotion tracts; (3) sermons; (4) polemical tracts and treatises; (5) histories and biographies; (6) diaries and autobiographies; and (7) poems. The absence of plays and novels in colonial America also requires brief explanation.

ACCOUNTS of VOYAGES

The simplest in structure of the literary types common in the colonies was the account of a voyage, from which developed the later literature of travel. This was at first a plain narrative, usually written by a plain man with few literary graces. Its organization was chronological, and the writer merely amplified, from memory, notes, or a journal, the events he had experienced, expanding whenever his own interests or those of his prospective readers seemed to demand it. The letter in which Columbus reported his first voyage of discovery is a good example; another is John Brereton's *Briefe and True Relation of the Discouerie of the North Part of Virginia* (1602). the earliest English account of the New England coast. The type prevails in the great collections of voyages which were edited by Richard Hakluyt, Samuel Purchas, and John Harris (*Collection of Voyages and Travels,* 1705). Although written to provide information, the account of a voyage was seldom impersonal and sometimes achieved a sharpness of effect and a charm scarcely excelled by polished literary art.

Mrs. Knight's *Journal* adapts the type quite naturally to a land journey, as do Byrd's

"Progress to the Mines" and Bartram's *Travels.* Byrd's two versions of the *History of the Dividing Line* (pp. 105 and 106) show how readily miscellaneous information could be inserted in the loose framework of a travel narrative.

Travel literature forms one of the largest classes of American books. It is closely related to the economic motive in colonization, but it still lends itself readily to comment on social life and customs, on personalities, and even to sheer entertainment.

PROMOTION TRACTS

The writer of the promotion tract almost invariably had to struggle with a topical arrangement. He had to make some division of his material so that he could generalize attractively about the resources of the region he was describing. He was not always familiar with his material; he could make only limited use of narrative; and he needed to appear judicious and relatively impersonal. Promotion tracts therefore vary somewhat in structure, according to the different solutions of the problems.

Hariot wisely followed his main interest—economic resources—in his account of Virginia. First he described commodities already found or raised in Virginia in quantities sufficient to be marketable: useful plants, minerals, and furs. He then listed commodities known to be sufficient in quantity to sustain life: grains, vegetables, fruits, game animals, fowl, and fish. A third section listed miscellaneous commodities and included his account of the Indians.

Smith's *Description of New England* (p. 66) and *Map of Virginia* (1612) employed a far more common structure. They begin with the general geographical features and then describe the climate, winds, soils, rivers, settled places, plants, animals, birds, fish, minerals, and Indians. The *Map* is the more consciously organized; in his *Description* Smith himself realized that his enthusiasm had carried him away, and at one point asks his readers to return a little with him, adding that he is not "sufficiently yet acquainted in those parts, to write fully the estate of the Sea, the Ayre, the Land, the Fruites, the Rocks, the People, the Gouern-

ment, Religion, Territories and Limitations, Friends and Foes: but as I gathered from the niggardly relations in a broken language to my understanding, during the time I ranged those Countries." It will be noted that Smith had a list of topics, arranged in an order proceeding from the general to the particular. This systematic approach he probably derived from the geographical literature of the day, which in turn is a reflection of the almost invariable approach of the medieval schoolmen to the study of the external world.

When the works of Aristotle were the highest authority in science, they were studied according to a settled system. One began with the *Organon* and the *Physica,* which deal with logic and the general properties of natural bodies; next came the *De Caelo,* a description of the heavens; next the *De Generatione et Corruptione,* which treats the four elements—fire, water, earth, and air—and their various combinations and interactions; next the *Meteorologica,* which describes the various processes of change in the elements; next various discussions of "perfectly mixed" bodies and "imperfectly mixed" ones, inanimate (stones, metals, and minerals); and finally the *De Anima* and the *Historia Animalium,* descriptions of animate bodies (plants and animals). After that one came to the study of man.

Many promotion tracts besides Smith's were based ultimately upon this tradition, for it was the topical arrangement most familiar to educated men. Francis Higginson's *New England's Plantation* begins with the following statement: "And because the life and wel-fare of euerie Creature here below, and the commodiousnesse of the Countrey whereas such Creatures liue, doth by the most wise ordering of Gods prouidence, depend next vnto himselfe, vpon the temperature and disposition of the foure Elements, Earth, Water, Aire, and Fire. . . . Therefore I will indeauour to shew you what *New-England* is by the considerations of these apart, and truly endeauour by Gods helpe to report nothing but the naked truth." Wood's *New England's Prospect* proceeds from the general to the particular, but Morton's *New English Canaan* varies that order somewhat.

Although the careful reader will discover many minor variations, the general outline of the promotion tracts is remarkably consistent. They are, of course, a large class in colonial literature. Closely related to them are the "progress reports" sent back to the folk at home by actual settlers. They have a somewhat larger proportion of narrative, but are not greatly different. George Alsop's account of Maryland is a good example of this development, and numerous other titles have already been mentioned (see p. 7).

SERMONS

The sermon was the most highly developed literary type in colonial literature, and a collection of the sermons available in print and in manuscript would run literally into the thousands. Men and women listened to sermons on every Sunday; often they went to lecture sermons during the week; they heard sermons on such public occasions as elections, thanksgiving and fast days, military trainings, and funerals. The more serious of them kept, in their diaries or notebooks, records of the sermon texts and even the main heads of the discourses to which they gave their attention. In an age wherein the pulpit was the center of intellectual life, it is not surprising that much of the best writing was in sermons, nor that the congregation knew a good sermon when they heard one.

Two complete sermons are reprinted in this chapter in order that this type may have more adequate representation than is possible by excerpts. That by Thomas Shepard is from the early seventeenth century; that by Jonathan Edwards was delivered in 1733. Both are systematically organized with doctrines drawn from the Scripture text, reasons given for those doctrines, and the uses or application of the doctrines suggested. This structural pattern is very old, and it is by far the most common in the sermons of the American Puritans. Within it there was room, as Shepard's sermon shows, for objections and answers and other variations upon the basic pattern. The present-day reader is impressed with the "firstlys," "secondlys," etc., but we should remember that earnest churchgoers wanted to know where

they were so that during the week they could discuss within the family circle the soundness of Mr. Shepard's third "use." The logical structure is also lightened by numerous homely illustrations and eloquent passages, and by the frequent citation of parallel texts from the Bible. All of this is typical; the preachers made every possible effort to relate their sermons to the lives and reading of their flocks.

There are a number of intricate problems in the sermon structure—the extent of influence of the logic of Petrus Ramus, for example, and the conflict between the "plain" and the more ornate styles. For us, however, it is important to understand the purpose of the sermon.

It was designed then, as now, to persuade men to consider honestly the state of their souls. The minister was to preach the gospel of Jesus Christ, to awaken his hearers to the supreme importance of faith and regeneration, to the urgent necessity of assuming an active part in the eternal warfare within man's soul between good and evil, the spirit and the flesh, God and the Devil. The sermon was the essence of Protestantism, more important in actuality than any single theological dogma. With the Calvinists, for example, the sermon was the chief means of preserving believers from fatalistic acceptance of their lot. That most men were foreordained to sin and damnation and that there was nothing the individual could do about it, are doctrines which might easily have led to despair and passive indifference. The sermons, however, were based on the even more powerful doctrines that divine grace did come to some men, and that to those who received it grace was a constant growth, an increasing understanding of perfection, an endless enlarging of one's capacity to deal with doubt and sin and temptation. Hence the soul-searching of the Puritans, the esteem and affection for "soul-ravishing" clergymen like Shepard, the vast respect for the sublime certainty with which Edwards testified to the "spiritual Light" which is "the dawning of the Light of Glory in the Heart." Men and women found sermons thrilling because sermons indicated the innumerable ways of analyzing and strengthening the inner life.

The sermon, in short, was both an appeal to man's imperfect reason and a stirring of his emotions, both an intellectual experience and a glimpse of the magnificent poetic vistas of God's promise to the regenerate soul. It is the real key to the religious life of the colonial age. Dull as some sermons may seem to the modern reader, the sermon literature of colonial America can stand comparison with that of any people. It called forth the finest literary talents of the time.

BEGINNING of CONTROVERSIAL WRITING

Theological and political discussion also produced a large literature of controversy. Decisions had to be made about church government, institutional organization, governmental policy, and theological positions, and there were often wide divergences of opinion. Men with convictions expressed them in numerous tracts and treatises, represented in the following pages by Williams' *Bloudy Tenent,* Cotton Mather's *Manuductio ad Ministerium,* Edwards' *Freedom of the Will,* and Chauncy's *Seasonable Thoughts.* These, and other works like them, vary widely in their structure, which ordinarily grew directly out of the controversial issues with which they dealt.

Williams' use of the dialogue structure is not uncommon, but topical organization is probably more usual. Polemical tracts were frequently a point-by-point refutation of a preceding pamphlet or treatise. Sometimes they were constructed as a series of queries, to which the author gave his well-considered answers. The fiction of addressing a "letter" to a friend was often used. We cannot generalize readily about the literary form of the literature of controversy. Its most striking difference from similar material of today is perhaps the fact that so little of it appeared in magazines; their development as a forum for literary debate came in a later period.

The volume and variety of tracts and treatises can best be suggested by listing a few of the more important titles, in addition to those by Williams, Eliot, Cotton Mather, Wise, Edwards, and Franklin which have already been mentioned. Among the books of enduring

significance are the following: Richard Mather's *Church Government and Church Covenant* (1643); John Cotton's *Way of the Churches of Christ in New England* (1645); Nathaniel Ward's *Simple Cobler of Aggawam in America* (1647); Thomas Hooker's *Survey of the Summe of Church Discipline* (1648); Increase Mather's *Cases of Conscience concerning Evil Spirits Personating Men* (1693); Samuel Sewall's *Selling of Joseph* (1700); Cotton Mather's *Essays to Do Good* (as *Bonifacius,* 1710) and *Christian Philosopher* (1721); Franklin's *Modest Inquiry into the Nature and Necessity of a Paper Currency* (1729) and *Proposals relating to the Education of Youth in Pensilvania* (1749); Jared Eliot's *Essay on Field Husbandry in New England* (Part I, 1748); John Woolman's *Some Considerations on the Keeping of Negroes* (Part I, 1753); James Otis' *Vindication of the Conduct of the House of Representatives of Massachusetts* (1762) and *Rights of British Colonies Asserted and Proved* (1764). Religion, women's fashions, social reform, science, agriculture, politics—all are represented, and the list might easily be extended.

This type of literature had its models in the press of Europe, but its content is invariably and peculiarly American. It is the basis of the tradition of free discussion and a free press and is perhaps, to the intellectual historian, the most significant class of colonial writing.

HISTORIES and BIOGRAPHIES

Historical and biographical writing formed a large part of colonial literature because it seemed important, for various reasons, to preserve a record of what happened in the New World. In its simplest form this writing was annalistic, a simple statement of historical and biographical fact. The journals of Bradford and Winthrop and Nathaniel Morton's *New-England's Memoriall* (1669) follow the natural chronological order and set down the main events of each year. The colonial historian was not satisfied with factual annals, however; he conceived it his duty to interpret events. Not much of the work was objective, by present-day standards, but it reveals awareness of the many possible uses of history.

Mixed motives can be perceived in most colonial histories and biographies. Smith's account of Virginia was both a justification of himself by a principal actor in the affairs described and a defense of colonization in general. Smith also had a distinctly modern conception of the close connection between history and geography. Bradford's history of Plymouth was written by a great leader who feared that the children and grandchildren of the founders would fail to cherish the achievement of a pious little group of heroes whose hard work had won, so Bradford believed, the special favor of God. Winthrop's journal-history of the Bay Colony, strongly flavored with the same providential theory of history as Bradford's book, had in it also the element of self-defense and a lawyer's respect for exact knowledge of precedents and experiments in institutional organization. Cotton Mather's biography of Burr (p. 150) exemplified a tendency to defend the "New England Way," as well as to emulate the didactic purposes of Bradford. Byrd's histories of the Dividing Line and Peters' account of Connecticut (p. 114) had axes to grind as well as information to convey.

Much colonial historical writing was tinged with the belief in a providential order of nature, and hence took on a distinctly theological quality. If events were to be interpreted as the working out of the divine plan, which man could never know in its entirety, a monstrous birth might be quite as significant to a reflective mind as a victory in battle or a great political or religious compromise. To the modern reader, Winthrop seems to jump readily from affairs of great moment to the most trivial events. This attitude tended to make history discontinuous except to the reader fascinated by the search for moral meanings in events. It is characteristic of most seventeenth-century writing, appearing most vividly in Edward Johnson's *History of New England* (1654) and reaching its culmination in Cotton Mather's *Magnalia Christi Americana.* For the providential theory the colonists had the example of the Book of Kings, the Roman historian Livy, and many ecclesiastical annalists from the time of St. Augustine.

More rationalistic tendencies may also be observed in colonial historiography. We have already noticed Bradford's analysis of possible causes of an outbreak of immorality in New England. Judicious and objective methods were foreshadowed in Thomas Prince's *Chronological History of New England,* the first volume of which appeared in 1730, in William Stith's *History of the First Discovery of Virginia* (1747), and most notably in Thomas Hutchinson's *History of the Province of Massachusetts Bay,* of which the first volume was published in 1764. These works likewise had European models, although Hutchinson's was the only one to show traces of the regard for institutional development which made Voltaire's *Age of Louis XIV* (1751) a landmark.

DIARIES and AUTOBIOGRAPHIES

An amazing number of colonists kept diaries or wrote autobiographies. Their purpose was sometimes practical—the desire to have a record of the weather, the planting and harvesting of crops, business transactions, and personal affairs. More often, perhaps, and almost always in the case of the autobiographies, the aim was fundamentally theological. Earnest Calvinists wished to study the state of their souls, and one of the best possible methods was to preserve a day-by-day or systematic account of temptations, struggles, and meditations, from which might be drawn some indication of their state of grace.

The best colonial example of a religious autobiography is probably Jonathan Edwards' "Personal Narrative." In its constant concern with the all-absorbing problem of man's relation to God, it is typical of numerous Puritan self-searchings. Other examples, almost as well known, are the autobiography and "Meditations and Spiritual Experiences" of Thomas Shepard, and the voluminous diary of Cotton Mather.

Those diaries which are most treasured by later generations, however, are the ones in which soul-searching is leavened by concern with temporal affairs. Winthrop's journal, Samuel Sewall's diary, the travel journal of Mrs. Knight, and the shorthand diaries from which

William Byrd "wrote up" his histories of the Dividing Line and his "Progress to the Mines" are important because they preserve for us the customs, manners, and personalities of relatively worldly people. We learn from them of the food, the drink, the social life, the household appointments, the gardens, the crimes, the births, marriages, and deaths—the external life, in short, of seventeenth- and eighteenth-century Americans.

Sewall's *Diary* is perhaps the best. It does not compare with the great English diaries written at approximately the same period by John Evelyn and Samuel Pepys, for Sewall's world was more circumscribed than theirs. Like all great diarists, however, Sewall has the virtue of revealing himself as a human being, not much unlike you and me in being beset by frailties and inadequacies and little vanities (not big ones, of course, for we none of us are inordinately vain—to ourselves).

It is worth remembering that two of the greatest of early American books—Benjamin Franklin's *Autobiography* (p. 245) and John Woolman's *Journal* (p. 299)—are in the direct line of descent from one of the most popular of colonial literary types. Of them we shall have more to say later.

POEMS

More than one critic has hinted that the less said of American poetry prior to 1765 the better. Colonial production of verse, compared to that of England in the same period, was small in quantity and, with very few exceptions, vastly inferior in quality. No colonial poet reached the level of Herbert, Herrick, Cowley, Butler, Prior, Young, or Thomson, to say nothing of the front-rank poets, Donne, Milton, Dryden, and Pope. Moreover, the colonial versifiers displayed a deplorable tendency to imitate the poetic diction and verse forms of their transatlantic betters.

Early American verse can nevertheless add to our knowledge of the pattern of culture and of the place of the arts in colonial life. Some of it has a respectable originality in thought or

subject matter, and some of it, notably that which expressed the religious faith of the most sensitive individuals, has genuine poetic merit.

The most utilitarian use of rhyme and meter is mnemonic; maxims and stories in verse are easier to remember verbatim than those in prose. Not a little colonial verse is based upon this fact, from the rhymed accounts of English Protestant history by the Rev. John Wilson (see *Handkerchiefs from Paul,* ed. K. B. Murdock, 1927) down to the Rev. Michael Wigglesworth's famous summary of Calvinistic theology, *The Day of Doom* (1662). Even the compilers of the *Bay Psalm Book* (1640), although their main purpose was to translate the Hebrew with the greatest possible exactness, chose to put the psalms to be sung in the New England churches in English meter, which is to say in the ballad stanza of folk poetry:

The Lord to mee a shepheard is,
want therefore shall not I.
Hee in the folds of tender-grasse,
doth cause mee downe to lie.
To waters calme me gently leads
Restore my soule doth hee:
he doth in paths of righteousnes:
for his names sake leade mee.

The use of the ballad stanza reveals the strength of popular tradition in the face of novel conditions—in this instance the Puritan respect for the Hebrew text of the Scriptures. Poetry as art suffered severely, but its basic elements survived.

Vaguely related to the mnemonic purpose, although essentially didactic in the same way as colonial historical writing, are the numerous historical poems of the colonial period. Bradford himself tried his hand at this type of writing, but the best-known examples are Benjamin Tompson's narratives of King Philip's War: *New Englands Crisis* (1676) and *New-Englands*

Tears for Her Present Miseries (1676). Both display the providential theory of history in an elaborate form. Relating to biographical writing, moreover, are the numerous funeral elegies, at which many New England clergymen tried their hands. Most modern readers will be satisfied to know Benjamin Franklin's recipe for such an elegy, without reading many of the originals on which he based his conclusions:

"For the subject of your Elegy, Take one of your Neighbors who has lately departed this Life; it is no great matter of what Age the Party dy'd, but it will be best if he went away suddenly, being *Kill'd, Drown'd,* or *Frose to Death.*

"Having chose the Person, take all his Virtues, Excellencies, &c. and if he have not enough, you may borrow some to make up a sufficient Quantity: To these add his last Words, dying Expressions, &c. if they are to be had; mix all these together, and be sure you strain them well. Then season all with a Handful or two of Melancholly Expressions, such as, *Dreadful, Deadly, cruel cold Death, unhappy Fate, weeping Eyes,* &c. . . . let them Ferment for the Space of a Fortnight, and by that Time they will be incorporated into a Body, which take out, and having prepared a sufficient Quantity of double Rhimes, such as *Power, Flower; Quiver, Shiver; Grieve us, Leave us; tell you, excel you; Expeditions, Physicians; Fatigue him, Intrigue him;* &c. you must spread all upon Paper, and if you can procure a Scrap of Latin to put at the End, it will garnish it mightily; then having affixed your Name at the Bottom, with a *Mœstus Composuit,* you will have an Excellent Elegy."

The more sophisticated poetry of the colonial era was likely to have a classical flavor, understandable in an age and place where the higher education gave a central place to the learned languages. Not a few colonists composed Latin verses, and translations and paraphrases constituted a common exercise. The height of "highbrow" verse-making was *Pietas et Gratulatio,* published at Boston in 1761. A tribute to the new king, George III, it contained three poems in Greek, sixteen in Latin, and twelve in English, most of them by recent graduates

or faculty members of Harvard College. Individuals trained in the classics were also interested in the work of the English Neoclassical school, and there were many colonial poems in the manner of the satires of Dryden and Pope, the mock-heroics of Butler, and the philosophical pieces of Thomson, Young, and Pomfret. These are often interesting for their content, although it is disconcerting to find colonial poets expressing boredom with court and city life when, as someone has said, five minutes' walking would have taken any one of them into a cow pasture. We may safely leave the works of Mather Byles, John Adams (the clergyman, not the statesman), George Webb, William Livingston, the younger Thomas Godfrey, Nathaniel Evans, Joseph Green, and other would-be "wits" to the specialist, remembering, however, that these gentlemen were the literati of their day and, whatever their deficiencies, cherished the tradition of belles-lettres in a world frequently too busy for art.

Religious poetry is another matter. It is represented in the present chapter by the works of Anne Bradstreet and Edward Taylor. Although these writers imitated French and English religious poets—Du Bartas, the English Spenserians, Donne, Herbert, Quarles, and Crashaw—they had the true poet's gift of conveying intensity of individual experience. Their poems, consequently, are probably the finest literary expression of the inner life of American Puritanism and have the same interest as the best of the diaries and spiritual autobiographies.

PLAYS and NOVELS

Fiction and the drama, which bulk large in later American literature, were almost non-existent in the colonial period. Both were distrusted by serious-minded persons, in England as well as in America, although it is not just to ascribe their absence entirely to Puritan influence.

A theater requires considerable capital and a public in the habit of playgoing, neither of which is often to be found except in the largest centers of population. As a class, moreover, actors were long mistrusted by civic authorities, as the history of the London theater shows.

These factors alone would be enough to account for the antagonism to stage plays which appears in colonial laws forbidding their public performance. Virginia was one of the few colonies without such legislation, but the earliest mention of a play acted in the colonies suggests some prejudice even there. In 1665 three citizens of Accomac County were called upon to appear in costume and tell what they said in *Ye Bare and Ye Cubb.* They were discharged and their accuser forced to pay the court charges.

The Puritans, however, unquestionably delayed the development of an American drama. Their influence had closed the theaters in England for eighteen years, and many colonists shared the resentment of English Puritans for the ridicule of Puritanism in Elizabethan drama. Remembered also was the association of the theater with the immoralities of king and court and the vigorous attack on the theater by the church fathers of the latter days of the Roman empire. To the famous English attacks on the theater by Stubbs (1583), Prynne (1632), and Collier (1698) there was at least one American parallel: Increase Mather's *Testimony against Several Prophane and Superstitious Customs, Now Practised by Some in New-England* (1687).

There was no effort to keep printed plays out of the college libraries, and as time went on there seems to have been sporadic interest in them in academic halls. There is some evidence that students at Harvard were thinking of histrionic things in the 1690's—a doubtful tradition that Benjamin Colman, later a prominent liberal clergyman, wrote a Latin play entitled *Gustavus Vasa* in 1690, and an allusion to examining "several of the Scholars about the Comedy" in Increase Mather's diary for 1698. The students at William and Mary offered a "pastoral colloquy" before the governor in 1702, and later in the eighteenth century undergraduates at Philadelphia, Princeton, New Haven, and Cambridge were frequently experimenting with dialogues and dramatic exercises. *The Prince of Parthia,* by the younger Thomas Godfrey, one of the literary group centering in the College of Philadelphia, was written in

1759, published in 1765, and actually produced on a professional stage in 1767. Closely imitative of the English heroic drama, it was a natural outgrowth of the discovery of belles-lettres by undergraduates and their friends.

New tastes and attitudes were accepted by the general public only gradually, despite the efforts of entranced amateurs, the visits of professional actors, and the changing tone of English drama. The first play to be printed was *Antroboros* (1714), a political satire published anonymously by Robert Hunter, governor of New York. Williamsburg built a theater in 1716, but there is no evidence that it was used until twenty years later. New York probably was entertained by a group of professional actors in 1732, and Charleston had a brief "season" in 1735. A company which performed Addison's *Cato* in Philadelphia in 1742 was arrested and forbidden to appear again. Going to New York, it performed *Richard III, The Beggars' Opera,* and other plays in 1750. An amateur performance scandalized conservative Boston in that same year, although George Lillo's bourgeois tragedy, *George Barnwell* (1731), had been reprinted in *The New-England Weekly Journal* within a year after its appearance in London. American theatrical history is usually said to have begun in 1752, with the arrival of Lewis Hallam's "American Company," which had a continuous history in repertoire until 1774, when the Continental Congress forbade theatrical performances "for the duration." The American Company played at Williamsburg, New York, Philadelphia, Annapolis, Newport, Providence, Charleston, and several towns in Virginia, and succeeded (sometimes by such stratagems as offering *Othello* as a series of "Moral Dialogues") in familiarizing the more venturesome colonists with the plays of Shakespeare, Marlowe, Dryden, Congreve, Farquhar, Addison, Steele, Cibber, Ambrose Philips, and others. But there was no native drama.

Nor did colonial Americans produce either novels or novel-like narratives comparable to those of Bunyan, Defoe, and Swift. This is less surprising than that there should have been no drama, for the novel as a form had by no means reached its full maturity. The serious-

ness of the reading public left little time for the long romances, although a good many of them appear on colonial booklists, and the pleasure in swift-moving narrative was partly provided for by the accounts of voyages and travels, the somewhat lurid accounts of captivity among the Indians, and the other factual material such as reports of the experiences and final hours of pirates and murderers and the descriptions of remarkable providences and witchcrafts. Many works of fiction which supposedly portrayed life must have seemed dull in comparison to more direct reporting. Quite probably the prevalent attitude toward fiction was not far from that in one passage of Cotton Mather's *Manuductio ad Ministerium,* where he advises divinity students to enjoy the recreation of poetry but not to be so set upon it "as to be always poring on the *Passionate* and *Measured* Pages. Let not what should be *Sauce* rather than Food for you, Engross all your Application. . . . Indeed, not merely for the *Impurities* which they convey, but also on some other Accounts, the *Powers of Darkness* have a *Library* among us, whereof the *Poets* have been the most *Numerous* as well as the most *Venemous* Authors. Most of the modern *Plays,* as well as the *Romances* and *Novels,* and *Fictions,* which are a sort of *Poems,* do belong to the Catalogue of this cursed Library." T.H.

Chronological Table of Literature and History

1492

Columbus, discovering islands in the western ocean, believed that he had reached outlying parts of Asia

1497

Cabot touched the coast of the North American continent, laying the foundation for English territorial claims in the New World

1507

Martin Waldseemuller's Cosmographiae Introductio, German treatise on geography wherein the newly discovered western hemisphere was named "America," in honor of Amerigo Vespucci, Italian navigator

1513

Ponce de León discovered and named Florida • Balboa discovered the Pacific Ocean

1519

Magellan began the voyage on which he eventually (1522) circumnavigated the globe • Cortez entered the city of Mexico and received the homage of Montezuma, Aztec emperor

1531

Pizarro undertook the conquest of Peru, completing it in two years

1534

Cartier reached the coast of Canada near the mouth of the St. Lawrence

1535

The Bible first fully translated into English, by Miles Coverdale

1536

John Calvin's **Institutes of the Christian Religion** (Latin version), important theological treatise by the Swiss reformer

1539

De Soto landed in Florida and marched westward toward Mexico; before his death in 1542 he had reached the Mississippi River and explored as far north, perhaps, as what is now Kentucky

1540

Coronado, misled by legends of fabulously wealthy cities, began an expedition into what is now New Mexico, Arizona, and the Great Plains

1543

Copernicus' **De Revolutionibus Coelestium Orbium**, pioneer work of modern astronomical science, by a Polish astronomer

1547

Death of Henry VIII (reigned 1509-1547); accession of Edward VI, under the regency of Edward Seymour

1549

First **Book of Common Prayer** (revisions in 1552, 1559, 1604, 1662), the object of much criticism from those who wished to rid the English Church of "popish" ritual

Uniform church service prescribed in England

1553

Death of Edward VI (reigned 1547-1553); accession of Mary, known as "Bloody Queen Mary" for her sanction of the persecution of Protestants in an effort to restore England to the Catholic faith

1558

Death of Mary (reigned 1553-1558); accession of Elizabeth

1562

John Hawkins made the first of three privateering voyages to the West Indies, bringing England into direct conflict with Spain for the riches of the New World

1565

Huguenot (French Protestant) colony in Florida destroyed by the Spaniards

1569

Map of the world by Gerard Mercator, marking the beginning of modern geographical science

1572

St. Bartholomew's Day Massacre of about ten thousand Huguenots helped confirm the English in their anti-Catholic convictions

1577

Francis Drake began a voyage which took him through the Straits of Magellan, along the western coasts of the Americas (where he took possession of Nova Albion—present-day California and Oregon—in the name of Queen Elizabeth), and back to England (1580) by way of Java and the Cape of Good Hope

1578

Charter for exclusive colonization in North America granted by the Queen to Sir Humphrey Gilbert and associates, among them Gilbert's half-brother, Walter Raleigh

1580

Montaigne's **Essais**, first edition, classic French work of their type

1582

Richard Hakluyt's **Divers Voyages**, first fruit of Hakluyt's lifelong interest in geography and the extension of English influence upon the sea

1584

Charter granted to Raleigh, Gilbert's ventures having failed, guaranteeing to colonists in North America the political rights of Englishmen • Two ships sent to locate the best site for a permanent settlement explored the coast of what is now North Carolina and returned to England with enthusiastic reports • Region named "Virginia" by Queen Elizabeth

1585

Raleigh sent seven ships to America, landing 107 men, Thomas Hariot among them, on Roanoke Island

1586

Raleigh's colony returned to England by Drake's ships when needed supplies failed to arrive on schedule • Decision that Chesapeake Bay area would be better for colonization than Roanoke, where the Indians were hostile

1587

120 persons left on Roanoke through the treachery of a ship captain; when a supply expedition finally arrived in 1590 this "lost colony" had vanished, leaving no trace except the word "Croatan" carved upon a tree • Mary, Queen of Scots, beheaded

1588

Hariot's **Briefe and True Report of the New Found Land of Virginia**

Destruction of the Spanish Armada in the English Channel, marking emergence of England as the chief sea power in the world

1589

Hakluyt's **Principall Nauigations,** first edition, the record of English participation in the geographical expansion of the Renaissance

1590

Edmund Spenser's **Faerie Queene,** first three books, English allegorical poem

1594

Richard Hooker's **Laws of Ecclesiastical Polity,** first four books, the best-known exposition of the basic position of the Church of England

1597

Francis Bacon's **Essays,** first edition, noteworthy English prose work • Shakespeare's **Romeo and Juliet,** pirated edition, marking the recognized success of the greatest English dramatist

1598

Edict of Nantes, issued by Henry IV of France, granted toleration to the Huguenots (see 1685)

1602-1605

English interest in North American colonies revived by a series of expeditions under Captains Gosnold, Pring, and Waymouth to the coast between present-day Maine and Martha's Vineyard • Champlain explored region for French

1603

Shakespeare's **Hamlet** printed

Death of Elizabeth (reigned 1558-1603); accession of James I

1605

Bacon's **Advancement of Learning,** important English philosophical treatise urging the development of scientific method • Cervantes' **Don Quixote,** Spanish picaresque novel, first part

Failure of the Gunpowder Plot, an attempt by Guy Fawkes and others to blow up the House of Lords which intensified anti-Catholic feeling

1606

Charters granted to two colonizing groups, the London Company and the Plymouth Company, who divided the territory of Virginia between them at 41° north latitude

1607

Jamestown, first permanent English settlement in North America, founded by the London Company, 13 May

1608

John Smith's **True Relation**

Quebec founded by Champlain • Migration of the Scrooby congregation of Separatists to Holland, the starting-point of William Bradford's **History of Plymouth Plantation**

1609

Henry Hudson discovered the river which bears his name • Smith returned to England, October

1612

Smith's **Map of Virginia**

1614

Northern part of Virginia explored by Smith for the Plymouth Company and named by him "New England" • Invention of logarithms by John Napier • Colony established by the Dutch at the mouth of the Hudson

1616

Smith's **Description of New England** •

Death of Shakespeare, Hakluyt, and Cervantes

1619

First representative assembly convened in Virginia • Negro slaves first imported, and iron manufacturing begun in Virginia

1620

***Mayflower* Compact** signed in Cape Cod Bay, 11 November

Charter granted by the London or Virginia Company to English capitalists, on behalf of the Separatists in Holland, for a settlement somewhere south of the Hudson • The **Mayflower,** driven off her course by storms, landed the colonists known as the Pilgrims on the shore of Massachusetts Bay

1621

Patent for the Pilgrims' settlement obtained from the Council for New England, successor to the Plymouth Company

1622

Mourt's Relation, by William Bradford and Edward Winslow, first authentic description of the settlement of the Pilgrims at Plymouth

Indian massacre in Virginia, 22 March

1623

First folio edition of Shakespeare's plays

1624

Smith's **Generall Historie** • Winslow's **Good News from New England**

Annulment of the Virginia charter, making that settlement the first royal colony, with a governor appointed by the king

1625

Samuel Purchas' **Hakluytus Posthumus, or Purchas His Pilgrimes,** a continuation of Hakluyt's **Principall Nauigations** (see 1589)

Death of James I (reigned 1603-1625); accession of Charles I, whose reign was notable for incessant constitutional conflict between the crown and Parliament

1627

Charter granted to the Massachusetts Bay Company • Thomas Morton of Merrymount (a settlement made at Mount Wollaston, now Braintree, south of Boston, Massachusetts) arrested and deported by the authorities of the Plymouth Colony

1628

William Harvey's **De Motu Cordis et Sanguinis,** physiological treatise by an English physician describing the circulation of the blood

1629

Charles I prorogued his third Parliament, beginning the arbitrary rule which encouraged emigration to America

1630

Smith's **True Travels** • Francis Higginson's **New England's Plantation**

"Great Migration" of the Puritans of the Massachusetts Bay Company, led by Governor John Winthrop, which by 1640 brought more than 20,000 persons to New England

1631

Death of John Smith • Roger Williams arrived in Massachusetts

1632

Charter granted for a colony in what is now Maryland • Settlement begun in the valley of the Connecticut River

1633

Dutch built Fort Goed Hope near what is now Hartford • Laud became Archbishop of Canterbury • Galileo forced to recant his acceptance of the Copernican astronomy

1634

William Wood's **New England's Prospect**

Maryland settled

1636

Roger Williams founded Providence in Rhode Island • Harvard College founded (classes begun in 1638)

1637

Thomas Morton's **New English Canaan** • Descartes' **Discours de la méthode**, French philosophical treatise

The Pequot Indians decisively defeated in a battle near Groton, Connecticut • Antinomian controversy in Massachusetts concluded by the banishment of Anne Hutchinson, who found refuge in Rhode Island

1638

New Haven settled • Swedish settlement established on the Delaware River

1640

Whole Booke of Psalmes, better known as the **Bay Psalm Book**

1641

Thomas Shepard's **Sincere Convert** • Massachusetts Body of Liberties

1642

William Denham's **Cooper's Hill**, English poem later imitated in America

Civil war in England precipitated by the attempt of the king to impeach and imprison five members of the House of Commons

1643

Williams' **Key into the Language of America**

Church of England adopted Presbyterian rule

1644

Williams' **Bloudy Tenent of Persecution for the Cause of Conscience** • John Milton's **Areopagitica**, English treatise in defense of freedom of speech and of the press

Manchu dynasty established in China; continued until 1912 • Defeat of the English Royalists at Marston Moor

1645

Shepard's **Sound Believer** • Milton's **Poems**, first edition, containing "L'Allegro" and "Il Penseroso," models for many American poems

Laud beheaded • Defeat of the Royalists at Naseby

1647

Charles I delivered to the Parliamentary army

1648

Parliament "purged" by Cromwell's army

1649

Death of Thomas Shepard and John Winthrop • Charles I tried and executed (reigned 1625-1649); Charles II crowned in exile in 1651 • England declared a commonwealth, and the House of Lords abolished

1650

Anne Bradstreet's **Tenth Muse Lately Sprung up in America**

1651

Thomas Hobbes' **Leviathan**, chief English treatise favoring absolutism in government

Parliament passed the first Navigation Act, designed to undermine the commercial supremacy of the Dutch; it provided that no goods should be imported from Asia, Africa, or America, except in English vessels; with supplementary acts in 1660 and 1663 it eventually became one of the chief sources of friction between the American colonies and the British ministry

1653

Cromwell became Lord High Protector

1655

New Sweden taken by the Dutch

1657

Death of William Bradford

1658

Death of Oliver Cromwell; Richard Cromwell became Protector (resigned 1659)

1659

Molière's **Les Précieuses ridicules,** French comedy

1660

The Restoration, which brought Charles II to the English throne

1662

Michael Wigglesworth's **Day of Doom**

Act of Uniformity purged the Church of England of dissenting clergymen and sent another wave of ministers to America • Half-Way Covenant adopted by the New England churches, admitting to membership the children of church members, without the requirement of a public relation of previous religious experience • Royal Society of London chartered

1663

Samuel Butler's **Hudibras,** English satirical poem, first part

1664

New Netherlands taken by the English • Conventicle Act prohibited meetings of religious nonconformists

1666

George Alsop's **A Character of the Province of Mary-Land**

1667

Milton's **Paradise Lost,** English epic poem, first edition

Treaty of Breda gave all Dutch colonies in America to England and Acadia (later Nova Scotia) to France

1668

William Penn became a Quaker • Joliet explored the Great Lakes • La Salle in the Ohio country, perhaps reaching the Mississippi

1669

Constitution for Carolina drawn up by John Locke, English philosopher

1672

John Josselyn's **New England's Rarities Discovered**

Death of Anne Bradstreet

1674

Josselyn's **Account of Two Voyages to New England** • Samuel Sewall began his **Diary**

Death of John Milton

1675-1676

King Philip's War, marked by numerous massacres and the burning of frontier villages • Royal Observatory founded at Greenwich

1676

Benjamin Tompson's **New Englands Crisis,** a series of poems on the providential delivery of New England from the threat of King Philip • Increase Mather's **Brief History of the Warr with the Indians**

Bacon's Rebellion, an early instance of conflict between a royal governor (Governor William Berkeley of Virginia) and those whom he governed

1678

John Bunyan's **Pilgrim's Progress,** English religious allegory, first part

"Popish Plot" to oust Charles II and place James, Duke of York, an avowed Catholic, on the throne; some thirty-five persons executed before it was discovered that the evidence "revealed" by Titus Oates was fabricated

1680

Sir Robert Filmer's **Patriarcha** published (written about 1645), the chief English defense of the divine right of kings

1681

Penn's **Some Account of the Province of Pensilvania in America** • John Dryden's **Absalom and Achitophel,** English satirical poem

Charter obtained for a new colony on the Delaware

by William Penn, in payment of a debt owed to Penn's father by the King • Massachusetts called upon to surrender its charter

1684

Increase Mather's **Essay for the Recording of Illustrious Providences**

1685

Death of Charles II (reigned 1660-1685); accession of James II • Revocation of the Edict of Nantes (see 1585) by Louis XIV of France sent many Huguenots to England and America

1686

Sir Edmund Andros arrived in Boston with commission as royal governor

1687

Sir Isaac Newton's **Philosophiae Naturalis Principia Mathematica,** scientific treatise by the most famous English physicist of his age

1688

Connecticut and Rhode Island charters revoked • James II permitted to escape to France—the so-called "Glorious Revolution"

1689

Cotton Mather's **Memorable Providences relating to Witchcrafts and Possessions** • Locke's **Treatise of Civil Government,** an exposition of the contract theory of society; of prime importance to the political philosophy of the American revolutionists

Deposition of James II (reigned 1685-1689); settlement of Mary (daughter of James II) and her husband, William of Orange, on the English throne • Andros imprisoned in Boston • Increase Mather and others sent to England to negotiate a new charter for Massachusetts

1690

Locke's **Essay Concerning Human Understanding,** key English philosophical treatise

Sir William Phips conquered Acadia but failed in an expedition against Quebec, these being the chief American actions in the War of the British Succession, which ended in 1697 with French recognition of William as king and Anne as his successor

1691

New Massachusetts charter made property the basis of suffrage and destroyed the vestiges of direct church control in the government

1692

Phips made royal governor of Massachusetts • *Special* court appointed to investigate the witchcraft outbreak at Salem Village

1693

Cotton Mather's **Wonders of the Invisible World** • Increase Mather's **Cases of Conscience Concerning Evil Spirits Personating Men**

William and Mary College chartered (first college classes begun about 1710)

1697

Daniel Defoe's **Essay on Projects,** an English work which influenced the humanitarian thought of Benjamin Franklin

Samuel Sewall publicly confessed his error in the witchcraft prosecutions

1700

Sewall's **Selling of Joseph** • William Congreve's **Way of the World,** English comedy

1701

Yale College founded • Death of James II in exile in France; his son James Francis Edward Stuart (1688-1766), "the Old Pretender," recognized as James III by Louis XIV of France

1702

Cotton Mather's **Magnalia Christi Americana**

Death of William III (reigned 1689-1702; Mary died in 1694); accession of Anne, whose reign was notable for the continued development of party government • Beginning of the War of the Spanish Succession (Queen Anne's War in America), ended by the Peace of Utrecht, 1713

1704

Sarah Kemble Knight's **Journal** begun • Jonathan Swift's **Battle of the Books** and **Tale of a Tub**, English satires

Battle of Blenheim

1707

Formal union of England and Scotland under the name of Great Britain, with a single Parliament

1709

First copyright act in Great Britain • Mass migration of Germans from the Palatinate to Pennsylvania

1710

Cotton Mather's **Bonifacius or Essays to Do Good**

1711

Alexander Pope's **Essay on Criticism**, English poem • Joseph Addison, Richard Steele, and others began **The Spectator**, best-known series of periodical essays in eighteenth-century England

1713

Addison's **Cato**, English tragedy

Treaty of Utrecht gave to Great Britain all French claims to Acadia, Newfoundland, and the Hudson Bay Settlement; France retained Canada proper

1714

Death of Anne (reigned 1702-1714); accession of George I, Elector of Hanover

1715

Le Sage's **Gil Blas**, French picaresque novel, first three books

Failure of first Jacobite rebellion, to return "the Old Pretender" to the British throne, sent a number of prominent Scots to America

1717

Compagnie d'Occident formed in Paris to colonize on the banks of the Mississippi; rumors of gold and silver mines led to furious stock speculation known as the "Mississippi Bubble," which collapsed in 1720

1718

New Orleans founded

1719

Defoe's **Robinson Crusoe**, English novel, first part

1721

New-England Courant established (discontinued in 1726); contained Benjamin Franklin's first characteristic writing, the "Dogood Papers" • Cotton Mather's **Christian Philosopher**

1723

Franklin arrived in Philadelphia • Death of Increase Mather

1726

Cotton Mather's **Manuductio ad Ministerium** • Swift's **Gulliver's Travels**, English satire • James Thomson's "Winter," first part of **The Seasons**, English philosophical poem

1727

Death of Sarah Kemble Knight • Death of George I (reigned 1714-1727); accession of George II

1728

Death of Cotton Mather • William Byrd helped run the boundary line between Virginia and North Carolina, keeping the diary later elaborated into his **History of the Dividing Line** and **Secret History of the Line**

1729

Edward Taylor died, leaving his **Poems** in manuscript • Sewall completed his **Diary**

1730

Death of Samuel Sewall

1731

Franklin organized the Library Company of Philadelphia • **Gentleman's Magazine** established in London; soon had a wide circulation in America and carried much American material

1732

Byrd made the trip described in "A Progress to the Mines" • Georgia founded

1733

First issue of **Poor Richard's Almanac**

Sugar Act, passed to protect British interests in the West Indies, threatened colonial trade in rum and lumber

1734

Jonathan Edwards' **Divine and Supernatural Light**

Peter Zenger arrested for libel in New York

1736

Thomas Prince's **Chronological History of New England,** first volume

1738

George Whitefield made the first of five evangelical tours of the American colonies • First spinning machines patented in Great Britain

1740

Samuel Richardson's **Pamela,** English sentimental novel

Charity school founded in Philadelphia, from which developed the College of Philadelphia and, eventually, the University of Pennsylvania • Frederick II, the Great, became King of Prussia, reigning until 1786

1741

Edwards' **Sinners in the Hands of an Angry God** • William Bradford's **American Magazine** and Franklin's **General Magazine** established at Philadelphia

1742

Edwards' **Some Thoughts concerning the Present Revival of Religion in New England** • Edward Young's **Night Thoughts,** English poem

1743

Charles Chauncy's **Seasonable Thoughts on the State of Religion in New England**

1744

Death of William Byrd • American Philosophical Society, first enduring scientific organization in what is now the United States • War of the Austrian Succession (King George's War in America), ending inconclusively in 1748 with the Treaty of Aix-la-Chapelle, restoring Louisbourg on Cape Breton Island to the French and leaving control of the Ohio country undetermined

1746

Edwards' **Treatise on the Religious Affections**

College of New Jersey (later Princeton University) founded

1748

Richardson's **Clarissa Harlowe,** English novel • Montesquieu's **Esprit des lois,** French political treatise largely responsible for the separation of powers under the American Constitution

1749

Franklin's **Proposals relating to the Education of Youth in Pensilvania** • Henry Fielding's **Tom Jones,** English novel

British grant of more than a half-million acres to the Ohio Company roused the fears of the French that there were plans to separate Canada from Louisiana

1750

Jonathan Mayhew's **Discourse Concerning Unlimited Submission and Non-Resistance to the Higher Powers** asserted the right of revolution under conditions such as those of 1642 and 1688

1751

Franklin's **Experiments & Observations on Electricity,** first edition

1752

First regular theatrical company visited the colonies • Change of calendar from the Julian or Old Style to the Gregorian or New Style, making the New Year commence 1 January instead of 25 March and dropping the ten days following 2 September 1752

1753

John Woolman's **Some Considerations on the Keeping of Negroes,** first part

French seized the Ohio country, taking prisoner British traders in the region; George Washington, aged twenty-one, sent by Governor Dinwiddie of Virginia to protest

1754

Edwards' **Freedom of the Will** • Franklin presented his **Plan of Union** to the Albany conference

Washington led two companies of Virginia militia against the French and, after initial successes, was forced to surrender on terms which permitted him to return with his men to Virginia • State of undeclared war recognized by call for delegates from all the colonies to meet at Albany, New York, June • Two plans for intercolonial organization proposed: (1) that by Governor William Shirley of Massachusetts, which would give the colonial governors the power to organize for defense, with the expenses to be met by a tax levied by Parliament—a plan vigorously opposed by Franklin on the ground that it was taxation without representation; (2) Franklin's plan, providing for a president-general appointed by the king and a grand council or intercolonial legislature of forty, elected by the colonial assemblies • King's College (later Columbia University) founded

1755

Samuel Johnson's **Dictionary of the English Language,** British compilation long standard

British and American troops under General Braddock, advancing on Fort Duquesne, totally defeated, sixty-four out of eighty-five officers being killed or wounded • Franklin active in getting supplies to Braddock's troops and in supervising the construction of forts to protect Pennsylvania from invasion • Acadians deported en masse from Nova Scotia

1756

Woolman's **Journal** begun

1757

Voltaire's **Candide,** French satirical novel

Fort William Henry captured by the French • Franklin sent to London by the Pennsylvania assembly, which desired full control of the expenditure of public funds • Seven Years' War formally declared (French and Indian War in America)

1758

Franklin's **Way to Wealth,** in **Poor Richard Improved** • Quesnay's **Tableau économique,** French treatise on physiocratic economic principles

Death of Jonathan Edwards • Tide of the war in America turned toward the British, with the conquest of Louisbourg by forces under Jeffrey Amherst and the occupation of Fort Duquesne, now renamed Pittsburgh • House of Commons resolved that "the claim of right in a colonial Assembly to raise and apply public money, by its own act alone, is derogatory to the crown, and to the rights of the people of Great Britain"

1759

Laurence Sterne's **Tristram Shandy,** English novel, first two volumes

Ticonderoga, Niagara, and Quebec taken by the British and Americans

1760

Franklin's **Interest of Great Britain Considered with Regard to Her Colonies,** a plea for the annexation of Canada and a united Anglo-American empire

Death of George II (reigned 1727-1760); accession of George III

1761

Colonial administration reflected a general "tightening up" to ease the strain of expenditures made necessary by the war, concluded in America but not in other parts of the world • Attempt to give "writs of assistance" in the execution of general search warrants to Massachusetts customs officers called forth the anger of James Otis, who in a famous speech (John Adams said it "breathed into this nation the breath of life") developed the classic colonial theory of inalienable natural rights to life, liberty, and property security

1762

Otis' **Vindication of the Conduct of the House of Representatives of the Province of Massachusetts Bay,** first public statement of the "no taxation without representation" argument; it was called forth by Governor Francis Bernard's action in fitting out a naval vessel without legislative authority

Spain secretly acquired from France all of Louisiana west of the Mississippi • Although the British controlled Canada, they were faced with much Indian hostility, evident in the Conspiracy of Pontiac (1762-1763)

1763

By the Treaty of Paris Great Britain received all of Canada from France, Florida from Spain • Rumors circulated that Parliament intended to tax the colonies for part of the cost of the war, and perhaps to enforce the long-forgotten Navigation Acts (see 1651)

1764

Otis' **Rights of the British Colonies Asserted and Proved** asked for colonial representation in Parliament if that body was to levy taxes on America

Parliament's modification of the Sugar Act showed obvious intentions of taxing the colonies

1765

Stephen Hopkins' **Rights of Colonies Examined,** a pamphlet similar to those by Otis • Martin Howard's **Letter from a Gentleman at Halifax to His Friend in Rhode Island,** first important Tory answer to Otis and Hopkins, arguing that the colonies were legally corporations, with privileges stated in their charters, and that the colonists were "virtually" represented in Parliament, which was not organized on a territorial principle • Daniel Dulany's **Considerations on the Propriety of Imposing Taxes in the British Colonies for the Purpose of Raising a Revenue by Act of Parliament** objected to Howard's argument

Stamp Act, March • Furious pamphlet war, numerous riots, and the mobbing of prominent Tories followed the reception of the news in America • Stamp Act Congress convened in New York, October, drew up a declaration of rights and grievances, petitioned the king, and sent memorials to both houses of Parliament

EXPLORERS AND COLONISTS: Hariot, Smith, Bradford, Winthrop, Sewall, Alsop, Knight, Byrd, Peters, Bartram



Thomas Hariot

1560 • 1621

In 1585 Thomas Hariot, a twenty-five-year-old Englishman already known in Oxford as a talented mathematician, landed on Roanoke Island, off the coast of what is now North Carolina, with the hundred-odd men involved in Sir Walter Raleigh's most ambitious attempt to establish a colony in North America. He stayed in Virginia (as all the territory claimed by the British had been named) for a little over a year, surveying its resources with scientific care. On his return to England he found it necessary to defend Raleigh's projects against slander from those members of the company who had been miserable in America because "there were not to bee found any English cities, nor such faire houses, nor at their owne wish any of their olde accustomed daintie food, nor any soft beds of downe or fethers." Hariot's defense of Raleigh and Virginia took the form of a forty-six-page pamphlet, *A Briefe and True Report of the New Found Land of Virginia* (London, 1588). Soon after it was published, he was pensioned by the Earl of Northumberland so that he could devote himself to mathematics and astronomy, and in his later years he was famous for his work in algebra.

Panel (l. to r.): View of Jamestown in 1622 • Captain John Smith • Colonists trading with Indians • View of Plymouth in 1622 • Samuel Sewall

Hariot knew that a living was to be had in America, and easily, but he knew also that men would have to learn to use the commodities which the country provided. His book, therefore, was one of the first "promotion tracts," designed to inform prospective emigrants of the opportunities the New World could offer to ambitious men. Like the real estate brochure of the present day, the promotion tract almost invariably emphasized the possibilities of vast profits and minimized the probable losses and hardships. Even Hariot, to whom the New World was less an earthly paradise than it was to some of his successors, assured his readers that in Virginia one man "may prepare and husband so much ground (having once borne corne before) with lesse than foure and twenty hours labour, as shall yeeld him victual in a large proportion for a twelvemoneth." Probably no one ever came to America actually believing that twenty-four hours of work would provide nearly enough food for a year, but the tenor of the promotion tracts was almost that optimistic. They pictured a land of limitless resources, unbounded fertility, and ideal climate, and contributed appreciably to the notion of America as a place where mankind's centuries-old dream of freedom from want might at last be realized.

Hariot was also among the earliest of English visitors to describe the American aborigines. Prospective settlers naturally wanted to know how numerous the Indians were and how friendly; but they had also a great curiosity about the new races and cultures to which the discovery of the New World had introduced Europeans. Among Hariot's companions on Roanoke Island was an artist, John White. In 1590, when Hariot's *Virginia* was reprinted at Frankfort, engravings from White's drawings were appended. Twenty-two of these engravings depicted the Indians, adding to Hariot's emphasis on their curious religious customs and suggesting what Hariot did not, that the savages were physically sturdy and handsome. Reading Hariot, one can grasp many of the motives for English colonization; looking at White's drawings, one can understand the long-lived literary tradition of the noble savage, whose simple, uncovetous life was to seem infinitely superior to that of supposedly civilized Europeans in the eyes of many seventeenth- and eighteenth-century writers.

G. B. Goode, "The Beginnings of Natural History in America," **Annual Report of the Smithsonian Institution for 1897**, Part II, Washington, 1901 • D. I. Bushnell, Jr., "John White—the First English Artist to Visit America," **Virginia Magazine of History and Biography**, October 1927, January and April 1928 • Bernard Jaffe, **American Men of Science**, New York, 1944

From

A Briefe and True Report of the New Found Land of Virginia

Hariot's **Virginia** was divided into six sections, as follows: (1) an introduction, in which he explained his purpose in writing the book; (2) a section on "marchantable" commodities, that is to say, products such as ship supplies and furs for which a European market existed; (3) a section on commodities "for victuall and sustenance of mans life," in which he listed edible vegetables, animals, fish, and fowl, stating that many more had been observed and pictures made of them by White; (4) a brief section on materials for building and other uses; (5) an account of "the nature and manners of the people"; and (6) a conclusion in which the benefits of colonization are outlined. The fifth and sixth sections are here reprinted. Hariot's purpose in this tract was partly informative and partly persuasive. He wrote hurriedly, in all likelihood, but with the ease and freedom which characterize the best prose of Elizabethan England.

In its original edition of 1588, Hariot's **Virginia** is one of the rarest books relating to America. In 1600 Richard Hakluyt included Hariot's account in the third volume of his **Principall Nauigations**, and it was thereafter readily available to European and American readers.

The apparent waywardness in spelling, punctuation, and abbreviation may be laid at the printer's door as much as at Hariot's; such things had not been standardized in the sixteenth century.

OF THE NATURE AND MANNERS OF THE PEOPLE

It resteth I speake a word or two of the naturall inhabitants, their natures and maners, leauing large discourse thereof vntill time more conuenient hereafter: nowe onely so farre foorth, as that you may know, how that they in respect of troubling our inhabiting and planting, are not to be feared; but that they shall haue cause both to feare and loue vs, that shall inhabite with them.

They are a people clothed with loose mantles made of Deere skins, & aprons of the same rounde about their middles; all els naked; of such a difference of statures only as wee in England; hauing no edge tooles or weapons of yron or steele to offend vs withall, neither know they how to make any: those weapons ỹ they haue, are onlie bowes made of Witch hazle, & arrowes of reeds; flat edged truncheons also of wood about a yard long, neither haue they any thing to defẽd thẽselues but targets made of barks; and some armours made of stickes wickered together with thread.

Their townes are but small, & neere the sea coast but few, some containing but 10. or 12. houses: some 20. the greatest that we haue seene haue bene but of 30. houses: if they be walled it is only done with barks of trees made fast to stakes, or els with poles onely fixed vpright and close one by another.

Their houses are made of small poles made fast at the tops in rounde forme after the maner as is vsed in many arbories in our gardens of England, in most townes couered with barkes, and in some with artificiall mattes made of long rushes; from the tops of the houses downe to the ground. The length of them is commonly double to the breadth, in some places they are but 12. and 16. yardes long, and in other some wee haue seene of foure and twentie.

In some places of the countrey one onely towne belongeth to the gouernment of a *Wiróans* or chiefe Lorde; in other some two or three, in some sixe, eight, & more; the greatest *Wiróans* that yet we had dealing with had but eighteene townes in his gouernment, and able to make not aboue seuen or eight hundred fighting men at the most: The language of euery gouernment is different from any other, and the farther they are distant the greater is the difference.

Their maner of warres amongst themselues is either by sudden surprising one an other most cōmonly about the dawning of the day, or moone light; or els by ambushes, or some suttle deuises: Set battels are very rare, except it fall out where there are many trees, where eyther part may haue some hope of defence, after the deliuerie of euery arrow, in leaping behind some or other.

If there fall out any warres between vs & them, what their fight is likely to bee, we hauing aduantages against them so many maner of waies, as by our discipline, our strange weapons and deuises els; especially by ordinance great and small, it may be easily imagined; by the experience we haue had in some places, the turning vp of their heeles against vs in running away was their best defence.

In respect of vs they are a people poore, and for want of skill and iudgement in the knowledge and vse of our things, doe esteeme our trifles before thinges of greater value: Notwithstanding in their proper manner considering the want of such meanes as we haue, they seeme very ingenious; For although they haue no such tooles, nor any such craftes, sciences and artes as wee; yet in those thinges they doe, they shewe excellencie of wit. And by howe much they vpon due consideration shall finde our manner of knowledges and craftes to exceede theirs in perfection, and speed for doing or execution, by so much the more is it probable that they shoulde desire our friendships & loue, and haue the greater respect for pleasing and obeying vs. Whereby may bee hoped if meanes of good gouernment bee vsed, that they may in short time be brought to ciuilitie, and the imbracing of true religion.

Some religion they haue alreadie, which although it be farre from the truth, yet beyng as it is, there is hope it may bee the easier and sooner reformed.

Text: from a facsimile of the 1588 edition prepared by R. G. Adams, Ann Arbor, 1931 • 14 **ỹ**, that. Elizabethan printers used the tilde for omitted letters, usually consonants, and made frequent use of abbreviations • 36 **Wiróans.** Like other early travelers, Hariot sought to indicate the pronunciation of Indian words by phonetic spelling and accents. Most Indian tribes encountered from Maine to Virginia belonged to the Algonquian group, and some linguistic similarities may be observed by the careful reader • 61 **esteeme our trifles,** a reference to the pleasant Indian habit, observed from the time of Columbus, of exchanging gold and copper ornaments for bits of broken bottles, etc. • 75 **true religion,** i.e., Anglicanism, as opposed to Roman Catholicism

They beleeue that there are many Gods which they call *Mantóac,* but of different sortes and degrees; one onely chiefe and great God, which hath bene from all eternitie. Who as they affirme when hee purposed to make the worlde, made first other goddes of a principall order to bee as meanes and instruments to bee vsed in the creation and gouernment to follow; and after the Sunne, Moone, and Starres, as pettie goddes and the instruments of the other order more principall. First they say were made waters, out of which by the gods was made all diuersitie of creatures that are visible or inuisible.

For mankind they say a woman was made first, which by the woorking of one of the goddes, conceiued and brought foorth children: And in such sort they say they had their beginning.

But how manie yeeres or ages haue passed since, they say they can make no relatio, hauing no letters nor other such meanes as we to keepe recordes of the particularities of times past, but onelie tradition from father to sonne.

They thinke that all the gods are of humane shape, & therfore they represent them by images in the formes of men, which they call *Kewasówok* one alone is called *Kewás;* Them they place in houses appropriate or temples which they call *Machicómuck;* Where they woorship, praie, sing, and make manie times offerings vnto them. In some *Machicómuck* we haue seene but on *Kewas,* in some two, and in other some three; The common sort thinke them to be also gods.

They beleeue also the immortalitie of the soule, that after this life as soone as the soule is departed from the bodie according to the workes it hath done, it is eyther carried to heauen the habitacle of gods, there to enioy perpetuall blisse and happinesse, or els to a great pitte or hole, which they thinke to bee in the furthest partes of their part of the worlde towarde the sunne set, there to burne continually: the place they call *Popogusso.*

For the confirmation of this opinion, they tolde mee two stories of two men that had been lately dead and reuiued againe, the one happened but few yeres before our comming into the countrey of a wicked man which hauing beene dead and buried, the next day the earth of the graue beeing seene to moue, was taken vp againe; Who made declaration where his soule had beene, that is to saie very neere entring into *Popogusso,* had not one of the gods saued him & gaue him leaue to returne againe, and teach his friends what they should doe to auoid that terrible place of torment.

The other happened in the same yeere wee were there, but in a towne that was threescore miles from vs, and it was tolde mee for straunge newes that one beeing dead, buried and taken vp againe as the first, shewed that although his bodie had lien dead in the graue, yet his soule was aliue, and had trauailed farre in a long broade waie, on both sides whereof grewe most delicate and pleasaunt trees, bearing more rare and excellent fruites then euer hee had seene before or was able to expresse, and at length came to most braue and faire houses, neere which hee met his father, that had beene dead before, who gaue him great charge to goe backe againe and shew his friendes what good they were to doe to enjoy the pleasures of that place, which when he had done he should after come againe.

What subtilty soeuer be in the *Wiroances* and Priestes, this opinion worketh so much in manie of the common and simple sort of people that it maketh them haue great respect to their Gouernours, and also great care what they do, to auoid torment after death, and to enioy blisse; although notwithstanding there is punishment ordained for malefactours, as stealers, whoremoongers, and other sortes of wicked doers; some punished with death, some with forfeitures, some with beating, according to the greatnes of the factes.

And this is the summe of their religiõ, which I learned by hauing special familiarity with some of their priestes. Wherein they were not so sure grounded, nor gaue such credite to their traditions and stories but through conuersing with vs they were brought into great doubts of their owne, and no small admiration of ours, with earnest desire in many, to learne more than we had meanes for want of perfect vtterance in their language to expresse.

Most thinges they sawe with vs, as Mathematicall instruments, sea compasses, the vertue of the loadstone in drawing yron, a perspective glasse whereby was

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37 **towarde . . . set.** In folklore of primitive peoples, the west is more often the abode of the blest than of the damned. "Gone west," still a common euphemism for death, is a survival • 84 **Mathematicall instruments,** the astrolabe and astrolabe quadrant, used to determine latitude by measurement of the angle between a celestial body and the horizon

John Smith

1579 · 1631

The band of Englishmen with whom John Smith sailed from London down the Thames and out to sea in 1606 was poorly fitted for battling the American wilderness. Only a few were workmen; the rest were all "poor gentlemen, tradesmen, serving-men, libertines, and such like." They, like Smith, had seen a chance to fatten their purses by setting up a new colony. Holding, perhaps, with the common contemporary notion that the new land was so rich that even dripping pans and handcuffs there were made of pure gold, they probably expected few hardships when in May 1607 they sailed into Hampton Roads, Virginia.

Apparently the colonizers were lucky to have Captain Smith's leadership on what turned out to be a heart-breaking although, in the long run, a successful venture —the establishment of the first permanent British colony on this continent. One must say "apparently," because what we know about Smith's ability and background he chiefly has told us, and the blustering soldier of fortune was not a man to underestimate his valor or to let literal truth spoil a good story. His account told how he had been born at Willoughby and educated in the free schools there, how he had broken family ties in his teens, had gone into military service in his twenties, and thereafter —rushing into the midst of any fighting in Europe or beyond its frontiers—had slain Turks, Tartars, or Indians with equal aplomb.

During his stay in Virginia from May 1607 to October 1609, Smith, according to his account, efficiently led the colonists, set up relationships with the Indians, and explored the country. In addition, somehow, he found time to write his first book and to send it overseas for publication. In the fall of 1609 Smith went back to England and remained there until 1614. That year, some six years before the settlement of Plymouth, he returned to America to explore New England minutely from the Penobscot River to Cape Cod. Believing that a territory of such extent deserved a name of its own, he christened it New England. At home he made an excellent map of the coast and dotted it with English names such as Cape Ann, Charles River, and Plymouth. In 1615 he sailed again for New England with a body of colonizers who traveled on two ships. This expedition, however, was cut short when French pirates stopped the vessels. Smith was captured and taken to Rochelle, but he shortly escaped and returned to his native country. His exploring days over, he remained there until his death in London, June 21, 1631.

Historians have pictured the mustachioed captain writing his first book in a sleazy wilderness tent by the light of a blazing pine-knot. However it was composed, *A True Relation* (1607) was a book wrought on the scene between clashes with redmen. It and books which followed it, notably *A Description of New England* (1616) and *The Generall Historie of Virginia, New England, and the Summer Isles* (1624), written to encourage and direct colonizing or to glorify Smith, reveal his gusto and his imaginativeness, combined with

what seems to be vivid circumstantial detail. Thus the poetry and hardships of the colonizing adventure fuse in these accounts.

Smith's works are interesting for their characterization of the author, their picturing of happenings, and their style. The style is that of an educated—but not too educated—man, writing imaginatively about first-hand experiences. It has the varied rhythms, the homeliness fused with strangeness and stateliness, of prose in the age of the King James Bible. Callous-fisted soldier though he was, Smith produced several fine bits of prose like those which follow.

Captain John Smith, Works, 1608-1631, ed. Edward Arber, Birmingham, 1884 (re-edited by A. G. Bradley, 1910) • J. G. Fletcher, **John Smith—Also Pocahontas**, New York, 1928 • M. C. Tyler, **History of American Literature, 1607-1765**, New York, 1897, I, 18-38

From • A Description of New England

Motives for Colonizing

The following selection from **A Description of New England** (1616) shows Smith as the advocate of the colonizing adventure. Eight years later the passage was reprinted in **The Generall Historie**. Like much of the writing of the period and like many other passages by Smith, this has as its purpose the attraction of settlers to the new colonies. As he addresses several arguments to his countrymen, Smith puts into poetic words the attitudes of the adventurous explorers and settlers of his day. The titles for this and the following selection were supplied by the editors.

Who can desire more content, that hath small meanes; or but only his merit to advance his fortunes, then to tread and plant that ground he hath purchased by the hazard of his life? If he have but the taste of virtue and magnanimity, what to such a minde can bee more pleasant, then planting and building a foundation for his Posteritie, gotte from the rude earth, by Gods blessing and his owne industry without prejudice to any? If hee have any graine of faith or zeale in Religion, what can hee doe lesse hurtfull to any: or more agreeable to God, then to seeke to convert those poore Salvages to know Christ, and humanitie, whose labours with discretion will triple requite thy charge and paines? What so truely su[i]tes with honour and honestie, as the discovering things unknowne? erecting Townes, peopling Countries, informing the ignorant, reforming things unjust, teaching virtue; and gaine to our Native mothercountrie; a kingdom to attend her: finde imployment for those that are idle, because they know not what to doe: so farre from wronging any, as to cause posterity to remember thee; and remembring thee, ever honour that remembrance with praise?

Consider: what were the beginnings and endings of the Monarkies of the *Chaldeans*, the *Syrians*, the *Grecians*, and *Romanes*, but this one rule; What was it they would not do for the good of their common weale, or their Mother-citie? For example: *Rome*, What made her such a Monarchesse, but onely the adventures of her youth, not in riots at home; but in dangers abroad? and the justice and judgement out of their experiences, when they grewe aged. What was their ruine and hurt but this; The excesse of idlenesse, the fondnesse of Parents, the want of experience in Magistrates, the admiration of their undeserved honours, the contempt of true merit, their unjust jealo[u]sies, their politike incredulities, their hypocriticall seeming goodnesse, and their deeds of secret lewdnesse? finally, in fine, growing onely formall temporists, all that their predecessors got in many yeeres they lost in a few daies. Those by their pain and vertues became Lords of the world; they by their ease and vices became slaves to their servants. This is the difference betwixt the use of Armes in the field, and on the monu-

Text (for this and the following selection): **Captain John Smith, Works, 1608-1631**, ed. Edward Arber, The English Scholar's Library, No. 16, Birmingham, 1884

ments of stones; the golden age and the leaden age, prosperity and miserie, justice and corruption, substance and shadowes, words and deeds, experience and imagination, making Commonwealths, and marring Commonwealths, the fruits of virtue, and the conclusions of vice.

Then, who would live at home idly (or thinke in himselfe any worth to live) onely to eate, drink and sleepe, and so die? Or by consuming that carelesly, his friends got worthily? Or by using that miserably, that maintained vertue honestly? Or for being descended nobly, pine with the vaine vaunt of great kindred in penurie? Or (to maintaine a silly shew of bravery) toyle out thy heart, soule, and time, basely; by shifts, tricks, cards and dice? Or by relating newes of others actions, sharke here and there for a dinner, or supper; deceive thy friends, by faire promises and dissimulation, in borrowing where thou never intendest to pay; offend the lawes, surfeit with excesse, burden thy Country, abuse thy selfe, despaire in want, and then couzen thy kindred, yea even thy owne brother, and wish thy parents death (I will not say damnation) to have their estates? though thou seest what honours, and rewards, the world yet hath for them [who] will seeke them and worthily deserve them.

I would bee sor[r]y to offend, or that any should mistake my honest meaning: for I wish good to all, hurt to none. But rich men for the most part are growne to that dotage, through their pride in their wealth, as though there were no accident could end it, or their life.

And what hellish care do such take to make it their owne miserie and their Countries spoile, especially when there is most neede of their imployment? drawing by all manner of inventions, from the Prince and his honest subjects, even the vitall spirits of their powers and estates: as if their Bagges, or Bragges were so powerfull a defence, the malicious could not assault them; when they are the onely baite, to cause us not to bee onely assaulted; but betrayed and murdered in our owne security, ere wee well perceive it.

May not the miserable ruine of *Constantinople,* their impregnable walles, riches, and pleasures [at] last taken by the *Turke* (which were then but a bit, in comparison of their mightines) now remember us of the effects of private covetousnesse? at which time the good *Emperour* held himselfe rich enough, to have such rich subjects, so formall in all excesse of vanity, all kinde of delicacie and prodigalitie. His povertie when the *Turke* besieged, the citizens (whose merchandizing thoughts were onely to get wealth, little conceiving the desperate resolution of a valiant expert enemy) left the Emp[erour] so long to his conclusions, having spent all he had to pay his young, raw, discontented Souldiers; that sodainly he, they, and their citie were all a prey to the devouring *Turke.* And what they would not spare for the maintenance of them who adventured their lives to defend them, did serve onely their enemies to torment them, their friends and countrey, and all Christendome to this present day. Let this lamentable example remember you that are rich (seeing there are such great theeves in the world to robbe you) not [to] grudge to lend some proportion, to breed them that have little, yet [are] willing to learne how to defend you: for, it is too late when the deed is a-doing.

The *Romanes* estate hath beene worse then this: for, the meere covetousnesse and extortion of a few of them, so moved the rest, that not having any imployment but contemplation; their great judgements grew to so great malice, as themselves were sufficient to destroy themselves by faction: Let this move you to imbrace imployment for those whose educations, spirits, and judgements want but your purses; not onely to prevent such accustomed dangers, but also to gaine more thereby then you have.

And you fathers, that are either so foolishly fond, or so miserably covteous, or so wilfully ignorant, or so negligently careless, as that you will rather maintaine your children in idle wantonness, till they grow your masters; or become so basely unkinde, as they wish nothing but your deaths; so that both sorts grow dissolute: and although you would wish them any where to escape the gallowes, and ease your cares; though they spend you here one, two or three hundred pound[s] a yeer, you would grudge to give halfe so much in adventure with them to obtaine an estate, which in a small time, but with a little assistance of your providence, might bee better then your owne. But if an Angell should tell you, [that] any place yet unknowne can afford such fortunes; you would not beleeve it, no more then *Columbus* was be-

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39 **the miserable . . . Constantinople.** The fall of Constantinople, in 1453, followed a fierce forty-day siege. Historians agree with Smith that Constantine's inability to pay his troops contributed to their ineffectiveness, but they disagree with Smith's claim that the defending force was larger than the attacking force • 63 **The Romanes estate. . . .** This paragraph contains Smith's version of the causes for the fall of the Roman Empire

leeved there was any such Land as is now the well knowne abounding *America;* much lesse such large Regions as are yet unknowne, as well in *America,* as in *Affrica* and *Asia,* and *Terra incognita;* where were courses for gentlemen (and them that would be so reputed) more suiting their qualities, then begging from their Princes generous disposition, the labours of his subjects, and the very marrow of his maintenance.

I have not beene so ill bred, but I have tasted of *Plenty* and *Pleasure,* as well as *Want* and *Miserie:* nor doth necessitie yet, or occasion of discontent, force me to these endeavors: nor am I ignorant what small thanke[s] I shall have for my paines; or that many would have the Worlde imagine them to bee of great judgement, that can but blemish these my designes, by their witty objections and detractions: yet (I hope) my reasons with my deeds, will so prevaile with some, that I shall not want imployment in these affaires, to make the most blinde see his owne senselesnesse and incredulity; Hoping that gaine will make them affect that which Religion, Charity and the Common good cannot. It were but a poore device in me, To deceive my selfe; much more the King, State, my Friends and Countrey, with these inducements, which seeing his Majestie hath given permission, I wish all sorts of worthie, honest, industrious spirits, would understand: and if they desire any further satisfaction, I will doe my best to give it: Not to perswade them to goe onely; but goe with them: Not leave them there; but live with them there.

I will not say, but by ill providing and undue managing, such courses may bee taken [that] may make us miserable enough: But if I may have the execution of what I have projected; if they want to eate, let them eat or never digest Mee. If I performe what I say, I desire but that reward out of the gaines [which] may su[i]te my paines, quality, and condition. And if I abuse you with my tongue, take my head for satisfaction. If any dislike at the yeeres end, defraying their charge, by my consent they should freely returne. I feare not want of companie sufficient, were it but knowne what I know of these Countries; and by the proofe of that wealth I hope yeerely to returne, if God please to blesse me from such accidents, as are beyond my power in reason to prevent: For, I am not so simple to thinke, that ever any other motive then wealth, will ever erect there a Commonweale; or draw companie from their ease and humours at home, to stay in *New England* to effect my purposes.

And lest any should thinke the toile might be insupportable, though these things may bee had by labour, and diligence: I assure my selfe there are who delight extreamly in vaine pleasure, that take much more paines in *England* to enjoy it, then I should doe here [*New England*] to gaine wealth sufficient; and yet I thinke they should not have halfe such sweet content: for our pleasure here is still gaines, in *England* charges and losse. Heer nature and liberty affords us that freely, which in *England* we want, or it costeth us deerely. What pleasure can bee more, then (being tired with any occasion a-shore, in planting Vines, Fruits, or Hearbs, in contriving their owne grounds to the pleasure of their owne minds, their Fields, Gardens, Orchards, Buildings, Ships, and other workes, &c.) to recreate themselves before their owne doores in their owne boates upon the Sea; where man, woman and childe, with a small hooke and line, by angling, may take divers sorts of excellent fish, at their pleasures? And is it not pretty sport, to pull up two pence, six pence, and twelve pence, as fast as you can ha[u]le and veare a line? He is a very bad Fisher [that] cannot kill in one day with his hooke and line, one, two, or three hundred Cods: which dressed and dried, if they bee sold there for ten shillings a hundred, though in England they will give more then twentie, may not both the servant, the master and marchant, be well content with this gaine? If a man worke but three daies in seaven, he may get more then hee can spend unlesse he will be excessive. Now that Carpenter, Mason, Gardiner, Taylor, Smith, Sailer, Forgers, or what other, may they not make this a pretty recreation though they fish but an houre in a day, to take more then they can eat in a weeke? or if they will not eat it, because there is so much better choice; yet sell it, or change it, with the fishermen or marchants for any thing they want. And what sport doth yeeld a more pleasing content, and lesse hurt and charge then angling with a hooke; and crossing the sweet ayre from Ile to Ile, over the silent streames of a calme Sea? Wherein the most curious may finde pleasure, profit, and content.

Thus, though all men be not fishers: yet all men, whatsoever, may in other matters doe as well. For necessity doth in these cases so rule a Commonwealth, and each in their severall functions, as their labours in their

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34 digest Mee, exploit me • 68 haule and veare, pull in and let out • 76 excessive, extravagant

qualities may be as profitable, because there is a necessary mutuall use of all.

For Gentlemen, what exercise should more delight them, then ranging dayly these unknowne parts, using fowling and fishing, for hunting and hawking? and yet you shall see the wilde-haukes give you some pleasure, in seeing them stoope (six or seven times after one another) an houre or two together, at the skuls of fish in the faire harbours, as those a-shore at a foule, and never trouble nor torment yourselves, with watching, mewing, feeding, and attending them: nor kill horse and man with running and crying, *See you not a hawk?* For hunting also: the woods, lakes and rivers affoord not onely chase sufficient, for any that delights in that kinde of toile or pleasure; but such beasts to hunt, that besides the delicacy of their bodies for food, their skins are so rich, as they will recompence thy daily labour with a Captains pay.

For labourers, if those that sowe hempe, rape, turnups, parsnips, carrats, cabidge, and such like; give 20, 30, 40, 50 shillings yearely for an acre of ground, and meat[,] drinke[,] and wages to use it, and yet grow rich; when better, or at least as good ground may be had and cost nothing but labour; it seems strange to me, any such should there grow poore.

My purpose is not to perswade children from their parents; men from their wives; nor servants from their masters: onely such as with free consent may be spared: But that each parish, or village, in Citie, or Countrey, that will but apparell their fatherlesse children of thirteene or foureteene years of age, or young maried people that have small wealth to live on, heere by their labour may live exceeding well: provided alwaies, that first there bee a sufficient power to command them, houses to receive them, meanes to defend them, and meet provisions necessarie for them; for any place may bee over-lain: and it is most necessarie to have a fortresse (ere this grow to practice) and sufficient masters, (as, Carpenters, Masons, Fishers, Fowlers, Gardiners, Husbandmen, Sawyers, Smiths, Spinsters, Taylors, Weavers, and such like) to take ten, twelve, or twentie, or as there is occasion, for Apprentises. The Masters by this may quicklie growe rich; these may learne their trades themselves, to doe the like; to a generall and an incredible benefit, for King, and Countrey, Master, and Servant.

1616

7 **stoope,** stoop, dive • 11 **mewing,** caging up

From · The Generall Historie of Virginia

Pocahontas

The passage recounting Smith's captivity and his rescue by Pocahontas, from **The Generall Historie** (1624), gains in interest if it is placed alongside the account of the same events which had appeared in 1608 in his **A True Relation of Such Occurences and Accidents of Note as Hath Happened in Virginia.** Henry Adams notes that, according to the earlier version, Smith had shortly found that his captors were using him with kindness, but that in the later he constantly feared violence; that "eight guards, which had been sufficient in 1608, were multiplied to thirty or forty tall fellows in 1624," and so on. Such changes heightened the drama, making both the captain and his captors more formidable. The most notable changes added to the ferocity of Powhatan and showed Pocahontas in the act of rescuing the heroic captain. The modifications suggest that Smith was perhaps better qualified as a writer of historical fiction than as a sternly accurate historian. The passage, nevertheless, vividly re-creates the life of the colonists and reveals the character of its picturesque author. The zestful yet workaday style is typical.

The next voyage hee proceeded so farre that with much labour by cutting of trees insunder he made his passage; but when his Barge could passe no farther, he

1 **hee,** John Smith. The account is written in the third person

left her in a broad bay out of danger of shot, commanding none should goe a shore till his returne: himselfe with two English and two Salvages went up higher in a Canowe, but hee was not long absent, but his men went a shore, whose want of government, gave both occasion and opportunity to the Salvages to surprise one *George Cassen,* whom they slew, and much failed not to have cut of[f] the boat and all the rest.

Smith little dreaming of that accident, being got to the marshes at the rivers head, twentie myles in the desert, had his two men slaine (as is supposed) sleeping by the Canowe, whilst himselfe by fowling sought them victuall, who finding he was beset with 200. Salvages, two of them hee slew, still defending himselfe with the ayd of a Salvage his guid[e], whom he bound to his arme with his garters, and used him as a buckler, yet he was shot in his thigh a little, and had many arrowes that stucke in his cloathes but no great hurt, till at last they tooke him prisoner.

When this newes came to *James* towne, much was their sorrow for his losse, fewe expecting what ensued.

Sixe or seven weekes those Barbarians kept him prisoner, many strange triumphes and conjurations they made of him, yet hee so demeaned himselfe amongst them, as he not onely diverted them from surprising the Fort, but procured his owne libertie, and got himselfe and his company such estimation amongst them, that those Salvages admired him more then their owne *Quiyouckosucks.*

The manner how they used and delivered him, is as followeth.

The Salvages having drawne from *George Cassen* whether Captaine *Smith* was gone, prosecuting that opportunity they followed him with 300. bowmen, conducted by the King of *Pamaunkee,* who in divisions searching the turnings of the river, found Robinson and Emry by the fire side, those they shot full of arrowes and slew. Then finding the Captaine, as is said, that used the Salvage that was his guide as his shield (three of them being slaine and divers other so gauld) all the rest would not come neere him. Thinking thus to have returned to his boat, regarding them, as he marched, more then his way, [Smith] slipped up to the middle in an oasie creeke & his Salvage with him, yet durst they not come to him till being neere dead with cold, he threw away his armes. Then according to their composition they drew him forth and led him to the fire, where his men were slaine. Diligently they chafed his benummed limbs.

He demanding for their Captaine, they shewed him *Opechankanough,* King of Pamaunkee, to whom he gave a round Ivory double compass Dyall. Much they marvailed at the playing of the Fly and Needle, which they could see so plainely, and yet not touch it, because of the glasse that covered them. But when he demonstrated by that Globe-like Jewell, the roundness of the earth, and skies, the spheare of the Sunne, Moone, and Starres, and how the Sunne did chase the night round about the world continually; the greatnesse of the Land and Sea, the diversitie of Nations, varietie of complexions, and how we were to them Antipodes, and many other such like matters, they all stood as amazed with admiration.

Notwithstanding, within an houre after they tyed him to a tree, and as many as could stand about him prepared to shoot him, but the King holding up the Compass in his hand, they all laid downe their Bowes and Arrowes, and in a triumphant manner led him to Orapaks, where he was after their manner kindly feasted, and well used.

Their order in conducting him was thus; Drawing themselves all in fyle, the King in the middest had all their Peeces and Swords borne before him. Captaine *Smith* was led after him by three great Salvages, holding him fast by each arme: and on each side six went in fyle with their Arrowes nocked. But arriving at the Towne (which was but onely thirtie or fortie hunting houses made of Mats, which they remove as they please, as we our tents) all the women and children staring to behold him, the souldiers first all in fyle performed the forme of a Bissom so well as could be, and on each flanke, officers as Serjeants to see them keepe their orders. A good time they continued this exercise, and then cast themselves in a ring, dauncing in such severall Postures, and singing and yelling out such hellish notes and screeches; being strangely painted, every one his quiver of Arrowes, and at his backe a club; on his arme

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7 **much failed not,** "came near cutting off the boat and all the rest" • 11 **two men slaine,** "Jehu Robinson and Thomas Emry slaine"—Smith • 22 **Sixe . . . weekes.** "More accurately about three weeks—Dec. 16, 1607–Jan. 8, 1608."—Arber • 29 **Quiyouckosucks.** Henry Spelman, in his **Relation of Virginea** (1613), wrote, "In ye Patomecks country they have an other god whom they call Quioquascacke, and untu ther Images they offer Beades and Copper if at any time they want Rayne or have to much. . . ." • 33 **whether,** news of whither • 40 **gauld,** galled • 43 **oasie,** oozy • 46 **composition,** agreement • 78 **Bissom,** a military formation

a Fox or an Otters skinne, or some such matter for his vambrace; their heads and shoulders painted red, with Oyle and *Pocones* mingled together, which Scarlet-like colour made an exceeding handsome shew; his Bow in his hand, and the skinne of a Bird with her wings abroad dryed, tyed on his head, a peece of copper, a white shell, a long feather, with a small rattle growing at the tayles of their snaks tyed to it, or some such like toy. All this while *Smith* and the King stood in the middest guarded, as before is said; and after three dances they all departed. *Smith* they conducted to a long house, where thirtie or fortie tall fellowes did guard him; and ere long more bread and venison was brought him then would have served twentie men, I thinke his stomacke at that time was not very good; what he left they put in baskets and tyed over his head. About midnight they set the meate againe before him, all this time not one of them would eate a bit with him, till the next morning they brought him as much more, and then did they eate all the old, & reserved the new as they had done the other, which made him thinke they would fat him to eat him. Yet in this desperate estate to defend him from the cold, one *Maocassater* brought him his gowne, in requitall of some beads and toyes Smith had given him at his first arrivall in Virginia.

Two dayes after, a man would have slaine him (but that the guard prevented it) for the death of his sonne, to whom they conducted him to recover the poore man then breathing his last. *Smith* told them that at *James* towne he had a water would doe it, if they would let him fetch it, but they would not permit that; but made all the preparations they could to assault *James* towne, craving his advice, and for recompence he should have life, libertie, land, and women. In part of a table booke he writ his minde to them at the Fort, what was intended, how they should follow that direction to affright the messengers, and without fayle send him such things as he writ for, and an inventory with them. The difficultie and danger he told the Salvages, of the Mines, great gunnes, and other Engins, exceedingly affrighted them; yet according to his request they went to James towne, in as bitter weather as could be of frost and snow, and within three dayes returned with an answer.

But when they came to *Jame[s]* towne, seeing men sally out as he had told them they would, they fled; yet in the night they came againe to the same place where he had told them they should receive an answer, and such things as he had promised them; which they found accordingly, and with which they returned with no small expedition, to the wonder of them all that heard it, that he could either divine, or the paper could speake.

Then they led him to the *Youthtanunds,* the *Mattapanients,* the *Payankatanks,* the *Nantaughtacunds,* and *Onawmanients* upon the rivers of *Rapahanock,* and *Patawomek,* over all those rivers, and backe againe by divers other severall Nations, to the Kings habitation at Pamaunkee, where they entertained him with most strange and fearefull Conjurations;

As if neare led to hell,
Amongst the Devils to dwell.

Not long after, early in a morning a great fire was made in a long house, and a mat spread on the one side, as on the other; on the one they caused him to sit, and all the guard went out of the house, and presently came skipping in a great grim fellow, all painted over with coale, mingled with oyle; and many Snakes and Wesels skins stuffed with mosse, and all their tayles tyed together, so as they met on the crowne of his head in a tassell; and round about the tassell was as a Coronet of feathers, the skins hanging round about his head, backe, and shoulders, and in a manner covered his face; with a hellish voyce, and a rattle in his hand. With most strange gestures and passions he began his invocation, and environed the fire with a circle of meale; which done, three more such like devils came rushing in with the like antique tricks, painted halfe blacke, halfe red: but all their eyes were painted white, and some red stroakes like Mutchato's along their cheekes. Round about him those fiends daunced a pretty while, and then came in three more as ugly as the rest, with red eyes, and white stroakes over their blacke faces. At last they all sat downe right against him, three of them on the one hand of the chiefe Priest, and three on the other. Then all with their rattles began a song, which ended, the chiefe Priest layd downe five wheat cornes; then strayning his armes and hands with such violence that he sweat, and his veynes swelled, he began a short Oration; at the conclusion they all gave a short groane, and then layd down three graines more. After that, began their song againe, and then another Oration, ever laying

2 vambrace, a leather guard worn on the forearm • 3 Pocones, bloodroot • 78 Mutchato's, mustachios

downe so many cornes as before, till they had twice incirculed the fire; that done, they tooke a bunch of little stickes prepared for that purpose, continuing still their devotion, and at the end of every song and Oration, they layd downe a sticke betwixt the divisions of Corne. Till night, neither he nor they did either eate or drinke; and then they feasted merrily, with the best provisions they could make. Three dayes they used this Ceremony; the meaning whereof, they told him, was to know if he intended them well or no. The circle of meale signified their Country, the circles of corne the bounds of the Sea, and the stickes his Country. They imagined the world to be flat and round, like a trencher, and they in the middest.

After this they brought him a bagge of gunpowder, which they carefully preserved till the next spring, to plant as they did their corne; because they would be acquainted with the nature of that seede.

Opitchapam the Kings brother, invited him to his house, where, with as many platters of bread, foule, and wild beasts as did environ him, he bid him wellcome; but not any of them would eate a bit with him, but put up all the remainder in Baskets.

At his return to Opechancanoughs, all the Kings women, and their children, flocked about him for their parts; as a due by Custome, to be merry with such fragments.

> But his waking mind in hydeous dreames did oft
> see wondrous shapes,
> Of bodies strange, and huge in growth, and of
> stupendious makes.

At last they brought him to *Meronocomoco,* where was *Powhatan,* their Emperor. Here more than two hundred of those grim Courtiers stood wondering at him, as he had beene a monster; till *Powhatan* and his trayne had put themselves in their greatest braveries. Before a fire upon a seat like a bedsted, he sat covered with a great robe, made of *Rarowcun* skinnes, and all the tayles hanging by. On either hand did sit a young wench of 16 or 18 yeares, and along on each side the house, two rowes of men, and behind them as many women, with all their heads and shoulders painted red; many of their heads bedecked with the white downe of Birds; but every one with something, and a great chayne of white beads about their necks.

At his entrance before the King, all the people gave a great shout. The Queene of *Appamatuck* was appointed to bring him water to wash his hands, and another brought him a bunch of feathers, in stead of a Towell, to dry them: having feasted him after their best barbarous manner they could, a long consultation was held; but the conclusion was, two great stones were brought before Powhatan: then as many as could layd hands on him, dragged him to them, and thereon laid his head, and being ready with their clubs, to beate out his braines, *Pocahontas,* the Kings dearest daughter, when no intreaty could prevaile, got his head in her armes, and laid her owne upon his to save him from death: whereat the Emperour was contented he should live to make him hatchets, and her bells, beads, and copper; for they thought him as well of all occupations as themselves. For the King himselfe will make his owne robes, shooes, bowes, arrowes, pots; plant, hunt, or doe any thing so well as the rest.

> They say he bore a pleasant shew,
> But sure his heart was sad.
> For who can pleasant be, and rest,
> That lives in feare and dread:
> And having life suspected, doth
> It still suspected lead.

Two days after, *Powhatan,* having disguised himselfe in the most fearefullest manner he could, caused Captain *Smith* to be brought forth to a great house in the woods, and there upon a mat by the fire to be left alone. Not long after, from behinde a mat that divided the house, was made the most dolefullest noyse he ever heard; then *Powhatan,* more like a devill then a man, with some two hundred more as blacke as himselfe, came unto him and told him now they were friends, and presently he should goe to *James* towne, to send him two great gunnes, and a gryndstone, for which he would give him the Country of *Capahowosick,* and for ever esteeme him as his sonne *Nantaquoud.*

So to *James* towne with 12 guides *Powhatan* sent him. That night they quarterd in the woods, he still expecting (as he had done all this long time of his imprisonment) every houre to be put to one death or other: for all their feasting. But almightie God (by his divine providence) had mollified the hearts of those sterne Barbarians with compassion. The next morning betimes they came to the

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35 Rarowcun, raccoon • 58 as well of, as efficient at • 87 betimes, early

Fort; where *Smith*, having used the Salvages with what kindnesse he could, he shewed *Rawhunt, Powhatans* trusty servant, two demi-Culverings & a millstone to carry *Powhatan:* they found them somewhat too heavie; but when they did see him discharge them, being loaded with stones, among the boughs of a great tree loaded with Isickles, the yce and branches came so tumbling downe, that the poore Salvages ran away halfe dead with feare. But at last we regained some conference with them, and gave them such toyes; and sent to *Powhatan*, his women, and children such presents, as he gave them in generall full content.

Now in *James* Towne they were all in combustion, the strongest preparing once more to run away with the pinnace; which with the hazzard of his life, with Sakre falcon and musket shot, *Smith* forced now the third time to stay or sinke.

Some, no better then they should be, had plotted with the President, the next day to have put him to death by the Leviticall law, for the lives of *Robinson* and *Emry;* pretending the fault was his that had led them to their ends: but he quickly tooke such order with such Lawyers, that he layd them by the heeles till he sent some of them prisoners for *England.*

1623·1624

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3 **demi-Culverings**, nine-pound cannons • 15 **pinnace**, a small sailing vessel • 15 **Sakre falcon**, a type of cannon • 20 **Leviticall law**, as set forth in Leviticus 24:17: "And he that killeth any man shall surely be put to death "

William Bradford

1590 · 1657

William Bradford came of a family of prosperous farmers in Yorkshire, England. While still a boy, he joined the Separatist group which met in the house of William Brewster at Scrooby, and in 1609 he accompanied the Separatists to Holland, where they remained eleven years. He sailed on the *Mayflower* in 1620. Following the landing at Plymouth in December of that year, Bradford, as his *History* records, took a leading part in the affairs of the colony. He was chosen governor in the annual elections no less than thirty times, serving continuously from 1622 to 1656, except for five years, when he was relieved at his own urgent request. The record shows him to have been worthy of such confidence.

The manuscript of Bradford's work was probably not intended for publication. At any rate, although it was freely drawn upon by numerous New England historians in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries (among them, Thomas Hutchinson), it was not published until 1856, shortly after it had been discovered in the library of the Bishop of London. It may have been taken to London by Hutchinson, a Loyalist, or by a British soldier. The manuscript was returned to Massachusetts in 1897 and has since reposed in the Massachusetts State Library.

Bradford's book tells the story of Plymouth Plantation through 1646. "There is no other document upon New England history," says Moses Coit Tyler, "that can take precedence of this either in time or in authority." It is a vivid record of the colonists' triumph over difficulties of many kinds. One cannot help being impressed by Bradford's sincerity, his exalted aims, and his lifelong dedication to religious truth as he conceived it.

Although he was said by Cotton Mather to have mastered Latin and Greek and to have studied Hebrew ("because he would see with his own eyes the ancient oracles of God in their native beauty"), his study must have been predominantly in the English Bible, which he read in the Geneva version of 1560, for his style, like John Bunyan's, shows a strong Biblical influence. Whether his art was conscious or not, Bradford's prose is worthy of a distinguished place in the English tradition of his century.

Bradford's History of Plymouth Plantation, ed. W. T. Davis, New York, 1908 • S. E. Morison, "William Bradford," **Dictionary of American Biography**, New York, 1933, II, 559-563 • E. F. Bradford, "Conscious Art in Bradford's **History of Plymouth Plantation**," **New England Quarterly**, April 1928, I, 133-157

From

The History of Plymouth Plantation

THE 9. CHAP.

Of their vioage, and how they passed the sea, and of their safe arrival at Cape Codd

Sept^{r}: 6. [1620] These troubls being blowne over, and now all being compacte togeather in one shipe, they put to sea againe with a prosperus winde, which continued diverce days togeather, which was some incouragmente unto them; yet according to the usuall maner many were afflicted with sea-sicknes. And I may not omite hear a spetiall worke of Gods providence. Ther was a proud and very profane yonge man, one of the sea-men, of a lustie, able body, which made him the more hauty; he would allway be contemning the poore people in their sicknes, and cursing them dayly with greevous execrations, and did not let to tell them, that he hoped to help to cast halfe of them over board before they came to their jurneys end, and to make mery with what they had; and if he were by any gently reproved, he would curse and swear most bitterly. But it plased God before they came halfe seas over, to smite this yong man with a greeveous disease, of which he dyed in a desperate maner, and so was him selfe the first that was throwne overbord. Thus his curses light on his owne head; and it was an astonishmente to all his fellows, for they noted it to be the just hand of God upon him.

After they had injoyed faire winds and weather for a season, they were incountred many times with crosse winds, and mette with many feirce stormes, with which the shipe was shroudly shaken, and her upper works made very leakie; and one of the maine beames in the midd ships was bowed and cracked, which put them in some fear that the shipe could not be able to performe the vioage. So some of the cheefe of the company, perceiveing the mariners to feare the suffisiencie of the shipe, as appeared by their mutterings, they entred into serious consulltation with the m^{r} and other officers of the ship, to consider in time of the danger; and rather to returne then to cast them selves into a desperate and inevitable perill. And truly ther was great distraction and differance of opinion amongst the mariners them selves; faine would they doe what could be done for their wages sake, (being now halfe the seas over,) and on the other hand they were loath to hazard their lives too desperately. But in examening of all opinions, the m^{r} and others affirmed they knew the ship to be stronge and firme under water; and for the buckling of the maine beame, ther was a great iron scrue the passengers brought out of Holland, which would raise the beame into his place; the which being done, the carpenter and m^{r} affirmed that with a post put under it, set firme in the lower deck, and otherways bounde, he would make it sufficiente. And as for the decks and uper workes they would calke them as well as they could, and though with the workeing of the ship they would not longe keepe stanch, yet ther would otherwise be no great danger, if they did not overpress her with sails. So they commited them selves to the will of God, and resolved to proseede.

Text: **Bradford's History of Plymouth Plantation**, ed. W. T. Davis, New York, 1908 • **2 shipe**, the Mayflower • **12 let**, forbear • **27 shroudly**, severely • **34 m^{r}**, master or captain

In sundrie of these stormes the winds were so feirce, and the seas so high, as they could not beare a knote of saile, but were forced to hull, for diverce days togither. And in one of them, as they thus lay at hull, in a mighty storme, a lustie yonge man (called John Howland) coming upon some occasion above the grattings, was, with a seele of the shipe throwne into [the] sea; but it pleased God that he caught hould of the top-saile halliards, which hunge over board, and rane out at length; yet he held his hould (though he was sundrie fadomes under water) till he was hald up by the same rope to the brime of the water, and then with a boat hooke and other means got into the shipe againe, and his life saved; and though he was something ill with it, yet he lived many years after, and became a profitable member both in church and commone wealthe. In all this viage ther died but one of the passengers, which was William Butten, a youth, servant to Samuell Fuller, when they drew near the coast. But to omite other things, (that I may be breefe,) after longe beating at sea they fell with that land which is called Cape Cod; the which being made and certainly knowne to be it, they were not a litle joyfull. After some deliberation had amongst them selves and with the mr of the ship, they tacked aboute and resolved to stande for the southward (the wind and weather being faire) to finde some place aboute Hudsons river for their habitation. But after they had sailed that course aboute halfe the day, they fell amongst deangerous shoulds and roring breakers, and they were so farr intangled ther with as they conceived them selves in great danger; and the wind shrinking upon them withall, they resolved to bear up againe for the Cape, and thought them selves hapy to gett out of those dangers before night overtooke them, as by Gods providence they did. And the next day they gott into the Cape-harbor wher they ridd in saftie. A word or too by the way of this cape; it was thus first named by Capten Gosnole and his company, An°: 1602, and after by Capten Smith was caled Cape James; but it retains the former name amongst seamen. Also that pointe which first shewed those dangerous shoulds unto them, they called Pointe Care, and Tuckers Terrour; but the French and Dutch to this day call it Malabarr, by reason of those perilous shoulds, and the losses they have suffered their.

Being thus arived in a good harbor and brought safe to land, they fell upon their knees and blessed the God of heaven, who had brought them over the vast and furious ocean, and delivered them from all the periles and miseries therof, againe to set their feete on the firme and stable earth, their proper elemente. And no marvell if they were thus joyefull, seeing wise Seneca was so affected with sailing a few miles on the coast of his owne Italy; as he affirmed, that he had rather remaine twentie years on his way by land, then pass by sea to any place in a short time; so tedious and dreadfull was the same unto him.

But hear I cannot but stay and make a pause, and stand half amased at this poore peoples presente condition; and so I thinke will the reader too, when he well considers the same. Being thus passed the vast ocean, and a sea of troubles before in their preparation (as may be remembred by that which wente before), they had now no freinds to wellcome them, nor inns to entertaine or refresh their weatherbeaten bodys, no houses or much less townes to repaire too, to seeke for succoure. It is recorded in scripture as a mercie to the apostle and his shipwraked company, that the barbarians shewed them no smale kindnes in refreshing them, but these savage barbarians, when they mette with them (as after will appeare) were readier to fill their sids full of arrows then otherwise. And for the season it was winter, and they that know the winters of that cuntrie know them to be sharp and violent, and subjecte to cruell and feirce stormes, deangerous to travill to known places, much more to serch an unknown coast. Besids, what could they see but a hidious and desolate wildernes, full of wild beasts and willd men? and what multituds ther might be of them they knew not. Nether could they, as it were, goe up to the tope of Pisgah, to vew from this willdernes a more goodly cuntrie to feed their hops; for which way soever they turnd their eys (save upward to the heavens) they could have litle solace or content in respecte of any outward objects. For summer being done, all things stand upon them with a wetherbeaten face; and the whole countrie, full of woods and thickets,

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3 **hull**, drift • 7 **seele**, lurch • 39 **Smith**, Captain John Smith, on his map of New England • 52 **Seneca**, Lucius Annaeus Seneca (4 B.C.?-65 A.D.), Roman philosopher and author. See Seneca's "Epistle LIII" for Bradford's allusion • 67 **scripture**, Acts 28:2 • 80 **Pisgah**, the mountain from which Moses was permitted to view the Promised Land. See Deuteronomy 34:1-4

represented a wild and savage heiw. If they looked behind them, ther was the mighty ocean which they had passed, and was now as a maine barr and goulfe to seperate them from all the civill parts of the world. If it be said they had a ship to sucour them, it is trew; but what heard they daly from the m^{r} and company? but that with speede they should looke out a place with their shallop, wher they would be at some near distance; for the season was shuch as he would not stirr from thence till a safe harbor was discovered by them wher they would be, and he might goe without danger; and that victells consumed apace, but he must and would keepe sufficient for them selves and their returne. Yea, it was muttered by some, that if they gott not a place in time, they would turne them and their goods ashore and leave them. Let it also be considred what weake hopes of supply and succoure they left behinde them, that might bear up their minds in this sade condition and trialls they were under; and they could not but be very smale. It is true, indeed, the affections and love of their brethren at Leyden was cordiall and entire towards them, but they had litle power to help them, or them selves; and how the case stode betweene them and the marchants at their coming away, hath allready been declared. What could now sustaine them but the spirite of God and his grace? May not and ought not the children of these fathers rightly say: *Our faithers were Englishmen which came over this great ocean, and were ready to perish in this willdernes; but they cried unto the Lord, and he heard their voyce, and looked on their adversitie, etc. Let them therfore praise the Lord, because he is good, and his mercies endure for ever. Yea, let them which have been redeemed of the Lord, shew how he hath delivered them from the hand of the oppressour. When they wandered in the deserte willdernes out of the way, and found no citie to dwell in, both hungrie, and thirstie, their sowle was overwhelmed in them. Let them confess before the Lord his loving kindnes, and his wonderfull works before the sons of men. . . .*

The remainder of An°: 1620

I shall a litle returne backe and begine with a combination made by them before they came ashore, being the first foundation of their govermente in this place; occasioned partly by the discontented and mutinous speeches that some of the strangers amongst them had let fall from them in the ship—That when they came a shore they would use their owne libertie; for none had power to command them, the patente they had being for Virginia, and not for New-england, which belonged to an other Goverment, with which the Virginia Company had nothing to doe. And partly that shuch an acte by them done (this their condition considered) might be as firme as any patent, and in some respects more sure.

The forme was as followeth.

In the name of God, Amen. We whose names are under-writen, the loyall subjects of our dread soveraigne Lord, King James, by the grace of God, of Great Britaine, Franc, and Ireland king, defender of the faith, etc., haveing undertaken, for the glorie of God, and advancemente of the Christian faith, and honour of our king and countrie, a voyage to plant the first colonie in the Northerne parts of Virginia, doe by these presents solemnly and mutualy in the presence of God, and one of another, covenant and combine our selves togeather into a civill body politick, for our better ordering and preservation and furtherance of the ends aforesaid; and by vertue hearof to enacte, constitute, and frame such just and equall lawes, ordinances, acts, constitutions, and offices, from time to time, as shall be thought most meete and convenient for the generall good of the Colonie, unto which we promise all due submission and obedience. In witnes wherof we have hereunder subscribed our names at Cap-Codd the 11. of November, in the year of the raigne of our soveraigne lord, King James, of England, France, and Ireland the eighteenth, and of Scotland the fiftie fourth. An°: Dom. 1620.

After this they chose, or rather confirmed, Mr. John Carver (a man godly and well approved amongst them) their Governour for that year. And after they had provided a place for their goods, or comone store, (which were long in unlading for want of boats, foulnes of winter weather, and sicknes of diverce,) and begune some small cottages for their habitation, as time would admitte, they mette and consulted of lawes and orders,

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21 **Leyden,** in Holland, whence the more devout members of the group had come • 27 **Our . . . etc.** The sentence paraphrases Deuteronomy 26:7 • 31 **Let . . . men.** The passage paraphrases Psalms 107:1-8 • 56 **In . . . 1620.** This document, known as the "Mayflower Compact," was an agreement signed by the Pilgrim Fathers to serve as a form of government because the Pilgrims had no charter

both for their civill and military Govermente, as the necessitie of their condition did require, still adding therunto as urgent occasion in severall times, and as cases did require.

In these hard and difficulte beginings they found some discontents and murmurings arise amongst some, and mutinous speeches and carriags in other; but they were soone quelled and overcome by the wisdome, patience, and just and equall carrage of things by the Govr and better part, which clave faithfully togeather in the maine. But that which was most sadd and lamentable was, that in 2. or 3. moneths time halfe of their company dyed, espetialy in Jan: and February, being the depth of winter, and wanting houses and other comforts; being infected with the scurvie and other diseases, which this long vioage and their inacomodate condition had brought upon them; so as ther dyed some times 2. or 3. of a day, in the foresaid time; that of 100. and odd persons, scarce 50. remained. And of these in the time of most distres, ther was but 6. or 7. sound persons, who, to their great comendations be it spoken, spared no pains, night nor day, but with abundance of toyle and hazard of their owne health, fetched them woode, made them fires, drest them meat, made their beads, washed their lothsome cloaths, cloathed and uncloathed them; in a word, did all the homly and necessarie offices for them which dainty and quesie stomacks cannot endure to hear named; and all this willingly and cherfully, without any grudging in the least, shewing herein their true love unto their freinds and bretheren. A rare example and worthy to be remembred. Tow of these 7. were Mr. William Brewster, ther reverend Elder, and Myles Standish, ther Captein and military comander, unto whom my selfe, and many others, were much beholden in our low and sicke condition. And yet the Lord so upheld these persons, as in this generall calamity they were not at all infected either with sicknes, or lamnes. And what I have said of these, I may say of many others who dyed in this generall vissitation, and others yet living, that whilst they had health, yea, or any strength continuing, they were not wanting to any that had need of them. And I doute not but their recompence is with the Lord. . . .

[1623] All this whille no supply was heard of, neither knew they when they might expecte any. So they begane to thinke how they might raise as much corne as they could, and obtaine a beter crope then they had done, that they might not still thus languish in miserie. At length, after much debate of things, the Govr (with the advise of the cheefest amongest them) gave way that they should set corne every man for his owne perticuler, and in that regard trust to them selves; in all other things to goe on in the generall way as before. And so assigned to every family a parcell of land, according to the proportion of their number for that end, only for present use (but made no devission for inheritance), and ranged all boys and youth under some familie. This had very good success; for it made all hands very industrious, so as much more corne was planted then other waise would have bene by any means the Govr or any other could use, and saved him a great deall of trouble, and gave farr better contente. The women now wente willingly into the feild, and tooke their litle-ons with them to set corne, which before would aledg weaknes, and inabilitie; whom to have compelled would have bene thought great tiranie and oppression.

The experience that was had in this commone course and condition, tried sundrie years, and that amongst godly and sober men, may well evince the vanitie of that conceite of Platos and other ancients, applauded by some of later times; — that the taking away of propertie, and bringing in communitie into a comone wealth, would make them happy and florishing; as if they were wiser then God. For this comunitie (so farr as it was) was found to breed much confusion and discontent, and retard much imployment that would have been to their benefite and comforte. For the yong-men that were most able and fitte for labour and service did repine that they should spend their time and streingth to worke for other mens wives and children, with out any recompence. The strong, or man of parts, had no more in devission of victails and cloaths, then he that was weake and not able to doe a quarter the other could; this was thought injuestice. The aged and graver men to be ranked and equalised in labours, and victails, cloaths, etc., with the meaner and yonger sorte, thought it some indignite and disrespect unto them.

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10 Govr, Governor Bradford himself • 68 commone course, ownership in common. Thus ended the communistic experiment at Plymouth

And for mens wives to be commanded to doe servise for other men, as dresing their meate, washing their cloaths, etc., they deemd it a kind of slaverie, neither could many husbands well brooke it. Upon the poynte all being to have alike, and all to doe alike, they thought them selves in the like condition, and one as good as another; and so, if it did not cut of those relations that God hath set amongest men, yet it did at least much diminish and take of the mutuall respects that should be preserved amongst them. And would have bene worse if they had been men of another condition. Let none objecte this is men's corruption, and nothing to the course it selfe. I answer, seeing all men have this corruption in them, God in his wisdome saw another course fiter for them. . . .

[1628] Aboute some 3. or 4. years before this time, ther came over one Captaine Wolastone, (a man of pretie parts,) and with him 3. or 4. more of some eminencie, who brought with them a great many servants, with provissions and other implments for to begine a plantation; and pitched them selves in a place within the Massachusets, which they called, after their Captains name, Mount-Wollaston. Amongst whom was one Mr. Morton, who, it should seeme, had some small adventure (of his owne or other mens) amongst them; but had litle respecte amongst them, and was sleghted by the meanest servants. Haveing continued ther some time, and not finding things to answer their expectations, nor profite to arise as they looked for, Captaine Wollaston takes a great part of the sarvants, and transports them to Virginia, wher he puts them of at good rates, selling their time to other men; and writs back to one Mr. Rassdall, one of his cheefe partners, and accounted their marchant, to bring another parte of them to Verginia likewise, intending to put them of ther as he had done the rest. And he, with the consente of the said Rasdall, appoynted one Fitcher to be his Livetenante, and governe the remaines of the plantation, till he or Rasdall returned to take further order theraboute. But this Morton abovesaid, haveing more craft than honestie, (who had been a kind of petiefogger, of Furnefells Inne,) in the others absence, watches an oppertunitie, (commons being but hard amongst them,) and gott some strong drinck and other junkats, and made them a feast; and after they were merie, he begane to tell them, he would give them good counsell. You see (saith he) that many of your fellows are carried to Virginia; and if you stay till this Rasdall returne, you will also be carried away and sould for slaves with the rest. Therfore I would advise you to thruste out this Levetenant Fitcher; and I, having a parte in the plantation, will receive you as my partners and consociats; so may you be free from service, and we will converse, trad, plante, and live togeather as equalls, and supporte and protecte one another, or to like effecte. This counsell was easily received; so they tooke oppertunitie, and thrust Levetenante Fitcher out a dores, and would suffer him to come no more amongst them, but forct him to seeke bread to eate, and other releefe from his neigbours, till he could gett passage for England. After this they fell to great licenciousnes, and led a dissolute life, powering out them selves into all profanenes. And Morton became lord of misrule, and maintained (as it were) a schoole of Athisme. And after they had gott some good into their hands, and gott much by trading with the Indeans, they spent it as vainly, in quaffing and drinking both wine and strong waters in great exsess, and, as some reported, 10*li.* worth in a morning. They allso set up a May-pole, drinking and dancing aboute it many days togeather, inviting the Indean women, for their consorts, dancing and frisking togither, (like so many fairies, or furies rather,) and worse practises. As if they had anew revived and celebrated the feasts of the Roman Goddes Flora, or the beasly practieses of the madd Bacchinalians. Morton likwise (to shew his poetrie) composed sundry rimes and verses, some tending to lasciviousnes, and others to the detraction and scandall of some persons, which he affixed to this idle or idoll May-polle. They chainged allso the name of their place, and in stead of calling it Mounte Wollaston, they called it Meriemounte, as if this joylity would have lasted ever. But this continued not long, for after Morton was sent for England, (as follows to be declared,) shortly after came over that worthy gentlman, Mr. John Indecott, who brought

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7 **of,** off, as often in Bradford • 23 **Mr. Morton,** Thomas Morton, whose amusing and very different account in the **New English Canaan** (London, 1637) should be compared with Bradford's • 41 **petiefogger,** pettifogger, an inferior lawyer • 42 **Furnefells Inne,** Furnival's Inn, one of the Inns of Court in London occupied by "students and practicers" of the law • 43 **commons,** food • 62 **powering,** pouring • 69 **li,** pounds • 85 **Indecott,** John Endicott

over a patent under the broad seall, for the govermente of the Massachusets, who visiting those parts caused that May-polle to be cutt downe, and rebuked them for their profannes, and admonished them to looke ther should be better walking; so they now, or others, changed the name of their place again, and called it Mounte-Dagon. . . .

[1633] Mr. Roger Williams (a man godly and zealous, having many precious parts, but very unsettled in judgmente) came over first to the Massachusets, but upon some discontente left that place, and came hither, (wher he was friendly entertained, according to their poore abilitie,) and exercised his gifts amongst them, and after some time was admitted a member of the church; and his teaching well approoved, for the benefite wherof I still blese God, and am thankfull to him, even for his sharpest admonitions and reproufs, so farr as they agreed with truth. He this year begane to fall into some strang oppinions, and from opinion to practise; which caused some controversie betweene the church and him, and in the end some discontente on his parte, by occasion whereof he left them some thing abruptly. Yet after wards sued for his dismission to the church of Salem, which was granted, with some caution to them concerning him, and what care they ought to have of him. But he soone fell into more things ther, both to their and the goverments troble and disturbance. I shall not need to name perticulers, they are too well knowen now to all, though for a time the church here wente under some hard censure by his occasion, from some that afterwards smarted them selves. But he is to be pitied, and prayed for, and so I shall leave the matter, and desire the Lord to shew him his errors, and reduse him into the way of truth, and give him a setled judgment and constancie in the same; for I hope he belongs to the Lord, and that he will shew him mercie. . . .

[1638] This year, aboute the 1. or 2. of June, was a great and fearfull earthquake; it was in this place heard before it was felte. It came with a rumbling noyse, or low murmure, like unto remoate thunder; it came from the norward, and pased southward. As the noyse aproched nerer, they earth begane to shake, and came at length with that violence as caused platters, dishes, and such like things as stoode upon shelves, to clatter and fall downe; yea, persons were afraid of the houses themselves. It so fell oute that at the same time diverse of the cheefe of this towne were mett together at one house, conferring with some of their freinds that were upon their removall from the place, (as if the Lord would herby shew the signes of his displeasure, in their shaking a peeces and removalls one from an other.) How ever it was very terrible for the time, and as the men were set talking in the house, some women and others were without the dores, and the earth shooke with that violence as they could not stand without catching hould of the posts and pails that stood next them; but the violence lasted not long. And about halfe an hower, or less, came an other noyse and shaking, but nether so loud nor strong as the former, but quickly passed over; and so it ceased. It was not only on the sea coast, but the Indeans felt it within land; and some ships that were upon the coast were shaken by it. So powerfull is the mighty hand of the Lord, as to make both the earth and sea to shake, and the mountaines to tremble before him, when he pleases; and who can stay his hand? It was observed that the sommers, for divers years togeather after this earthquake, were not so hotte and seasonable for the ripning of corne and other fruits as formerly; but more could and moyst, and subjecte to erly and untimly frosts, by which, many times, much Indean corne came not to maturitie; but whether this was any cause, I leave it to naturallists to judge. . . .

Anno Dom: 1642

Marvilous it may be to see and consider how some kind of wickednes did grow and breake forth here, in a land wher the same was so much witnesed against, and so narrowly looked unto, and severly punished when it was knowne; as in no place more, or so much, that I have known or heard of; insomuch as they have been somewhat censured, even by moderate and good men, for their severitie in punishments. And yet all this could not suppress the breaking out of sundrie notorious sins, (as this year, besids other, gives us too many sad presidents and instances,) espetially drunkennes and unclainnes; not only incontinencie betweene persons unmaried, for which many both men and women have been punished sharply enough, but some maried persons allso.

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34 **the . . . truth.** Banished from the Massachusetts Bay Colony in 1635, Roger Williams (see p. 136) migrated to the Narragansett country, where he founded Providence, Rhode Island • 83 **presidents,** precedents

But that which is worse, even sodomie and bugerie, (things fearfull to name,) have broak forth in this land, oftener then once. I say it may justly be marveled at, and cause us to fear and tremble at the consideration of our corrupte natures, which are so hardly bridled, subdued, and mortified; nay, cannot by any other means but the powerfull worke and grace of Gods spirite. But (besids this) one reason may be, that the Divell may carrie a greater spite against the churches of Christ and the gospell hear, by how much the more they indeaour to preserve holynes and puritie amongst them, and strictly punisheth the contrary when it ariseth either in church or comone wealth; that he might cast a blemishe and staine upon them in the eyes of [the] world, who use to be rash in judgmente. I would rather thinke thus, then that Satane hath more power in these heathen lands, as som have thought, then in more Christian nations, espetially over Gods servants in them.

2. An other reason may be, that it may be in this case as it is with waters when their streames are stopped or dammed up, when they gett passage they flow with more violence, and make more noys and disturbance, then when they are suffered to rune quietly in their owne chanels. So wikednes being here more stopped by strict laws, and the same more nerly looked unto, so as it cannot rune in a comone road of liberty as it would, and is inclined, it searches every wher, and at last breaks out wher it getts vente.

3. A third reason may be, hear (as I am verily perswaded) is not more evills in this kind, nor nothing nere so many by proportion, as in other places; but they are here more discoverd and seen, and made publick by due serch, inquisition, and due punishment; for the churches looke narrowly to their members, and the magistrats over all, more strictly then in other places. Besids, here the people are but few in comparison of other places, which are full and populous, and lye hid, as it were, in a wood or thickett, and many horrible evills by that means are never seen nor knowne; wheras hear, they are, as it were, brought into the light, and set in the plaine feeld, or rather on a hill, made conspicuous to the veiw of all. . . .

1630-1657·1856

John Winthrop

1588 · 1649

John Winthrop was past forty in 1629 when the Massachusetts Bay Company decided to take its charter to New England and chose him as its governor. A Suffolk County squire who had practiced law and quietly administered the very considerable estate left him by his father, Winthrop was a devout Puritan with an ambition, as he himself admitted, for public service. This ambition he satisfied unselfishly in Massachusetts, where for nineteen years he held high office, nine times chosen governor. He labored diligently for the good of the commonwealth, spent much of his private fortune in hospitality and charity, and frankly based his actions upon the social and religious obligations of an aristocratic ruling class. Besides providing the economic

basis for what was long the most influential of the colonies, the group which Winthrop represented is memorable for its early development of educational and political institutions which have survived to the present day.

Of the many remarkable aspects of the Bay Colony, two are especially connected with Winthrop's career: the annual election provided for in the charter, which periodically brought to review the stewardship of public servants; and the development of governmental institutions roughly equivalent to those of England, notably a legislature of two houses and a system of courts, statutes, and common law. Both the annual election and the transference of English constitutional practice to the New World are contributions of a Puritan oligarchy which, although in some ways unenlightened according to twentieth-century standards, was remarkably astute in practice.

Winthrop's writings are somewhat varied in nature. A series of letters addressed to his third wife, Margaret, is perhaps the finest picture of a happy Puritan marriage in our literature. "A Modell of Christian Charity," a discourse composed for delivery on board the *Arbella,* flagship of the Puritan migration, is a careful exposition of his political philosophy: that "God Almightie in his most holy and wise providence hath soe disposed of the Condicion of mankinde, as in all times some must be rich some poore, some highe and eminent in power and dignitie; others meane and in subieccion." Winthrop is chiefly read, however, in his *Journal* or *History of New England,* which is a chronicle of events from 1630 until two months before his death in 1649.

The History of New England from 1630 to 1649, ed. James Savage, New Edition, 2 vols., Boston, 1853 • **Winthrop's Journal, "History of New England," 1630-1649**, ed. J. K. Hosmer, 2 vols., New York, 1908 • R. C. Winthrop, **Life and Letters of John Winthrop**, 2 vols., Boston, 1864-1867 • S. E. Morison, **Builders of the Bay Colony**, Boston, 1930

From

The History of New England

William Hubbard, Cotton Mather, and Thomas Prince, among the earlier New England historians, knew of Winthrop's manuscript journal bound up in three volumes. The first two volumes, covering the period from 1630 to 1644, were published in 1790. The third, rediscovered in 1816, was turned over for editing, along with the previously published volumes, to James Savage. Before his edition appeared in 1825-1826, Volume II was destroyed by fire. There has never been an edition giving the exact reading of the manuscript, for Savage modernized Winthrop's spelling and wrote out the abbreviations in full—a fact which accounts for the relatively regular text of the extracts which follow.

This selection has been chosen to give Winthrop's side of the most famous incident of his career: his virtual impeachment for what some of his neighbors conceived to be an excessive use of his power as magistrate. The sequence of events can be readily followed, but it should be noted that the conflict between aristocratic and popular parties had been brewing for some time prior to 1645, so that the "trial" of Winthrop was a test case. Its origins and development will fascinate anyone concerned with the working processes of self-government.

April 6, 1645] Two great fires happened this week, one at Salem; Mr. Downing having built a new house at his farm, he being gone to England, and his wife and family gone to the church meeting upon the Lord's day, the chimney took fire, and burnt down the house, and bedding, apparel, and household to the value of 200

pounds. The other was at Roxbury this day. John Johnson, the surveyor general of the ammunition, a very industrious and faithful man in his place, having built a fair house in the midst of the town, with divers barns and other out houses, it fell on fire in the day time, (no man knowing by what occasion,) and there being in it seventeen barrels of the country's powder and many arms, all was suddenly burnt and blown up, to the value of 4 or 500 pounds, wherein a special providence of God appeared, for he being from home, the people came together to help, and many were in the house, no man thinking of the powder, till one of the company put them in mind of it, whereupon they all withdrew, and soon after the powder took fire, and blew up all about it, and shook the houses in Boston and Cambridge, so as men thought it had been an earthquake, and carried great pieces of timber a great way off and some rags and such light things beyond Boston meeting house. There being then a stiff gale at south, it drove the fire from the other houses in the town, (for this was the most northerly,) otherwise it had endangered the greatest part of the town. The loss of our powder was the more observable in two respects, 1. Because the court had not taken that care they ought to pay for it, having been owing for divers years; 2. In that, at the court before, they had refused to help our countrymen in Virginia, who had written to us for some for their defence against the Indians, and also to help our brethren of Plymouth in their want.

Mr. Wheelwright being removed from Exeter to Wells, the people remaining fell at variance among themselves. Some would gather a new church, and call old Mr. Batchellor from Hampton to be their pastor, and for that purpose appointed a day, and gave notice thereof to the magistrates and churches, but the court, understanding of their divisions and present unfitness for so solemn and sacred a business, sent and wrote to them (by way of direction only) to desist for that time, and not to proceed until upon satisfaction given to this court, or the court at Ipswich, of their reconciliation, they might proceed with allowance of authority, according to order. To this they submitted, and did not proceed.

The question about Seacunk, now Rehoboth, being revived this court, whether it should belong to this jurisdiction (upon the submission of the purchasers, etc.) or to Plimouth by right of their patent, the court (by order) referred it to the judgment of the commissioners of the union, who decreed it for Plimouth, with reservation, if better evidence should appear by the next meeting.

Some malignant spirits began to stir, and declare themselves for the king, etc., whereupon an order was made to restrain such courses, and to prevent all such turbulent practices, either by action, word, or writing.

The court ordered letters of thanks to be sent to Mr. Richard Andrews of London, haberdasher, for his gift of 500 pounds, and to the Lady Armine for her gift of 20 pounds per annum, and to the Lady Moulson for her gift, which was done accordingly by the committee appointed.

Upon advice from Mr. Weld, remaining still at London, a commission was sent under the public seal to Mr. Pocock and divers other our friends in London to this effect, 1. To answer for us upon all such occasions as may be presented to the parliament or any other court of officer, concerning us or our affairs, but not to engage us, without our consent, 2. To receive all letters and other despatches of public nature or concernment from us, 3. To advise us of all occurrents as may happen touching our colony, 4. To receive all moneys or other things due to us from any person in England, by gift or otherwise, and to dispose of them by direction under our public seal.

Mr. John Winthrop, the younger, coming from England two years since, brought with him 1000 pounds stock and divers workmen to begin an iron work, and

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Text: that prepared by James Savage in 1853. No verbatim text of the manuscript has been printed • 24 **the court,** the General Court of the colony, consisting at first of all stockholders in the Bay Company, who were to meet each spring to elect a governor, deputy-governor, and eighteen assistants. By 1644 the stockholders or freemen had created a House of Deputies to represent them; the assistants had come to constitute an upper house of what was in effect a two-house legislature • 43 **Seacunk, now Rehoboth,** a settlement in southern Massachusetts • 46 **patent,** grant of land • 48 **the union,** the New England Confederation, founded by Plymouth, Massachusetts, Connecticut, and New Haven in 1643. Winthrop had been presiding officer at the first meeting of its commissioners • 52 **the king,** Charles I, then engaged in active warfare against the parliamentary forces under Oliver Cromwell • 57 **gift,** to Harvard College. Lady Moulson's maiden name was Ann Radcliffe; hence the name of the women's college now affiliated with Harvard • 74 **John Winthrop, the younger** (1606-1676), later governor of Connecticut, was much interested in science and technology

had moved the court for some encouragement to be given the undertakers, and for the court to join in carrying on the work, etc. The business was well approved by the court, as a thing much conducing to the good of the country, but we had no stock in the treasury to give furtherance to it, only some two or three private persons joined in it, and the court granted the adventurers near all their demands, as a monopoly of it for twenty-one years, liberty to make use of any six places not already granted, and to have three miles square in every place to them and their heirs, and freedom from public charges, trainings, etc., and this was now sent them over under the public seal this year.

The court, finding that the over number of deputies drew out the courts into great length, and put the country to excessive charges, so as some one court hath expended more [than] 200 pounds, etc., did think fit to have fewer deputies, and so to have only five or six out of each shire; and because the deputies were still unsatisfied with the magistrates' negative vote, the magistrates consented to lay it down, so as the deputies might not exceed them in number, and those to be the prime men of the country, to be chosen by the whole shires; but they agreed first to know the mind of the country. But upon trial, the greater number of towns refused it, so it was left for this time.

At this court in the third month [May] Passaconaway, the chief sachem of Merrimack, and his sons came and submitted themselves and their people and lands under our jurisdiction, as Pumham and others had done before.

Mr. Shepherd, the pastor of the church in Cambridge, being at Connecticut when the commissioners met there for the United Colonies, moved them for some contribution of help towards the maintenance of poor scholars in the college, whereupon the commissioners ordered that it should be commended to the deputies of the general courts and the elders within the several colonies to raise (by way of voluntary contribution) one peck of corn or twelve pence money, or other commodity, of every family, which those of Connecticut presently performed.

[July 3] By order of the general court, upon advice with the elders, a general fast was kept. The occasions were, the miseries of England, and our own differences in the general court, and also for the great drought. In this latter the Lord prevented our prayers in sending us rain soon after, and before the day of humiliation came.

Divers free schools were erected, as at Roxbury (for maintenance whereof every inhabitant bound some house or land for a yearly allowance forever) and at Boston (where they made an order to allow forever 50 pounds to the master and an house, and 30 pounds to an usher, who should also teach to read and write and cipher, and Indians' children were to be taught freely, and the charge to be by yearly contribution, either by voluntary allowance, or by rate of such as refused, etc., and this order was confirmed by the general court). Other towns did the like, providing maintenance by several means. . . .

[May 14] The court of elections was held at Boston. Mr. Thomas Dudley was chosen governour, Mr. Winthrop, deputy governour again, and Mr. Endecott, serjeant major general. Mr. Israel Stoughton, having been in England the year before, and now gone again about his private occasions, was by vote left out, and Herbert Pelham, Esquire, chosen an assistant.

This court fell out a troublesome business, which took up much time. The town of Hingham, having one Emes their lieutenant seven or eight years, had lately chosen him to be their captain, and had presented him to the standing council for allowance; but before it was accomplished, the greater part of the town took some light occasion of offence against him, and chose one Allen to be their captain, and presented him to the magistrates (in the time of the last general court) to be allowed. But the magistrates, considering the injury

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12 **trainings**, of the militia • 14 **deputies**, chosen by the towns, which in Massachusetts already numbered thirty. The magistrates, or House of Assistants, were willing to forego their right to veto actions of the House of Deputies, if they were not outnumbered • 49 **free schools**. Not until 1647 did Massachusetts pass the act requiring each town of fifty families to support an elementary school, each town of one hundred families to provide a grammar school. This act is usually regarded as the origin of the theory of education at public expense • 59 **several means**. Five pages of miscellaneous entries are here omitted • 60 **court of elections**. At this time, apparently, the freemen cast their ballots by proxy, through their deputies or representatives, at the designated meeting of the General Court. The solemnity of election day, with its inevitable sermon, has been well described by Hawthorne in **The Scarlet Letter** • 62 **deputy governour again**. Winthrop was chosen governor in 1631, 1632, 1633, 1634, 1637, 1638, 1639, 1640, 1642, and 1643; he was chosen deputy-governor in 1636, 1644, and 1645 • 71 **for allowance**. The General Court, because it had granted land to each town, retained some supervisory powers

that would hereby accrue to Emes, (who had been their chief commander so many years, and had deserved well in his place, and that Allen had no other skill, but what he learned from Emes,) refused to allow of Allen, but willed both sides to return home, and every officer to keep his place, until the court should take further order. Upon their return home, the messengers, who came for Allen, called a private meeting of those of their own party, and told them truly, what answer they received from the magistrates, and soon after they appointed a training day, (without their lieutenant's knowledge,) and being assembled, the lieutenant hearing of it came to them, and would have exercised them, as he was wont to do, but those of the other party refused to follow him, except he would show them some order for it. He told them of the magistrates' order about it; the others replied, that authority had advised him to go home and lay down his place honorably. Another asked, what the magistrates had to do with them? Another, that it was but three or four of the magistrates, and if they had been all there, it had been nothing, for Mr. Allen had brought more for them from the deputies, than the lieutenant had from the magistrates. Another of them professeth he will die at the sword's point, if he might not have the choice of his own officers. Another (viz. the clerk of the band) stands up above the people, and requires them to vote, whether they would bear them out in what was past and what was to come. This being assented unto, and the tumult continuing, one of the officers (he who had told them that authority had advised the lieutenant to go home and lay down his place) required Allen to take the captain's place; but he not then accepting it, they put it to the vote, whether he should be their captain. The vote passing for it, he then told the company, it was now past question, and thereupon Allen accepted it, and exercised the company two or three days, only about a third part of them followed the lieutenant. He, having denied in the open field, that authority had advised him to lay down his place, and putting (in some sort) the lie upon those who had so reported, was the next Lord's day called to answer it before the church, and he standing to maintain what he had said, five witnesses were produced to convince him. Some of them affirmed the words, the others explained their meaning to be, that one magistrate had so advised him. He denied both. Whereupon the pastor, one Mr. Hubbert, (brother to three of the principal in this sedition,) was very forward to have excommunicated the lieutenant presently, but, upon some opposition, it was put off to the next day. Thereupon the lieutenant and some three or four more of the chief men of the town inform four of the next magistrates of these proceedings, who forthwith met at Boston about it, (viz. the deputy governour, the serjeant major general, the secretary, and Mr. Hibbins). These, considering the case, sent warrant to the constable to attach some of the principal offenders (viz. three of the Hubbards and two more) to appear before them at Boston, to find sureties for their appearance at the next court, etc. Upon the day they came to Boston, but their said brother the minister came before them, and fell to expostulate with the said magistrates about the said cause, complaining against the complainants, as talebearers, etc., taking it very disdainfully that his brethren should be sent for by a constable, with other high speeches, which were so provoking, as some of the magistrates told him, that, were it not for respect to his ministry, they would commit him. When his brethren and the rest were come in, the matters of the information were laid to their charge, which they denied for the most part. So they were bound over (each for other) to the next court of assistants. After this five others were sent for by summons (these were only for speaking untruths of the magistrates in the church). They came before the deputy governour, when he was alone, and demanded the cause of their sending for, and to know their accusers. The deputy told them so much of the cause as he could remember, and referred them to the secretary for a copy, and for their accusers he told them they knew both the men and the matter, neither was a judge bound to let a criminal offender know his accusers before the day of trial, but only in his own discretion, least the accuser might be taken off or perverted, etc. Being required to give bond for their appearance, etc., they refused. The deputy labored to let them see their error, and gave them time to consider of it. About fourteen days after, seeing two of them in the court, (which was kept by those four magistrates for smaller causes,) the deputy required them again to

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47 **Mr. Hubbert,** Peter Hobart (1604-1678), who settled at Hingham in 1635 • 75 **the deputy governour,** Winthrop himself

enter bond for their appearance, etc., and upon their second refusal committed them in that open court.

The general court falling out before the court of assistants, the Hubberts and the two which were committed, and others of Hingham, about ninety, (whereof Mr. Hubbert their minister was the first,) presented a petition to the general court, to this effect, that whereas some of them had been bound over, and others committed by some of the magistrates for words spoken concerning the power of the general court, and their liberties, and the liberties of the church, etc., they craved that the court would hear the cause, etc. This was first presented to the deputies, who sent it to the magistrates, desiring their concurrence with them, that the cause might be heard, etc. The magistrates, marvelling that they would grant such a petition, without desiring conference first with themselves, whom it so much concerned, returned answer, that they were willing the cause should be heard, so as the petitioners would name the magistrates whom they intended, and the matters they would lay to their charge, etc. Upon this the deputies demanded of the petitioners' agents (who were then deputies of the court) to have satisfaction in these points, thereupon they singled out the deputy governour, and two of the petitioners undertook the prosecution. Then the petition was returned again to the magistrates for their consent, etc., who being desirous that the deputies might take notice, how prejudicial to authority and the honor of the court it would be to call a magistrate to answer criminally in a cause, wherein nothing of that nature could be laid to his charge, and that without any private examination preceding, did intimate so much to the deputies, (though not directly, yet plainly enough,) showing them that nothing criminal, etc., was laid to his charge, and that the things objected were the act of the court, etc., yet if they would needs have a hearing, they would join in it. And indeed it was the desire of the deputy, (knowing well how much himself and the other magistrates did suffer in the cause, through the slanderous reports wherewith the deputies and the country about had been possessed,) that the cause might receive a public hearing.

The day appointed being come, the court assembled in the meeting house at Boston. Divers of the elders were present, and a great assembly of people. The deputy governour, coming in with the rest of the magistrates, placed himself beneath within the bar, and so sate uncovered. Some question was in the court about his being in that place (for many both of the court and the assembly were grieved at it). But the deputy telling them, that, being criminally accused, he might not sit as a judge in that cause, and if he were upon the bench, it would be a great disadvantage to him, for he could not take that liberty to plead the cause, which he ought to be allowed at the bar, upon this the court was satisfied.

The petitioners having declared their grievances, etc., the deputy craved leave to make answer, which was to this effect, viz., that he accounted it no disgrace, but rather an honor put upon him, to be singled out from his brethren in the defence of a cause so just (as he hoped to make that appear) and of so public concernment. And although he might have pleaded to the petition, and so have demurred in law, upon three points, 1, In that there is nothing laid to his charge, that is either criminal or unjust; 2, if he had been mistaken either in the law or in the state of the case, yet whether it were such as a judge is to be called in question for as a delinquent, where it doth not appear to be wickedness or wilfulness; for in England many erroneous judgments are reversed, and errors in proceeding rectified, and yet the judges not called in question about them; 3, in that being thus singled out from three other of the magistrates, and to answer by himself for some things, which were the act of a court, he is deprived of the just means of his defence, for many things may be justified as done by four, which are not warrantable if done by one alone, and the records of a court are a full justification of any act, while such record stands in force. But he was willing to waive this plea, and to make answer to the particular charges, to the end that the truth of the case, and of all proceedings thereupon might appear to all men.

Hereupon the court proceeded to examine the whole cause. The deputy justified all the particulars laid to his charge, as that upon credible information of such a mutinous practice, and open disturbance of the peace, and slighting of authority, the offenders were sent for,

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44 **the elders,** ministers of the churches. Their close affiliation with Winthrop's party accounts for the identification of church and state in early Massachusetts history

the principal by warrant to the constable to bring them, and others by summons, and that some were bound over to the next court of assistants, and others that refused to be bound were committed; and all this according to the equity of laws here established, and the custom and laws of England, and our constant practice here these fifteen years. And for some speeches he was charged with as spoken to the delinquents when they came before him at his house, when none were present with him but themselves, first, he appealed to the judgment of the court, whether delinquents may be received as competent witnesses against a magistrate in such a case; then, for the words themselves, some he justified, some he explained so as no advantage could be taken of them, as that he should say, that the magistrates could try some criminal causes without a jury, that he knew no law of God or man, which required a judge to make known to the party his accusers (or rather witnesses) before the cause came to hearing. But two of them charged him to have said, that it was against the law of God and man so to do, which had been absurd, for the deputy professed he knew no law against it, only a judge may sometimes, in discretion, conceal their names, etc., least they should be tampered with, or conveyed out of the way, etc.

Two of the magistrates and many of the deputies were of opinion that the magistrates exercised too much power, and that the people's liberty was thereby in danger; and other of the deputies (being about half) and all the rest of the magistrates were of a different judgment, and that authority was overmuch slighted, which, if not timely remedied, would endanger the commonwealth, and bring us to a mere democracy. By occasion of this difference, there was not so orderly carriage at the hearing, as was meet, each side striving unseasonably to enforce the evidence, and declaring their private judgments thereupon, which should have been reserved to a more private debate, (as after it was,) so as the best part of two days was spent in this public agitation and examination of witnesses, etc. This being ended, a committee was chosen of magistrates and deputies, who stated the case, as it appeared upon the whole pleading and evidence, though it cost much time, and with great difficulty did the committee come to accord upon it.

The case being stated and agreed, the magistrates and deputies considered it apart, first the deputies, having spent a whole day, and not attaining to any issue, sent up to the magistrates to have their thoughts about it, who taking it into consideration, (the deputy always withdrawing when that matter came into debate,) agreed upon these four points chiefly; 1. That the petition was false and scandalous, 2. That those who were bound over, etc., and others that were parties to the disturbance at Hingham, were all offenders, though in different degrees, 3. That they and the petitioners were to be censured, 4. That the deputy governour ought to be acquit and righted, etc. This being sent down to the deputies, they spent divers days about it, and made two or three returns to the magistrates, and thought they found the petition false and scandalous, and so voted it, yet they would not agree to any censure. The magistrates, on the other side, were resolved for censure, and for the deputy's full acquittal. The deputies being thus hard held to it, and growing weary of the court, for it began [May 14], and brake not up (save one week) till [July 5], were content they should pay the charges of the court. After, they were drawn to consent to some small fines, but in this they would have drawn in lieutenant Emes to have been fined deeply, he being neither plaintiff nor defendant, but an informer only, and had made good all the points of his information, and no offence found in him, other than that which was after adjudged worthy admonition only; and they would have imposed the charges of the court upon the whole trained band at Hingham, when it was apparent, that divers were innocent, and had no hand in any of these proceedings. The magistrates not concenting to so manifest injustice, they sent to the deputies to desire them to join with

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5 **laws here established.** In 1641 the General Court had adopted one hundred fundamental laws, known as **The Body of Liberties.** Their chief author was the Rev. Nathaniel Ward (1578-1652), who, having had the advantage of legal training, modeled his statutes more upon English precedents than upon the Mosaic laws in the Old Testament, despite widespread belief among the clergy that laws ought not to "smell of man" • 33 **a mere democracy.** Winthrop was always doubtful about referring "matter of counsel or judicature to the body of the people, quia [of which] the best part is always the least, and of that best part the wiser part is always the lesser." The two magistrates who disagreed with him were Richard Saltonstall and Richard Bellingham

them in calling in the help of the elders, (for they were now assembled at Cambridge from all parts of the United Colonies, and divers of them were present when the cause was publicly heard, and declared themselves much grieved to see that the deputy governour should be called forth to answer as a delinquent in such a case as this was, and one of them, in the name of the rest, had written to him to that effect, fearing least he should apprehend over deeply of the injury, etc.) but the deputies would by no means consent thereto, for they knew that many of the elders understood the cause, and were more careful to uphold the honor and power of the magistrates than themselves well liked of, and many of them (at the request of the elder and others of the church of Hingham during this court) had been at Hingham, to see if they could settle peace in the church there, and found the elder and others the petitioners in great fault, etc. After this (upon motion of the deputies) it was agreed to refer the cause to arbitrators, according to an order of court, when the magistrates and deputies cannot agree, etc. The magistrates named six of the elders of the next towns, and left it to them to choose any three or four of them, and required them to name six others. The deputies finding themselves now at the wall, and not daring to trust the elders with the cause, they sent to desire that six of themselves might come and confer with the magistrates, which being granted, they came, and at last came to this agreement, viz., the chief petitioners and the rest of the offenders were severally fined, (all their fines not amounting to 50 pounds,) the rest of the petitioners to bear equal share to 50 pounds more towards the charges of the court, (two of the principal offenders were the deputies of the town, Joshua Hubbert and Bozone Allen, the first was fined 20 pounds, and the other 5 pounds,) lieutenant Emes to be under admonition, the deputy governour to be legally and publicly acquit of all that was laid to his charge.

According to this agreement, [July 3] presently after the lecture the magistrates and deputies took their places in the meeting house, and the people being come together, and the deputy governour placing himself within the bar, as at the time of the hearing, etc., the governour read the sentence of the court, without speaking any more, for the deputies had (by importunity) obtained a promise of silence from the magistrates. Then was the deputy governour desired by the court to go up and take his place again upon the bench, which he did accordingly, and the court being about to arise, he desired leave for a little speech, which was to this effect.

I suppose something may be expected from me, upon this charge that is befallen me, which moves me to speak now to you; yet I intend not to intermeddle in the proceedings of the court, or with any of the persons concerned therein. Only I bless God, that I see an issue of this troublesome business. I also acknowledge the justice of the court, and, for mine own part, I am well satisfied, I was publicly charged, and I am publicly and legally acquitted, which is all I did expect or desire. And though this be sufficient for my justification before men, yet not so before the God, who hath seen so much amiss in my dispensations (and even in this affair) as calls me to be humble. For to be publicly and criminally charged in this court, is matter of humiliation, (and I desire to make a right use of it,) notwithstanding I be thus acquitted. If her father had spit in her face, (saith the Lord concerning Miriam,) should she not have been ashamed seven days? Shame had lien upon her, whatever the occasion had been. I am unwilling to stay you from your urgent affairs, yet give me leave (upon this special occasion) to speak a little more to this assembly. It may be of some good use, to inform and rectify the judgments of some of the people, and may prevent such distempers as have arisen amongst us. The great questions that have troubled the country, are about the authority of the magistrates and the liberty of the people. It is yourselves who have called us to this office, and being called by you, we have our authority from God, in the way of an ordinance, such as hath the image of God eminently stamped upon it, the contempt and violation whereof hath been vindicated, with examples of divine vengeance. I entreat you to consider, that when you choose magistrates, you take them from among yourselves, men subject to like passions as you are. Therefore when you see infirmities in us, you should

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67 **Miriam.** The reference is to Numbers 12:14 • 79 **an ordinance.** Winthrop uses the word in a legal sense of his day: legislation issued by the sovereign but not sanctioned by parliament. He is arguing that the magistrate, once elected, is responsible to God, not to the people

reflect upon your own, and that would make you bear the more with us, and not be severe censurers of the failings of your magistrates, when you have continual experience of the like infirmities in yourselves and others. We account him a good servant, who breaks not his covenant. The covenant between you and us is the oath you have taken of us, which is to this purpose, that we shall govern you and judge your causes by the rules of God's law and our own, according to our best skill. When you agree with a workman to build you a ship or house, etc., he undertakes as well for his skill as for his faithfulness, for it is his profession, and you pay him for both. But when you call one to be a magistrate, he doth not profess nor undertake to have sufficient skill for that office, nor can you furnish him with gifts, etc., therefore you must run the hazard of his skill and ability. But if he fail in faithfulness, which by his oath he is bound unto, that he must answer for. If it fall out that the case be clear to common apprehension, and the rule clear also, if he transgress here, the error is not in the skill, but in the evil of the will: it must be required of him. But if the case be doubtful, or the rule doubtful, to men of such understanding and parts as your magistrates are, if your magistrates should err here, yourselves must bear it.

For the other point concerning liberty, I observe a great mistake in the country about that. There is a twofold liberty, natural (I mean as our nature is now corrupt) and civil or federal. The first is common to man with beasts and other creatures. By this, man, as he stands in relation to man simply, hath liberty to do what he lists; it is a liberty to evil as well as to good. This liberty is incompatible and inconsistent with authority, and cannot endure the least restraint of the most just authority. The exercise and maintaining of this liberty makes men grow more evil, and in time to be worse than brute beasts: *omnus sumus licentia deteriores.* This is that great enemy of truth and peace, that wild beast, which all the ordinances of God are bent against, to restrain and subdue it. The other kind of liberty I call civil or federal, it may also be termed moral, in reference to the covenant between God and man, in the moral law, and the politic covenants and constitutions, amongst men themselves. This liberty is the proper end and object of authority, and cannot subsist without it; and it is a liberty to that only which is good, just, and honest. This liberty you are to stand for, with the hazard (not only of your goods, but) of your lives, if need be. Whatsoever crosseth this, is not authority, but a distemper thereof. This liberty is maintained and exercised in a way of subjection to authority; it is of the same kind of liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free. The woman's own choice makes such a man her husband; yet being so chosen, he is her lord, and she is to be subject to him, yet in a way of liberty, not of bondage; and a true wife accounts her subjection her honor and freedom, and would not think her condition safe and free, but in her subjection to her husband's authority. Such is the liberty of the church under the authority of Christ, her king and husband; his yoke is so easy and sweet to her as a bride's ornaments; and if through frowardness or wantonness, etc., she shake it off, at any time, she is at no rest in her spirit, until she take it up again; and whether her lord smiles upon her, and embraceth her in his arms, or whether he frowns, or rebukes, or smites her, she apprehends the sweetness of his love in all, and is refreshed, supported, and instructed by every such dispensation of his authority over her. On the other side, ye know who they are that complain of this yoke, and say, let us break their bands, etc., we will not have this man to rule over us. Even so, brethren, it will be between you and your magistrates. If you stand for your natural corrupt liberties, and will do what is good in your own eyes, you will not endure the least weight of authority, but will murmur, and oppose, and be always striving to shake off that yoke; but if you will be satisfied to enjoy such civil and lawful liberties, such as Christ allows you, then will you quietly and cheerfully submit unto that authority which is set over you, in all the administrations of it, for your good. Wherein, if we fail at any time, we hope we shall be willing (by God's assistance) to hearken to good advice from any of you, or in any other way of God; so shall your liberties be preserved, in upholding the honor and power of authority amongst you. . . .

1645·1853

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6 **covenant.** Winthrop's frequent reference to covenants reflects the dominance in New England of covenant or federal theology, which explained man's relation to God in terms of a legal agreement or contract • 37 **omnus . . . deteriores.** We are all made weak by liberty

Samuel Sewall

1652 · 1730

Samuel Sewall was born at Bishopstoke, England, but migrated to Boston when he was nine years old and spent the rest of his life there. For nearly sixty years following his graduation from Harvard in 1671 he was active in business and politics. For a period (1681-1684) he managed the colony's printing press; he spent a year in England (1688-1689), engaged in private business and assisting Increase Mather in his unsuccessful efforts to bring about the restoration of the colony's charter; he was captain, in 1701, of the Ancient and Honorable Artillery Company; and from 1718 to 1728 he was Chief Justice of the Superior Court of Massachusetts.

Sewall had fourteen children by his first wife (Hannah, daughter of John Hull, Master of the Mint), whom he married in 1676 and who died in 1717. A second wife, married in 1719, died May 26, 1720. During October and November 1720 he courted Madam Winthrop without success (see selection). A third marriage —his last—occurred in 1722.

James Truslow Adams (in the *Dictionary of American Biography)* calls Sewall a "competent jurist of more than average liberality." His most famous, or infamous, juridical rôle was played at Salem in 1692 as one of three commissioners (William Stoughton and John Hathorne were the other two) appointed by the Royal Governor, Sir William Phips, to try the cases of witchcraft. Nineteen persons were sentenced to death. Sewall was the only one of the three judges ever to admit publicly that the court had been guilty of a tragic error. On January 14, 1697, the day appointed by the legislature as a day of penance for whatever had been done amiss at Salem, he stood up in the Old South Church while the Reverend Samuel Willard read Sewall's prepared statement of confession (see selection).

Sewall has been called unattractive names by more than one recent writer on colonial New England. Adams says that he was "mercenary"; Parrington speaks of his "tradesman's conception of religion"; socially minded historians have pointed to Sewall as an example of the unholy alliance between Puritanism and capitalism. It is true that Sewall was not the man to underestimate the value of a dollar honestly earned. At the same time, it is hardly possible for the careful reader of the *Diary* to question the sincerity of Sewall's religious convictions. His use of legal terminology in religious contexts was quite natural to a lawyer; moreover, the same usage occurs in the sermons of the least worldly ministers of the period, and Sewall was a great hearer and reader of sermons. A tradesman, yes; but the record of "a private day of Prayer with Fasting" (see entry of February 9, 1708, p. 91) shows him to have been a sincerely religious man. As an expression of "a tradesman's conception of religion," the passage is, to say the least, extraordinary.

Sewall was the author of several lesser works (among them, *The Selling of Joseph,* perhaps the earliest protest in this country against Negro slavery); but his fame rests upon the *Diary,* which remained unpublished until 1878. Begun in 1673 and continued through 1729, the *Diary* affords a rich and vivid picture of life in and

around Boston for a period of about fifty-seven years. It is remarkably concise and suggestive. Indeed, its distinctive literary virtue lies in the writer's ability to suggest an unforgettable picture in a few words: the picture, for example, of a New England meeting house in winter, "This day so cold that the Sacramental Bread is frozen pretty hard, and rattles sadly as broken into the Plates." After these two hundred years and more, Sewall's *Diary*, in Parrington's words, "is still quick with life."

Samuel Sewall, **Diary, Massachusetts Historical Society Collections,** Series 5, Vols. V-VII, 1878-1882 • **Samuel Sewall's Diary** (abridged), ed. Mark Van Doren, New York, 1927 • V. L. Parrington, "Samuel Sewall, Yankee," **The Colonial Mind,** New York, 1927

From the *Diary*

July 8, 1677. New Meeting House *Mane:* In Sermon time there came in a female Quaker, in a Canvas Frock, her hair disshevelled and loose like a Periwigg, her face as black as ink, led by two other Quakers, and two other followed. It occasioned the greatest and most amazing uproar that I ever saw. . . .

[Nov. 12, 1685] . . . the Ministers of this Town Come to the Court and complain against a Dancing Master who seeks to set up here and hath mixt Dances, and his time of Meeting is Lecture-Day; and 'tis reported he should say that by one Play he could teach more Divinity than Mr. Willard or the Old Testament. Mr. Moodey said 'twas not a time for N[ew] E[ngland] to dance. Mr. Mather struck at the Root, speaking against mixt Dances. . . .

Sabbath, Jan^{y} 24 [1686]. Friday night and Satterday were extream cold, so that the Harbour frozen up, and to the Castle. This day so cold that the Sacramental Bread is frozen pretty hard, and rattles sadly as broken into the Plates. . . .

Tuesday, Dec^{r} 21 [1686]. There is a meeting at Mr. Allen's, of the Ministers and four of each Congregation, to consider what answer to give the Governour; and 'twas agreed that could not with a good conscience consent that our Meeting-Houses should be made use of for the Common-Prayer Worship. . . .

[January 14, 1697]. Copy of the Bill I put up on the Fast day; giving it to Mr. Willard as he pass'd by, and standing up at the reading of it, and bowing when finished; in the Afternoon.

Samuel Sewall, sensible of the reiterated strokes of God upon himself and family; and being sensible, that as to the Guilt contracted upon the opening of the late Comission of Oyer and Terminer at Salem (to which the order for this Day relates) he is, upon many accounts, more concerned than any that he knows of, Desires to take the Blame and shame of it, Asking pardon of men, And especially desiring prayers that God, who has an Unlimited Authority, would pardon that sin and all other his sins; personal and Relative: And according to his infinite Benignity, and Sovereignty, Not Visit the sin of him, or of any other, upon himself or any of his, nor upon the Land: But that He would powerfully defend him against all Temptations to Sin, for the future; and vouchsafe him the efficacious, saving Conduct of his Word and Spirit. . . .

1 **Mane,** in the morning • 2 **a female Quaker.** Interesting evidence is here afforded of a historical basis for Hawthorne's depiction of a fanatical Quakeress in **The Gentle Boy** • 3 **Periwigg.** Sewall had a particular aversion to periwigs • 10 **Lecture-Day,** every Thursday, when a sermon or "lecture" was delivered • 11 **one Play.** The theater, of course, was not permitted in colonial Boston • 14 **Mr. Mather,** the Rev. Increase Mather, father of Cotton Mather • 26 **Common-Prayer Worship,** the form of worship used by the Established Church of England. "I would not set up," Sewall wrote in his **Diary** "that which the people of New England came over to avoid." Thus rebuffed, Sir Edmund Andros, the Royal Governor, and his Anglican associates founded King's Chapel, although the building was not completed until after Andros' expulsion from the colony in 1689 • 27 **the Bill.** The document is Sewall's public confession of error as one of the judges of the witchcraft cases in Salem in 1692 • 34 **Oyer and Terminer,** literally, to hear and determine; used of a writ or commission giving authority to judges

Lord's Day, June 10, 1705. The Learned and pious Mr. Michael Wigglesworth dies at Malden about 9 m. Had been sick about 10 days of a Fever; 73 years and 8 moneths old. He was the Author of the Poem entituled The Day of Doom, which has been so often printed: and was very useful as a Physician. . . .

Feb^{y} 9. 1708. The Apointment of a Judge for the Super. Court being to be made upon next Fifth day, Febr. 12, I pray'd God to Accept me in keeping a private day of Prayer with Fasting for That and other Important Matters: I kept it upon the Third day Febr. 10. 1708 in the uper Chamber at the North-East end of the House, fastening the Shutters next the Street.— Perfect what is lacking in my Faith, and in the faith of my dear Yokefellow. Convert my children; especially Samuel and Hanah; Provide Rest and Settlement for Hanah: Recover Mary, Save Judith, Elisabeth and Joseph: Requite the Labour of Love of my Kinswoman Jane Tappin, Give her health, find out Rest for her. Make David a man after thy own heart, Let Susan live and be baptised with the Holy Ghost, and with fire. Relations. Steer the Government in this difficult time, when the Governour and many others are at so much Variance: Direct, incline, overrule on the Council-day fifth-day, Febr. 12. as to the special Work of it in filling the Super. Court with Justices; or any other thing of like nature. . . . Bless the Company for propagation of the Gospel, especiall Gov^{r} Ashurst &c. Revive the Business of Religion at Natick, and accept and bless John Neesnumin who went thither last week for that end. Mr. Rawson at Nantucket. Bless the South Church in preserving and spiriting our Pastor; in directing unto suitable Supply, and making the Church unanimous: Save the Town, College; Province from Invasion of Enemies, open, Secret, and from false Brethren: Defend the Purity of Worship. Save Connecticut, bless their New Governour: Save the Reformation under N. York Governm^{t}. Reform all the European Plantations in America; Spanish, Portuguese, English, French, Dutch; Save this New World, that where Sin hath abounded, Grace may Superabound; that CHRIST who is stronger, would bind the strong man and spoil his house; and order the Word to be given, Babylon is fallen.——— Save our Queen, lengthen out her Life and Reign. Save France, make the Proud helper stoop, Save all Europe; Save Asia, Africa, Europe and America. These were gen^{l} heads of my Meditation and prayer; and through the bounteous Grace of GOD, I had a very Comfortable day of it. . . .

Aug^{t} 25 [1709]. Mr. Cotton Mather, Mr. Pemberton and wife, and others dine with us after Lecture. In the even I invited the Gov^{r} and Council to drink a Glass of Wine with me; About 20 came; viz. Gov^{r} Winthrop, Hathorne.... Gave them variety of good Drink, and at going away a large piece of Cake Wrap'd in Paper. They very heartily wish'd me Joy of my daughter's Marriage....

April 3 [1711]. I dine with the Court at Pullin's. Mr. Attorney treats us at his house with excellent Pipins, Anchovas, Olives, Nuts. I said I should be able to make no Judgment on the Pipins without a Review, which made the Company Laugh. Spake much of Negroes; I mention'd the problem, whether should be white after the Resurrection: Mr. Bolt took it up as absurd, because the body should be void of all Colour, spake as if it should be a Spirit. I objected what Christ said to his Disciples after the Resurrection. He said twas not so after his Ascension. . . .

Seventh Day [Saturday] Feb^{y} 6 [1714] [Queen Anne's birthday]. . . . My neighbour Colson knocks at our door about 9 or past to tell of the Disorders at the Tavern at the South-end in Mr. Addington's house, kept by John Wallis. He desired me that I would accompany Mr. Bromfield and Constable Howell thither. It was 35 Minutes past Nine at Night before Mr. Bromfield came; then we went. I took Aeneas Salter with me. Found much Company. They refus'd to go away. Said were there to drink the Queen's Health, and they had many other Healths to drink. Call'd for more Drink: drank to me, I took notice of the Affront to them. Said must and would stay upon that Solemn occasion. Mr. John Netmaker drank the Queen's health to me. I told him I drank none; upon that he ceas'd. Mr. Brinley put on his Hat to affront me. I made him take it off. I threaten'd to send some of them to prison; that did not

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5 **The Day of Doom,** first published in 1662, was the most popular poem written in colonial New England • 34 **College,** Harvard College • 40 **where . . . Superabound.** Compare Romans 5:20: "But where sin abounded, grace did much more abound." Sewall's language is often Biblical • 42 **bind . . . house,** a paraphrase of Matthew 12:29 • 44 **Queen,** Anne, Queen of England, 1702-1714 • 45 **Proud . . . stoop,** a paraphrase of Job 9:13 • 54 **Hathorne,** John Hathorne, one of the "witch judges" and an ancestor of Nathaniel Hawthorne

move them. They said they could but pay their Fine, and doing that they might stay. I told them if they had not a care, they would be guilty of a Riot. Mr. Bromfield spake of raising a number of Men to Quell them, and was in some heat, ready to run into Street. But I did not like that. Not having Pen and Ink, I went to take their Names with my Pensil, and not knowing how to Spell their Names, they themselves of their own accord writ them. Mr. Netmaker, reproaching the Province, said they had not made one good Law.

At last I address'd myself to Mr. Banister. I told him he had been longest an Inhabitant and Freeholder, I expected he should set a good Example in departing thence. Upon this he invited them to his own House, and away they went; and we, after them, went away. The Clock in the room struck a pretty while before they departed. I went directly home, and found it 25 Minutes past Ten at Night when I entred my own House. . . .

Dec^{r} 23 [1714]. Dr. C. Mather preaches excellently from Ps. 37. Trust in the Lord &c. only spake of the Sun being in the centre of our System. I think it inconvenient to assert such Problems. . . .

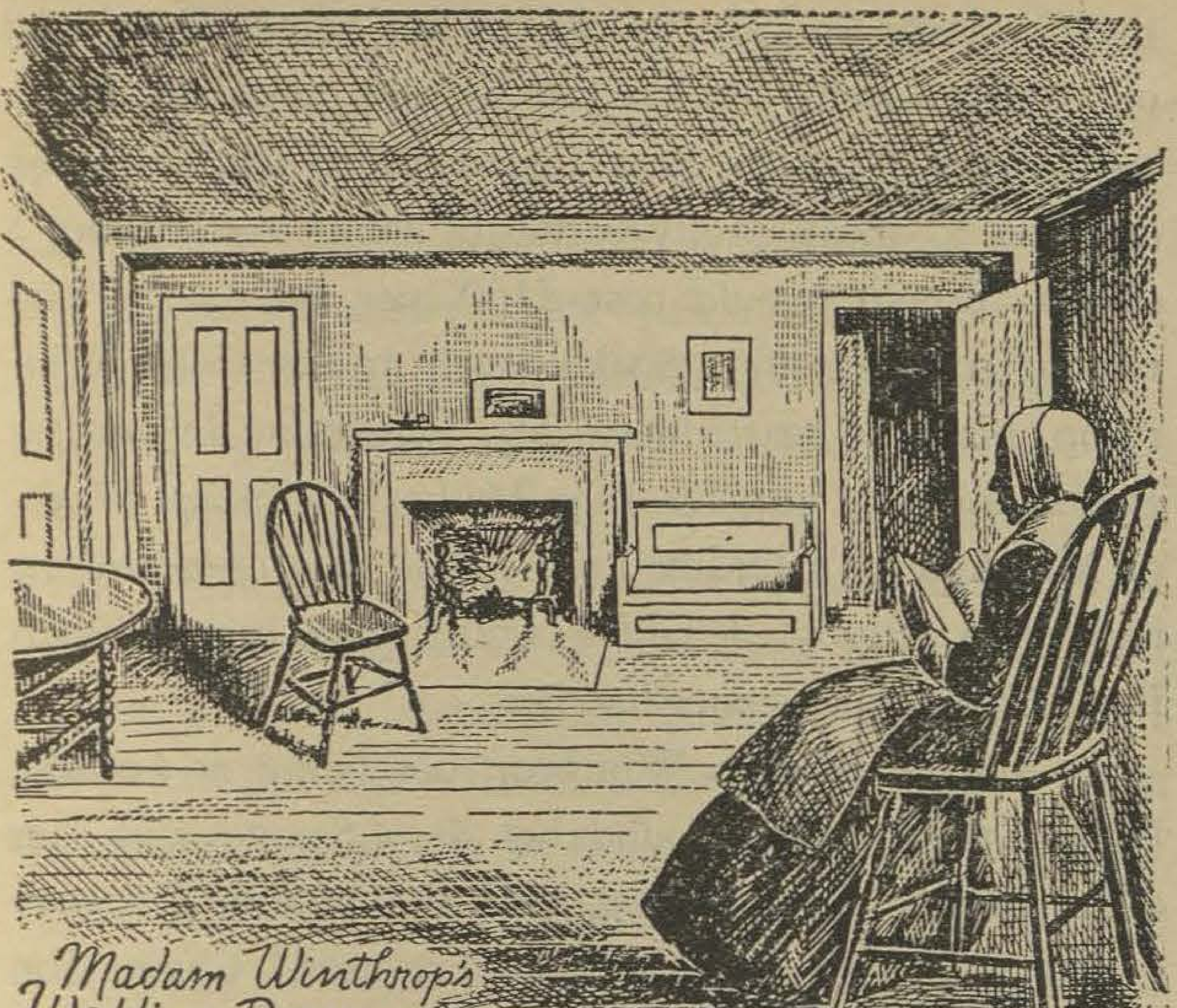
Octob^{r} 3. [1720]. Waited on Madam Winthrop again; 'twas a little while before she came in. Her daughter Noyes being there alone with me, I said, I hoped my Waiting on her Mother would not be disagreeable to her. She answer'd she should not be against that that might be for her Comfort. I Saluted her, and told her I perceiv'd I must shortly wish her a good Time; (her mother had told me, she was with Child, and within a Moneth or two of her time). By and by in came Mr. Airs, Chaplain of the Castle, and hang'd up his Hat, which I was a little startled at, it seeming as if he was to lodge there. At last Madam Winthrop came in too. After a considerable time, I went up to her and said, if it might not be inconvenient I desired to speak with her. She assented, and spake of going into another Room; but Mr. Airs and Mrs. Noyes presently rose up, and went out, leaving us there alone. Then I usher'd in Discourse from the names in the Fore-seat; at last I pray'd that Katharine might be the person assign'd for me. She instantly took it up in the way of Denyal, as if she had catch'd at an Opportunity to do it, saying she could not do it before she was asked. Said that was her mind unless she should Change it, which she believed she should not; could not leave her Children. I express'd my Sorrow that she should do it so Speedily, pray'd her Consideration, and ask'd her when I should wait on her agen. She setting no time, I mention'd that day Sennight. Gave her Mr. Willard's Fountain open'd with the little print and verses; saying, I hop'd if we did well read that book, we should meet together hereafter, if we did not now. She took the Book, and put it in her Pocket. Took Leave.

8^{r} 5. Midweek, I din'd with the Court; from thence went and visited Cousin Jonathon's wife, Lying in with her little Betty. Gave the Nurse 2^{s}. Although I had apointed to wait upon her, M^{m} Winthrop, next Monday, yet I went from my Cousin Sewall's thither about 3. p. m. The Nurse told me Madam dined abroad at her daughter Noyes's, they were to go out together. I ask'd for the Maid, who was not within. Gave Katee a peny and a Kiss and came away. Accompanyed my Son and dâter Cooper in their Remove to their New House. . . .

8^{r} 6th. . . . A little after 6. p. m. I went to Madam Winthrop's. She was not within. I gave Sarah Chickering the Maid 2^{s}, Juno, who brought in wood, 1^{s}. Afterward the Nurse came in, I gave her 18^{d}, having no other small Bill. After awhile Dr. Noyes came in with his Mother; and quickly after his wife came in: They sat talking, I think, till eight a-clock. I said I fear'd I might be some Interruption to their Business: Dr. Noyes reply'd pleasantly: He fear'd they might be an Interruption to me, and went away. Madam seem'd to harp upon the same string. Must take care of her Children; could not leave that House and Neighbourhood where she had dwelt so long. I told her she might doe her children as much or more good by bestowing what she laid out in Hous-keeping, upon them. Said her Son

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1 **Fine.** A law of the colony "for the better observation and keeping of the Lord's Day" imposed a fine of five shillings on every person remaining in a public house, "drinking, or idly spending his time on Saturday night, after the sun is set, or on the Lord's Day, or the evening following" • 23 **Waited . . . again.** Sewall's second wife had died May 26, 1720. Sewall at this time was 68; Madam Winthrop was 56. Twice a widow, she did not marry again • 32 **Castle,** Castle Island, which was fortified, and where soldiers were stationed • 40 **names . . . Fore-seat,** eligible widows, mentioned in a previous entry • 41 **Katharine,** Madam Winthrop • 50 **Sennight,** a week • 50 **Fountain open'd,** Samuel Willard, "The Fountain Opened, or the Great Gospel Privilege of having Christ exhibited to Sinful Men . . .," Boston, 1700 • 55 **8^{r},** October



Madam Winthrop's Wedding Room

would be of age the 7^{th} of August. I said it might be inconvenient for her to dwell with her Daughter-in-Law, who must be Mistress of the House. I gave her a piece of Mr. Belcher's Cake and Ginger-Bread wrapped up in a clean sheet of Paper; told her of her Father's kindness to me when Treasurer, and I Constable. My Daughter Judith was gon from me and I was more lonesom—might help to forward one another in our Journey to Canaan.—Mr. Eyre came within the door; I saluted him, ask'd how Mr. Clark did, and he went away. I took leave about 9 aclock. I told [her] I came now to refresh her Memory as to Monday-night; said she had not forgot it. In discourse with her, I ask'd leave to speak with her Sister; I meant to gain Mad^{m} Mico's favour to persuade her Sister. She seem'd surpris'd and displeas'd, and said she was in the same condition! . . .

8^{r} 10^{th}. . . . In the Evening I visited Madam Winthrop, who treated me with a great deal of Curtesy; Wine, Marmalade. I gave her a News-Letter about the Thanksgiving Proposals, for sake of the verses for David Jeffries. She tells me Dr. Increase Mather visited her this day, in Mr. Hutchinson's Coach. . . .

8^{r} 11^{th} I writ a few Lines to Madam Winthrop to this purpose: "Madam, These wait on you with Mr. Mayhew's Sermon, and Account of the state of the Indians on Martha's Vinyard. I thank you for your Unmerited Favours of yesterday; and hope to have the Hapiness of Waiting on you tomorrow before Eight a-clock after Noon. I pray GOD to keep you, and give you a joyfull entrance upon the Two Hundred and twenty ninth year of Christopher Columbus his Discovery; and take Leave, who am, Madam, your humble $Serv^{t}$.

S. S.

Sent this by Deacon Green, who deliver'd it to Sarah Chickering, her Mistress not being at home.

8^{r} 12. . . . Mrs. Anne Cotton came to door (twas before 8.) said Madam Winthrop was within, directed me into the little Room, where she was full of work behind a Stand; Mrs. Cotton came in and stood. Madam Winthrop pointed to her to set me a Chair. Madam Winthrop's Countenance was much changed from what 'twas on Monday, look'd dark and lowering. At last, the work, (black stuff or Silk) was taken away, I got my Chair in place, had some Converse, but very Cold and indifferent to what 'twas before. Ask'd her to acquit me of Rudeness if I drew off her Glove. Enquiring the reason, I told her twas great odds between handling a dead Goat, and a living Lady. Got it off. I told her I had one Petition to ask of her, that was, that she would take off the Negative she laid on me the third of October; She readily answer'd she could not, and enlarg'd upon it; She told me of it so soon as she could; could not leave her house, children, neighbours, business. I told her she might do som Good to help and suport me. Mentioning Mrs. Gookin, Nath, the widow Weld was spoken of; said I had visited Mrs. Denison. I told her Yes! Afterward I said, If after a first and second Vagary she would Accept of me returning, Her Victorious Kindness and Good Will would be very Obliging. She thank'd me for my Book, (Mr. Mayhew's Sermon), But said not a word of the Letter. When she insisted on the Negative, I pray'd there might be no more Thunder and Lightening, I should not sleep all night. I gave her Dr. Preston, The Church's Marriage and the Church's Carriage, which cost me 6^{s} at the Sale. The door standing open, Mr. Airs came in, hung up his Hat, and sat down. After awhile, Madam Winthrop moving, he went out. Jn^{o} Eyre look'd in, I said How do ye, or,

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19 **News-Letter.** The Boston **News-Letter**, founded in 1704, was the first newspaper in the colonies. The issue of October 3-10, 1720, contained "A Proclamation for a General Thanksgiving" issued by Governor Samuel Shute, calling for the observance of Thursday, October 27, and "forbidding all Servile Labour and Recreation" on that day • 20 **Proposals**, an unidentified broadside, presumably • 64 **Dr. Preston**, John Preston (1587-1628), English Puritan divine, much read by the early Puritans of New England

your servant Mr. Eyre: but heard no word from him. Sarah fill'd a Glass of Wine, she drank to me, I to her, She sent Juno home with me with a good Lantern, I gave her 6^{d} and bid her thank her Mistress. In some of our Discourse, I told her I had rather go to the Stone-House adjoining to her, than to come to her against her mind. Told her the reason why I came every other night was lest I should drink too deep draughts of Pleasure. She had talk'd of Canary, her Kisses were to me better than the best Canary. Explain'd the expression Concerning Columbus. . . .

8^{r} 15. I dine on Fish and Oyle at Mr. Stoddard's. Capt. Hill wish'd me Joy of my proceedings i. e. with M— Winthrop; Sister Cooper aplauded it, spake of Visiting her: I said her Complaisance of her Visit would be obliging to me.

8^{r} 16. L. Day, I upbraided my self that could be so solicitous about Earthly things; and so cold and indifferent as to the Love of Christ, who is altogether Lovely. . . .

8^{r} 17. . . . In the Evening I visited Madam Winthrop, who Treated me Courteously, but not in Clean Linen as sometimes. She said, she did not know whether I would come again, or no. I ask'd her how she could so impute inconstancy to me. (I had not visited her since Wednesday night being unable to get over the Indisposition received by the Treatment received that night, and I *must* in it seem'd to sound like a made piece of Formality.) Gave her this day's Gazett. . . .

8^{r} 18. Visited Madam Mico, who came to me in a splendid Dress. I said, It may be you have heard of my Visiting Madam Winthrop, her Sister. She answered, Her Sister had told her of it. I ask'd her good Will in the Affair. She answer'd, If her Sister were for it, she should not hinder it. I gave her Mr. Homes's Sermon. She gave me a Glass of Canary, entertain'd me with good Discourse, and a Respectfull Remembrance of my first Wife. I took Leave.

8^{r} 19. Midweek, Visited Madam Winthrop; Sarah told me she was at Mr. Walley's, would not come home till late. I gave her Hanah 3 oranges with her Duty, not knowing whether I should find her or no. Was ready to go home: but said if I knew she was there, I would go thither. Sarah seem'd to speak with pretty good Courage, She would be there. I went and found her there, with Mr. Walley and his wife in the little Room below. At 7 a-clock I mentioned going home; at 8. I put on my Coat, and quickly waited on her home. She found occasion to speak loud to the servant, as if she had a mind to be known. Was Courteous to me; but took occasion to speak pretty earnestly about my keeping a Coach: I said 'twould cost £100. per anum: she said twould cost but £40. Spake much against John Winthrop, his false-heartedness. Mr. Eyre came in and sat awhile; I offer'd him Dr. Incr. Mather's Sermons, whereof Mr. Apleton's Ordination Sermon was one; said he had them already. I said I would give him another. Exit. Came away somewhat late.

8^{r} 20. . . . Madam Winthrop not being at Lecture, I went thither first; found her very Serene with her dâter Noyes, Mrs. Dering, and the widow Shipreev sitting at a little Table, she in her arm'd Chair. She drank to me, and I to Mrs. Noyes. After awhile pray'd the favour to speak with her. She took one of the Candles, and went into the best Room, clos'd the shutters, sat down upon the Couch. She told me Madam Usher had been there, and said the Coach must be set on Wheels, and not by Rusting. She spake somthing of my needing a Wigg. Ask'd me what her Sister said to me. I told her, She said, If her Sister were for it, She would not hinder it. But I told her, she did say she would be glad to have me for her Brother. Said, I shall keep you in the Cold, and asked her if she would be within to morrow night, for we had had but a running Feat. She said she could not tell whether she should, or no. I took Leave. As were drinking at the Governour's, he said: In England the Ladies minded little more than that they might have Money, and Coaches to ride in. I said, And New-England brooks its Name. At which Mr. Dudley smiled. Gov^{r} said they were not quite so bad here.

8^{r} 21. Friday, My Son, the Minister, came to me p. m. by apointment and we pray one for another in the Old Chamber; more especially respecting my Courtship. About 6. a-clock I go to Madam Winthrop's; Sarah told me her Mistress was gon out, but did not tell me whither she went. She presently order'd me a Fire; so I went in, having Dr. Sibb's Bowels with me to read. I read the

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3 **Juno,** an Indian servant • 5 **Stone-House,** the prison near by • 17 **L.,** Lord's • 28 **Gazett,** the Boston Gazette, founded in 1719 • 87 **Dr. Sibb's Bowels,** Richard Sibbes, "Bowels Opened; or Discovery of the neere and deere Love between Christ and the Church," 1639. An English Puritan, Sibbes was much read by the New England Puritans

two first Sermons, still no body came in: at last about 9. a-clock Mr. Jn° Eyre came in; I took the oportunity to say to him as I had done to Mrs. Noyes before, that I hoped my Visiting his Mother would not be disagreeable to him; He answered me with much Respect. When twas after 9. a-clock He of himself said he would go and call her, she was but at one of his Brothers: A while after I heard Madam Winthrop's voice, enquiring somthing about John. After a good while and Claping the Garden door twice or thrice, she came in. I mention'd somthing of the lateness; she banter'd me, and said I was later. She receiv'd me Courteously. I ask'd when our proceedings should be made publick: She said They were like to be no more publick than they were already. Offer'd me no Wine that I remember. I rose up at 11 a-clock to come away, saying I would put on my Coat. She offer'd not to help me. I pray'd her that Juno might light me home, she open'd the Shutter, and said twas pretty light abroad; Juno was weary and gon to bed. So I came hom by Star-light as well as I could. At my first coming in, I gave Sarah five Shillings. I writ Mr. Eyre his Name in his book with the date Octob^r^ 21. *1720. It cost me 8^s^. Jehovah jireh!* Madam told me she had visited M. Mico, Wendell, and W^m^ Clark of the South [Church].

Octob^r^ 22. Dâter Cooper visited me before my going out of Town, staid till about Sun set. I brought her going near as far as the Orange Tree. Coming back, near Leg's Corner, Little David Jeffries saw me, and looking upon me very lovingly, ask'd me if I was going to see his Grandmother? I said, Not to-night. Gave him a peny, and bid him present my Service to his Grandmother.

Octob^r^ 24. I went in the Hackny Coach through the Comon, stop'd at Madam Winthrop's (had told her I would take my departure from thence). Sarah came to the door with Katee in her Arms: but I did not think to take notice of the Child. Call'd her Mistress. I told her, being encourag'd by David Jeffries loving eyes, and sweet Words, I was come to enquire whether she could find in her heart to leave that House and Neighbourhood, and go and dwell with me at the South-end; I think she said softly, Not yet. I told her It did not ly in my Lands to keep a Coach. If I should, I should be in danger to be brought to keep company with her Neighbour Brooker, (he was a little before sent to prison for Debt). Told her I had an Antipathy against those who would pretend to give themselves; but nothing of their Estate. I would a proportion of my Estate with my self. And I supos'd she would do so. As to a Perriwig, My best and greatest Friend, I could not possibly have a greater, began to find me with Hair before I was born, and had continued to do so ever since; and I could not find in my heart to go to another. She comended the book I gave her, Dr. Preston, the Church Marriage; quoted him saying 'twas inconvenient keeping out of a Fashion comonly used. I said the Time and Tide did circumscribe my Visit. She gave me a Dram of Black-Cherry Brandy, and gave me a lump of the Sugar that was in it. She wish'd me a good Journy. I pray'd God to keep her, and came away. Had a very pleasant Journy to Salem. . . .

31. . . . At night I visited Madam Winthrop about 6. p. m. They told me she was gon to Madam Mico's. I went thither and found she was gon; so return'd to her house, read the Epistles to the Galatians, Ephesians in Mr. Eyre's Latin Bible. After the Clock struck 8. I began to read the 103. Psalm. Mr. Wendell came in from his Warehouse. Ask'd me if I were alone? Spake very kindly to me, offer'd me to call Madam Winthrop. I told him, She would be angry, had been at Mrs. Mico's; he help'd me on with my Coat and I came home: left the Gazett in the Bible, which told Sarah of, bid her present my Service to Mrs. Winthrop, and tell her I had been to wait on her if she had been at home.

Nov^r^ 1. I was so taken up that I could not go if I would.

Nov^r^ 2. Midweek, went again, and found Mrs. Alden there, who quickly went out. Gave her about ½ pound of Sugar Almonds, cost 3^s^ per £. Carried them on Monday. She seem'd pleas'd with them, ask'd what they cost. Spake of giving her a Hundred pounds per añum if I dy'd before her. Ask'd what sum she would give me, if she should dy first? Said I would give her time to Consider of it. She said she heard as if I had given all to my Children by Deeds of Gift. I told her 'twas a mistake, Point-Judith was mine &c. That in England, I own'd, my Father's desire was that it should go to my eldest Son; 'twas 20£ per añum; she thought 'twas forty.

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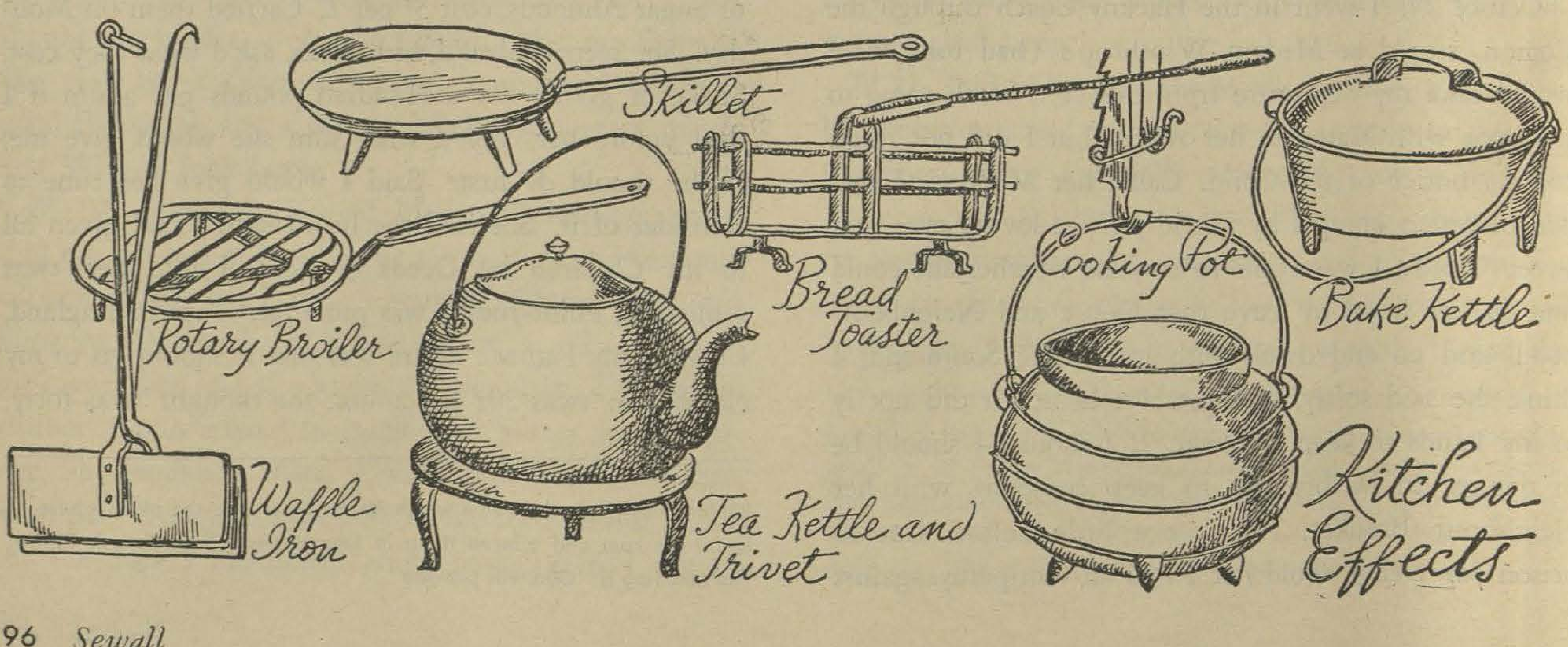
23 **Jehovah jireh,** the name which Abraham gave to the place where he found the ram and offered it up in Isaac's stead (see Genesis 22:14). The meaning is "God will provide"

I think when I seem'd to excuse pressing this, she seem'd to think twas best to speak of it; a long winter was coming on. Gave me a Glass or two of Canary.

Nov^{r} 4th. Friday, Went again about 7. a-clock; found there Mr. John Walley and his wife: sat discoursing pleasantly. I shew'd them Isaac Moses's Writing. Madam W. serv'd Comfeits to us. After a-while a Table was spread, and Super was set. I urg'd Mr. Walley to Crave a Blessing; but he put it upon me. About 9. they went away. I ask'd Madam what fashioned Neck-lace I should present her with, She said, None at all. I ask'd her Whereabout we left off last time; mention'd what I had offer'd to give her; Ask'd her what she would give me; She said she could not Change her Condition: She had said so from the beginning; could not be so far from her Children, the Lecture. Quoted the Apostle Paul affirming that a single Life was better than a Married. I answer'd That was for the present Distress. Said she had not pleasure in things of that nature as formerly: I said, you are the fitter to make me a Wife. If she held in that mind, I must go home and bewail my Rashness in making more haste than good Speed. However, considering the Super, I desired her to be within next Monday night, if we liv'd so long. Assented. She charg'd me with saying, that she must put away Juno, if she came to me: I utterly deny'd it, it never came into my heart; yet she insisted upon it; saying it came in upon Discourse about the Indian woman that obtained her Freedom this Court. About 10. I said I would not disturb the good orders of her House, and came away. She not seeming pleas'd with my Coming away. Spake to her about David Jeffries, had not seen him.

Monday, Nov^{r} 7th. My Son pray'd in the Old Chamber. Our time had been taken up by Son and Daughter Cooper's Visit; so that I only read the 130th and 143. Psalm. Twas on the Account of my Courtship. I went to Mad. Winthrop; found her rocking her little Katee in the Cradle. I excus'd my Coming so late (near Eight). She set me an arm'd Chair and Cusheon; and so the Cradle was between her arm'd Chair and mine. Gave her the remnant of my Almonds; She did not eat of them as before; but laid them away; I said I came to enquire whether she had alter'd her mind since Friday, or remained of the same mind still. She said, Thereabouts. I told her I loved her, and was so fond as to think that she loved me: She said had a great respect for me. I told her, I had made her an offer, without asking any advice; she had so many to advise with, that twas a hindrance. The Fire was come to one short Brand besides the Block, which Brand was set up in end; at last it fell to pieces, and no Recruit was made: She gave me a Glass of Wine. I think I repeated again that I would go home and bewail my Rashness in making more haste than good Speed. I would endeavor to contain myself, and not go on to sollicit her to do that which she could not Consent to. Took leave of her. As came down the steps she bid me have a Care. Treated me Courteously. Told her she had enter'd the 4th year of her Widowhood. I had given her the News-Letter before: I did not bid her draw off her glove as sometime I had done. Her dress was not so clean as sometime it had been. Jehovah jireh!

1677-1720·1878-1882



George Alsop

1638 · 1666

Almost nothing is known about George Alsop other than what can be gathered from his *Character of the Province of Mary-Land* (London, 1666), which has for a frontispiece his portrait "Aetat 28." He worked for four years in Maryland, probably as an indentured servant, and then returned to London.

Like dozens of other books written to encourage emigration, Alsop's *Character* begins with an enthusiastic description of the natural resources of the colony, continues with an account of the government and customs, and concludes with sections on the means of settlement and on the peculiarities of the "wilde and naked" Indians.

Two things, however, set Alsop's book apart from others of its kind: his evident delight in word-play and a rhetorical style, and his vigorous representation of non-Puritan ideals of society. His love of ornament, more typical of the Elizabethan than of his own generation, survives even to the present day in occasional pieces of polemic and satirical prose. Intellectually, Alsop was a Cavalier without being either smug or snobbish. Like the Restoration wits, he assumed a pose of detachment, but it is clear that he had a deep-rooted dislike for the bitter class and religious conflicts which had made seventeenth-century England a hotbed of faction. Moderation, stability, a nice balance between individual freedom and governmental authority, a minimum of litigation and religious zeal—these were the things he desired, and he saw more chance of achieving them in America than in Europe. There were probably many men like him in every one of the colonies.

A Character of the Province of Mary-Land, ed. J. G. Shea, New York, 1869

From

A Character of the Province of Mary-Land

The selection which follows is from the second chapter, "Of the Government and natural disposition of the People."

Mary-Land, not from the remoteness of her situation, but from the regularity of her well-ordered Government, may (without sin, I think) be called *Singular:* And though she is not supported with such large Revenues as some of her Neighbours are, yet such is her wisdom in a reserved silence, and not in pomp, to shew her well-conditioned Estate, in relieving at a distance the proud poverty of those that wont be seen they want, as well as those which by undeniable necessities are drove upon the Rocks of pinching wants: Yet such a loathsome creature as a common and folding-handed Begger, that upon the penalty of almost a perpetual working in Imprisonment, they are not to appear, nor

lurk near our vigilant and laborious dwellings. The Country hath received a general spleen and antipathy against the very name and nature of it; and though there were no Law provided (as there is) to suppress it, I am certainly confident, there is none within the Province that would lower themselves so much below the dignity of men to beg, as long as limbs and life keep house together; so much is a vigilant industrious care esteem'd.

He that desires to see the real Platform of a quiet and sober Government extant, Superiority with a meek and yet commanding power sitting at the Helme, steering the actions of State quietly, through the multitude and diversity of Opinionous waves that diversly meet, let him look on Mary-Land with eyes admiring, and he'le then judge her, *The Miracle of this Age.*

Here the *Roman Catholick,* and the *Protestant Episcopal,* (whom the world would perswade have proclaimed open Wars irrevocably against each other) contrarywise concur in an unanimous parallel of friendship, and inseparable love intayled unto one another: All Inquisitions, Martyrdom, and Banishments are not so much as named, but unexpressably abhorr'd by each other.

The several Opinions and Sects that lodge within this Government, meet not together in mutinous contempts to disquiet the power that bears Rule, but with a reverend quietness obeys the legal commands of Authority. Here's never seen Five Monarchies in a Zealous Rebellion, opposing the Rights and Liberties of a true setled Government, or Monarchical Authority: Nor did I ever see (here in *Mary-Land*) any of those dancing Adamitical Sisters, that plead a primitive Innocency for their base obscenity, and naked deportment; but I conceive if some of them were there at some certain time of the year, between the Months of *January* and *February,* when the winds blow from the North-West quarter of the world, that it would both cool, and (I believe) convert the hottest of these Zealous from their burning and fiercest Concupiescence.

The Government of this Province doth continually, by all lawful means, strive to purge her Dominions from such base corroding humors, that would predominate upon the least smile of Liberty, did not the Laws check and bridle in those unwarranted and tumultuous Opinions. And truly, where a Kingdom, State or Government, keeps or cuts down the weeds of destructive Opinions, there must certainly be a blessed Harmony of quietness. And I really believe this Land or Government of *Mary-Land* may boast, that she enjoys as much quietness from the disturbance of Rebellious Opinions, as most States or Kingdoms do in the world: For here every man lives quietly, and follows his labour and imployment desiredly; and by the protection of the Laws, they are supported from those molestious troubles that ever attend upon the Commons of other States and Kingdoms, as well as from the Aquafortial operation of great and eating Taxes. Here's nothing to be levyed out of the Granaries of Corn; but contrarywise, by a Law every Domestick Governor of a Family is enjoyned to make or cause to be made so much Corn by a just limitation, as shall be sufficient for him and his Family: So that by this wise and *Janus*-like providence, the thin jawed Skeliton with his starv'd Carkess is never seen walking the Woods of *Mary-Land* to affrighten Children.

Once every year within this Province is an Assembly called, and out of every respective County (by the consent of the people) there is chosen a number of men, and to them is deliver'd up the Grievances of the Country; and they maturely debate the matters, and according to their Consciences make Laws for the general good of the people; and where any former Law that was made, seems and is prejudicial to the good or quietness of the Land, it is repeal'd. These men that determine on these matters for the Republique, are called Burgesses, and they commonly sit in Junto about six weeks, being for the most part good ordinary Householders of the several Counties, which do more by a plain and honest Conscience, then by artificial Syllogisms drest up in gilded Orations.

Text: the first edition (1666) • 28 **Five Monarchies.** The Fifth Monarchy men were an extremist sect with the belief that the second coming of Christ was at hand and should be prepared for, by violence if necessary. They conspired against Oliver Cromwell in 1657 and tried to seize London by force in 1661, after which they were suppressed. Their name came from their conviction that the four ancient kingdoms of Assyria, Persia, Greece, and Rome were to be eclipsed by that of Jesus Christ • 32 **Adamitical Sisters.** Since early Christian times, various sects practicing nudism in their meetings have been called Adamites. The extent of the practice in Alsop's time is problematical, but it is often mentioned in lists of current heresies • 56 **Aquafortial.** Aqua fortis, or nitric acid, was used to dissolve all metals other than gold • 62 **Janus-like,** two-faced, from the Roman god whose month was January. The sense seems to be that the law worked two ways: every man had food, and there was no vagrancy

Here Suits and Tryals in Law seldome hold dispute two Terms or Courts, but according as the Equity of the Cause appears is brought to a period. The *Temples* and *Grays-Inne* are clear out of fashion here: *Marriot* would sooner get a paunch-devouring meal for nothing, then for his invading Counsil. Here if the Lawyer had nothing else to maintain him but his bawling, he might button up his Chops, and burn his Buckrom Bag, or else hang it upon a pin untill its Antiquity had eaten it up with durt and dust: Then with a Spade, like his Grandsire *Adam*, turn up the face of the Creation, purchasing his bread by the sweat of his brows, that before was got by the motionated Water-works of his jaws. So contrary to the Genius of the people, if not to the quiet Government of the Province, that the turbulent Spirit of continued and vexatious Law, with all its querks and evasions, is openly and most eagerly opposed, that might make matters either dubious, tedious, or troublesom. All other matters that would be ranging in contrary and improper Spheres, (in short) are here by the Power moderated, lower'd, and subdued. All villanous Outrages that are committed in other States, are not so much as known here: A man may walk in the open Woods as secure from being externally dissected, as in his own house or dwelling. So hateful is a Robber, that if but once imagin'd to be so, he's kept at a distance and shun'd as the Pestilential noysomness.

It is generally and very remarkably observed, That those whose Lives and Conversations have had no other gloss nor glory stampt on them in their own Country, but the stigmatization of baseness, were here (by the common civilities and deportments of the Inhabitants of this Province) brought to detest and loath their former actions. Here the Constable hath no need of a train of Holberteers, that carry more Armour about them, then heart to guard him: Nor is he ever troubled to leave his Feathered Nest to some friendly successor, while he is placing of his Lanthern-horn Guard at the end of some suspicious Street, to catch some Nightwalker, or Batchelor of Leachery, that has taken his Degree three story high in a Bawdy-house. Here's no *Newgates* for pilfering Felons, nor *Ludgates* for Debtors, nor any *Bridewils* to lash the soul of Concupiscence into a chast Repentance. For as there is none of these Prisons in *Mary-Land*, so the merits of the Country deserves none, but if any be foully vitious, he is so reserv'd in it, that he seldom or never becomes popular. Common Alehouses, (whose dwellings are the only Receptacles of debauchery and baseness, and those Schools that trains up Youth, as well as Age, to ruine) in this Province there are none; neither hath Youth his swing or range in such a profuse and unbridled liberty as in other Countries; for from an ancient Custom at the primitive seating of the place, the Son works as well as the Servant, (an excellent cure for untam'd Youth) so that before they eat their bread, they are commonly taught how to earn it; which makes them by that time Age speaks them capable of receiving that which their Parents indulgency is ready to give them, and which partly is by their own laborious industry purchased, they manage it with such a serious, grave and watching care, as if they had been Masters of Families, trained up in that domestick and governing power from their Cradles. These Christian Natives of the Land, especially those of the Masculine Sex, are generally conveniently confident, reservedly subtle, quick in apprehending, but slow in resolving; and where they spy profit sailing towards them with the wings of a prosperous gale, there they become much familiar. The Women differ something in this point, though not much: They are extreme bashful at the first view, but after a continuance of time hath brought them acquainted, there they become discreetly familiar, and are much more talkative then men. All Complemental Courtships, drest up in critical Rarities, are meer strangers to them, plain wit comes nearest their Genius; so that he that intends to Court a *Mary-Land* Girle, must have something more then the Tautologies of a long-winded speech to carry on his design, or else he may (for ought I know) fall under the contempt of her frown, and his own windy Oration.

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3 **Temples and Grays-Inne,** societies of lawyers, which in England have the sole right to admit members of the bar, and are both the equivalent of colleges of law and office-residences for practicing lawyers. Oliver Goldsmith is one of the many famous men of letters who lived in the Inns of Court • 4 **Marriot.** John Marriot (d. 1653) was the victim of a famous libel of 1652, **The Great Eater of Graye's Inn, or the Life of Marriot, the Cormorant.** He was said to have the appetite of twenty men, which he satisfied by eating dogs and offal • 35 **Holberteers,** halberdiers, guards or foot-soldiers armed with a long, spearlike weapon • 42 **Newgates . . . Ludgates . . . Bridewils,** prisons, distinguished, as is suggested, by the offenses for which criminals were committed

One great part of the Inhabitants of this Province are desiredly Zealous, great pretenders to Holiness; and where any thing appears that carries on the Frontispiece of its Effigies the stamp of Religion, though fundamentally never so imperfect, they are suddenly taken with it, and out of an eager desire to any thing that's new, not weighing the sure matter in the Ballance of Reason, are very apt to be catcht. *Quakerism* is the only Opinion that bears the Bell away. The *Anabaptists* have little to say here, as well as in other places, since the Ghost of *John of Leyden* haunts their Conventicles. The *Adamite, Ranter,* and *Fift-Monarchy men, Mary-Land* cannot, nay will not digest within her liberal stomach such corroding morsels: So that this Province is an utter Enemy to blasphemous and zealous Imprecations, drain'd from the Lymbeck of hellish and damnable Spirits, as well as profuse prophaneness, that issues from the prodigality of none but crackt-brain Sots.

'Tis said the Gods lower down that Chain above,
That tyes both Prince and Subject up in Love;
And if this Fiction of the Gods be true,
Few, Mary-Land, *in this can boast but you:*
Live ever blest, and let those Clouds that do
Eclipse most States, be alwayes Lights to you;
And dwelling so, you may for ever be
The only Emblem of Tranquility.

1666?·1666

9 **Anabaptists,** a religious sect of the Reformation era, opposed to infant baptism. The Anabaptists also held communistic theories, and in 1534 announced the foundation, in the city of Münster in Westphalia, Germany, of a society which should have no magistrates, no law, no marriage, and no private property. Led by John of Leyden, the Anabaptists shocked all Europe, and were eventually dispersed after enduring a lengthy siege • 12 **Ranter,** an extreme Protestant of the Commonwealth period, so called because of extravagance in expression. The Ranters were distinguished by their pantheism, or the belief that God dwelt in every creature in the universe, for which heresy they were vigorously prosecuted • 16 **Lymbeck,** alembic, an apparatus for distilling

Sarah Kemble Knight

1666 · 1727

The life of Sarah Kemble Knight shows that even in early colonial days a woman of enterprise and intelligence could make a career for herself. The daughter of a Boston merchant, Madam Knight, after her husband's death, efficiently attended to the business of the estate. In addition, she kept a dame's school which Benjamin Franklin is said to have attended, did a good deal of legal work and managed a rather large household. She lived in Boston until 1713, then moved to New London, Connecticut, and lived there until her death in 1727.

Mrs. Knight's *Journal* (October 1704–March 1705) —a record of a trip through Rhode Island and Connecticut to New York and thence back to Boston—differs greatly in its materials from the gloomy religious introspections characteristic of the diaries of her contemporaries. This "dame of Boston—buxom, blithe, and debonair—" writes amusingly of her journeying and of her stops along the way. Much of the humor is made possible by Mrs. Knight's sprightly fun with some of the religious concepts which weigh down other journals of the day. Pondering the crossing of a rough stream by boat, for instance, she pictured herself being doused

"like a holy Sister Just come out of a Spiritual Bath in dripping Garments"; or learning that an innkeeper nearby was named Mr. Devil, she wondered whether she should "go to the Devil to be helpt out of affliction."

Madam Knight's sense of comedy plus her flair for observation gave her little book added importance as an early humorous depiction of the characters and manners of rural New England and New York. Her sketch of the Yankee bumpkin and his mate, in the selection which follows (the title has been supplied by the editors), vividly brings to life physical aspects, postures, and speech—a rare achievement for the period.

The Journal of Madam Knight, ed. G. P. Winship, Boston, 1925 • Sidney Gunn, "Sarah Kemble Knight," **Dictionary of American Biography**, New York, 1933, X, 468-469

From • The Journals

Life in Connecticut

Saturday, Oct. 7th

. . . About two o'clock afternoon we arrived in New Haven, where I was received with all Posible Respects and civility. Here I discharged Mr. Wheeler with a reward to his satisfaction, and took some time to rest after so long and toilsome a Journey; And Inform'd myselfe of the manners and customs of the place, and at the same time employed myselfe in the afair I went there upon.

They are Govern'd by the same Laws as wee in Boston, (or little differing,) thr'out this whole Colony of Connecticot, And much the same way of Church Government, and many of them good, Sociable people, and I hope Religious too: but a little too much Independent in their principalls, and, as I have been told, were formerly in their Zeal very Riggid in their Administrations towards such as their Lawes made Offenders, even to a harmless Kiss or Innocent merriment among Young people. Whipping being a frequent and counted an easy Punishment, about w^{ch} as other Crimes, the Judges were absolute in their Sentances. They told mee a pleasant story about a pair of Justices in those parts, w^{ch} I may not omit the relation of.

A Negro Slave belonging to a man in y^{e} Town, stole a hogs head from his master, and gave it or sold it to an Indian, native of the place. The Indian sold it in the neighbourhood, and so the theft was found out. Thereupon the Heathen was Seized, and carried to the Justices House to be Examined. But his worship (it seems) was gone into the field, with a Brother in office, to gather in his Pompions. Whither the malefactor is hurried, And Complaint made, and satisfaction in the name of Justice demanded. Their Worships cann't proceed in form without a Bench: whereupon they Order one to be Imediately erected, which, for want of fitter materials, they made with pompions—which being finished, down setts their Worships, and the Malefactor call'd, and by the Senior Justice Interrogated after the following manner. You Indian why did You steal from this man? You sho'dn't do so—it's a Grandy wicked wicked thing to steal. Hol't Hol't cryes Justice Jun^{r}. Brother, You speak Negro to him. I'le ask him. You sirrah, why did You steal this man's Hoggshead? Hoggshead? (replys the Indian,) me no stomany. No? says his Worship; and pulling off his hatt, Patted his own head with his hand, sais, Tatapa—You, Tatapa—you: all one this. Hah! says Netop, now me stomany that. Whereupon the Company fell into a great fitt of Laughter, even to Roreing. Silence is comanded, but to no effect: for they continued perfectly Shouting. Nay, said his worship, in an angry tone, if it be so, *take mee off the Bench.*

Their Diversions in this part of the Country are on Lecture days and Training days mostly: on the former there is Riding from town to town.

And on training dayes The Youth divert themselves by Shooting at the Target, as they call it, (but it very

31 Pompions, pumpkins • **44 stomany,** understand (?) • **53 Training days,** days on which the militia drilled

much resembles a pillory,) where hee that hitts neerest the white has some yards of Red Ribbin presented him w^{ch} being tied to his hattband, the two ends streeming down his back, he is Led away in Triumph, wth great applause, as the winners of the Olympiack Games. They generally marry very young: the males oftener as I am told under twentie than above; they generally make public weddings, and have a way something singular (as they say) in some of them, *viz.* Just before Joyning hands the Bridegroom quitts the place, who is soon followed by the Bridesmen, and as it were, [is] dragged back to duty—being the reverse to y^{e} former practice among us, to steal his Bride.

There are great plenty of Oysters all along by the sea side, as farr as I Rode in the Collony, and those very good. And they Generally lived very well and comfortably in their famelies. But too Indulgent (especially y^{e} farmers) to their slaves: sufering too great familiarity from them, permitting them to sit at Table and eat with them, (as they say to save time,) and into the dish goes the black hoof as freely as the white hand. They told me there was a farmer lived nere the Town where I lodgd who had some differences wth his slave, concerning something the master had promised him and did not punctualy perform; w^{ch} caused some hard words between them; But at length they put the matter of Arbitration and Bound themselves to stand to the award of such as they named—w^{ch} done, the Arbitrators Having heard the Allegations of both parties, Order the master to pay 40^{s} to black face, and acknowledge his fault. And so the matter ended: the poor master very honestly standing to the award.

There are every where in the Towns as I passed, a Number of Indians the Natives of the Country, and are the most salvage of all the salvages of that kind that I had ever Seen: little or no care taken (as I heard upon enquiry) to make them otherwise. They have in some places Landes of their owne, and Govern'd by Law's of their own making;—they marry many wives and at pleasure put them away, and on the least dislike or fickle humour, on either side, saying *stand away* to one another is a sufficient Divorce. And indeed those uncomely *Stand aways* are too much in Vougue among the English in this (Indulgent Colony) as their Records plentifully prove, and that on very trivial matters, of which some have been told me, but are not proper to be Related by a Female pen, tho some of that foolish sex have had too large a share in the story.

If the natives committ any crime on their own precincts among themselves, y^{e} English takes no Cognezens of. But if on the English ground, they are punishable by our Laws. They mourn for their Dead by blackening their faces, and cutting their hair, after an Awkerd and frightfull manner; But can't bear You should mention the names of their dead Relations to them: they trade most for Rum, for w^{ch} theyd hazard their very lives; and the English fit them Generally as well, by seasoning it plentifully with water.

They give the title of merchant to every trader; who Rate their Goods according to the time and spetia they pay in: *viz.* Pay, mony, Pay as mony, and trusting. *Pay* is Grain, Pork, Beef, &c. at the prices sett by the General Court that Year; *mony* is pieces of Eight, Ryalls, or Boston or Bay shillings (as they call them,) or Good hard money, as sometimes silver coin is termed by them; also Wampom, *vizt.* Indian beads w^{ch} serves for change. *Pay as mony* is provisions, as aforesd one Third cheaper then as the Assembly or Gen^{el} Court sets; and *Trust* as they and the merch^{t} agree for time.

Now, when the buyer comes to ask for a comodity, sometimes before the merchant answers that he has it, he sais, *is Your pay redy?* Perhaps the Chap Reply's Yes: what do You pay in? say's the merchant. The buyer having answered, then the price is set; as suppose he wants a sixpenny knife, in pay it is 12d—in pay as money eight pence, and hard money its own price, *viz.* 6d. It seems a very Intricate way of trade and what *Lex Mercatoria* had not thought of.

Being at a merchants house, in comes a tall country fellow, wth his alfogeos full of Tobacco; for they seldom Loose their Cudd, but keep Chewing and Spitting as long as they'r eyes are open,—he advanc't to the midle of the Room, makes an Awkward Nodd, and spitting a Large deal of Aromatick Tincture, he gave a scrape with his shovel like shoo, leaving a small shovel full of dirt on the floor, made a full stop, Hugging his own pretty Body with his hands under his arms, Stood staring rown'd him,

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60 **spetia**, species of money • 63 **Ryalls**, Spanish reals • 75 **12d**, twelve pence. The "d" is derived from the Latin coin, "denarius" • 77 **Lex Mercatoria**, the usage and customs of merchants • 80 **alfogeos**, Spanish alforjas, saddlebags—here meaning, of course, cheeks

like a Catt let out of a Baskett. At last, like the creature Balaam Rode on, he opened his mouth and said: have You any Ribeinen for Hatbands to sell I pray? The Questions and Answers about the pay being past, the Ribin is bro't and opened. Bumpkin Simpers, cryes its confounded Gay I vow; and beckning to the door, in comes Jone Tawdry, dropping about 50 curtsees, and stands by him: hee shows her the Ribin. *Law You,* sais shee, *its right Gent,* do You, take it, *tis dreadfull pretty.* Then she enquires, *have you any hood silk I pray?* w^{ch} being brought and bought, Have you any *thred silk to sew it w^{th}* says shee, w^{ch} being accomodated w^{th} they Departed. They Generaly stand after they come in a great while speachless and sometimes dont say a word till they are askt what they want, which I Impute to the Awe they stand in of the merchants, who they are constantly almost Indebted too; and must take what they bring without Liberty to choose for themselves; but they serve them as well, making the merchants stand long enough for their pay.

We may Observe here the great necessity and bennefitt both of Education and Conversation; for these people have as Large a portion of mother witt, and sometimes a Larger, than those who have bin brought up in Citties; But for want of improvements, Render themselves almost Ridiculos, as above. I should be glad if they would leave such follies, and am sure all that Love Clean Houses (at least) would be glad on't too.

They are generaly very plain in their dress, throuout all y^e Colony, as I saw, and follow one another in their modes; that You may know where they belong, especially the women, meet them where you will.

Their Cheif Red Letter day is St. Election, w^{ch} is annually Observed according to Charter, to choose their $Govern^r$; a blessing they can never be thankfull enough for, as they will find, if ever it be their hard fortune to loose it. The present Govenor is the Hon^{ble} John Winthrop Esq. A Gentleman of an Ancient and Honourable Family, whose Father was Govenor here sometime before, and his Grandfather had bin Gov^r of the Massachusetts. This gentleman is a very curteous and afable person, much Given to Hospitality, and has by his Good services Gain'd the affection of the people as much as any who had bin before him in that post.

1704-1705·1825

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1 **the creature Balaam Rode on,** the ass in the Biblical story of Balaam • 3 **Ribeinen,** ribbons • 9 **Gent,** genteel • 35 **a blessing . . .** Madam Knight is referring to the fact that Massachusetts, unlike Connecticut, at the time was governed by appointees of the king

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William Byrd

1674 · 1744

Gentleman, scholar, and wit, William Byrd II, Esquire, of Westover Plantation, Virginia, vividly exemplifies colonial Southern aristocracy. Although Byrd's birthplace was a tidewater plantation, he was educated in England and on the Continent. His training in business and the law prepared him to engage in what he called "projects for improving our infant colony" and to administer his properties. His training in the social graces and in classical and Neoclassical literature prepared him to live as an aristocrat and to write amusing literature.



Shortly after his return from England to America in 1692, Byrd assumed his place as a member of the ruling circle of Virginia. He served in the House of Burgesses; on various occasions he represented the colony in England; he was appointed a member of the Council and held that dignified position the rest of his life. In addition to these political duties, Byrd had the task of running a vast plantation tended by numerous slaves and of supervising extensive scattered properties. (He had title to 179,440 acres of land at the time of his death.) "Like one of the patriarchs," he wrote a noble British friend, "I have my flocks and my herds, my bondmen and my bondwomen, and every sort of trade amongst my own servants, so that I live in a kind of independence of everyone but Providence. However, this sort of life . . . is attended with a great deal of trouble. I must take care to keep all my people to their duty, to set all the springs in motion, and to make everyone draw his equal share to carry the machine forward." Some of Byrd's secret journals which recently have been decoded and published make clear that, although he lived in a princely style, he had more than his share of work and worry.

Byrd's numerous tasks, however, did not keep him from living as he felt a gentleman should. His handsome brick mansion, with its fine gardens and its wide lawn sloping to the river, was a show place. The manor house was furnished with the costliest of furniture, cut glass, and silver imported from England, and on the walls were hung not only family portraits but also paintings of the lords and ladies he had met abroad. Having seen more of genteel society in London than any contemporaneous Virginian, Byrd thought of himself as a social leader—one who should set the pace for the *beau monde.* "My doors," he wrote proudly, "are open to everybody"; and his hospitality was lavish.

But Byrd's idea of aristocratic living included pleasures in addition to those afforded by dancing, dining, and fox hunting. Thinking well of scholarship, for years he corresponded with the Royal Society, of which he was a member; and almost daily he took from the shelves of his admirable library some Latin, Greek, or Hebrew classic to read and enjoy. And in his correspondence through the years with his British friends he tried to give his phrases the sparkle, the wit, and the grace of some of the urbane classical authors whom he admired.

Such were the attitudes, such was the way of life that shaped the writings for which Byrd is best remembered: *The Secret History, The History of the Dividing Line, A Progress to the Mines,* and *A Journey to the Land of Eden.* The first two are accounts of a surveying trip Byrd led in 1728 to determine the Virginia boundary. The latter two works record journeys he made in 1732

Panel (l. to r.): Byrd as a surveyor • Byrd's drawing-room • Westover • Byrd at the age of 30 • Byrd coat-of-arms • Dancing the minuet at Westover

and 1733 to inspect his frontier properties. None of these works was published until 1841, long after his death, although the last three were revised, bound, and preserved for his descendants.

These writings show the ability to record in well-turned phrases the witty perceptions of an author who knew and admired such sophisticated British writers of the period as Wycherley, Swift, and Pope. They also show the personality of their author—a businessman, keenly observant of industry, commerce, and commercial possibilities; a Virginia aristocrat, given to taking sly digs at people of other social strata or other parts of the country; a charming and urbane man of the world.

History of the Dividing Line and Other Tracts, ed. T. H. Wynne, Richmond, 1866 • **The Writings of Colonel William Byrd of Westover in Virginia, Esq.**, ed. J. S. Basset, New York, 1901 • **William Byrd's Histories of the Dividing Line** (including **The Secret History**), ed. W. K. Boyd, New York, 1929 • R. C. Beatty, **William Byrd of Westover**, Boston, 1932 • Louis Wright, "The Byrds' Progress from Trade to Genteel Elegance," **The First Gentlemen of Virginia**, San Marino, 1940

From

The Secret History of the Line

The following entries in Byrd's secret journal tell of a part of the survey in 1728 to determine the line between Virginia and North Carolina. At the time the passage begins, the surveyors were going through the Dismal Swamp, and the commissioners, who had gone around the swamp, were awaiting their return. The passage, with its handling of a rather racy situation in the manner of an author of Restoration comedy, is typical of a good deal of Byrd's writing. It is noteworthy that Byrd gives his companions names generally used in the comedy of the period.

March] 25, [1728] The Air was chill'd with a N. Wester which favour'd our Dismalites who enter'd the Desert very early. It was not so kind to Meanwell who unreasonably kick't off the Bed Clothes, & catch't An Ague. We killed the Time, by that great help to disagreeable Society, a Pack of Cards. Our Landlord had not the Good Fortune to please Firebrand with our Dinner, but surely when People do their best, a reasonable Man wou'd be satisfy'd. But he endeavour'd to mend his Entertainment by making hot Love to Ruth, who wou'd by no means be charm'd either with his Perswasion, or his Person. While the Master was employ'd in making Love to one Sister, the man made his Passion known to the other, Only he was more boisterous, & employ'd force, when he cou'd not succeed by fair means. Tho' one of the men rescu'd the poor Girl from this violent Lover; but was so much his Friend as to keep the shamefull Secret from those, whose Duty it wou'd have been to punish such Violations of Hospitality. Nor was this the only one this disorderly fellow was guilty of, for he broke upon a House where our Landlord kept the Fodder for his own use, upon the belief that it was better than what he allow'd us. This was in compliment to his Master's Horses I hope, & not in blind obedience to any order he receiv'd from him.

[March] 26. I persuaded Meanwell to take a Vomit of Ipocoacana which workt very kindly; I took all the care of him I cou'd, tho' Firebrand was so unfriendly as not to step once up Stairs to visit him. I also gave a Vomit to a poor Shoemaker that belong'd to my Landlord, by which he reap't great benefit. Puzzlecause made a Journey to Edenton, & took our Chaplain with him to preach the Gospel to the Infidels of that Town, & to baptize some of their Children. I began to entertain with my Chocolate, which every body commended, but

2 **Dismalites**, the surveyors in the Dismal Swamp • 3 **Meanwell**, identified by Professor Boyd as William Dandridge, a Virginia commissioner • 7 **Firebrand**, Richard Fitz-William, another Virginia commissioner • 28 **Ipocoacana**, technical name for ipecac, the root of which is emetic • 32 **Puzzlecause**, fictitious name for Edward Moseley, a North Carolina commissioner

only he that commends nothing that don't belong to himself. In the Evening I took a Solitary walk, that I might have Leizure to think on my absent Friends, which I now grew impatient to see. Orion stuck as close to his Patron Firebrand, as the Itch does to the Fingers of many of his Country Folks.

[March] 27. Tho' it threaten'd Rain both Yesterday & today, yet Heaven was so kind to our Friends in the Dismal as to keep it from Falling. I perswaded Meanwell to take the Bark, which He did with good Effect, tho' he continued very faint & low-Spirited. He took Firebrand's Neglect in great Dudgeon, and amidst all his good Nature cou'd not forbear a great deal of Resentment; but I won his Heart entirely by the tender Care I took of him in his illness. I also gain'd the Men's Affection by dressing their wounds, & giving them little Remedys for their complaints. Nor was I less in my Landlords Books, for acting the Doctor in his Family. Tho' I observ'd some Distempers in it, that were past my Skill to cure. For his Wife & Heir Apparent were so enclin'd to a cheerfull Cup, that our Liquor was very unsafe in their keeping. I had a long time observed that they made themselves happy every day, before the Sun had run one third of his course, which no doubt gave some uneasiness to the Old Gentleman: but Custome that reconciles most Evils, made him bear it with Christian Patience.

As to the Young Gentleman, he seem'd to be as worthless as any homebred Squire I had ever met with, & much the worse for having a good Opinion of himself. His good Father intended him for the Mathematicks, but he never cou'd rise higher in that Study than to gage a Rum Cask. His Sisters are very sensible Industrious Damsels, who tho' they see Gentlemen but Seldom, have the Grace to resist their Importunitys, & tho' they are innocently free, will indulge them in no dangerous Libertys. However their cautious Father having some Notion of Female Frailty, from what he observed in their Mother, never suffers them to lie out of his own Chamber.

1728·1929

4 Orion, another Virginia commissioner • 10 **the Bark,** quinine

From · The History of the Dividing Line

An Aristocrat Describes Lubberland

Byrd's account, in **The History of the Dividing Line,** of three of the days covered in the previous selection offers an interesting comparison with the less polite **Secret History.** Although in each passage the author has his eye on amusing literary effects, the second version, intended for publication, is less libelous and more polished. The second version, too, shows more of Byrd's prejudices—against infidels and New Englanders, for instance. The satirical description of the poor whites in the entry for March 27, the best-known passage in the diary, is an interesting early example of a kind of humor which later was to be widespread in America—humor which made sport of the people of this class.

March 24, 1728.] This being Sunday, we had a Numerous congregation, which flocked to our Quarters from all the adjacent Country. The News that our Surveyors were come out of the Dismal, increas'd the Number very much, because it wou'd give them an Opportunity of guessing, at least, whereabouts the Line wou'd cut, whereby they might form Some Judgment whether they belong'd to Virginia or Carolina. Those who had taken up Land within the Disputed Bounds were in great pain lest it should be found to ly in Virginia; because this being done contrary to an Express

2 **Numerous congregation,** ironic reference to the people of the district, gathered not for Sunday worship but to find where the line was to fall

Order of that government, the Patentees had great reason to fear they should in that case have lost their land. But their Apprehensions were now at an end, when they understood that all the Territory which had been controverted was like to be left in Carolina. In the afternoon, those who were to re-enter the Dismal were furnished with the Necessary provisions, and Order'd to repair the Over-Night to their Landlord, Peter Brinkley's, that they might be ready to begin their Business early on Monday Morning. Mr. Irvin was excused from the fatigue, in compliment to his Lungs; but Mr. Mayo and Mr. Swan were Robust enough to return upon that painful Service, and, to do them Justice, they went with great Alacrity. The Truth was, they now knew the worst of it; and cou'd guess pretty near at the time when they might hope to return to Land again.

[March] 25th. The Air was chill'd this Morning with a Smart North-west Wind, which favour'd the Dismalites in their Dirty March. They return'd by the Path they had made in coming out, and with great Industry arriv'd in the Evening at the Spot where the Line had been discontinued. After so long and laborious a Journey, they were glad to repose themselves on their couches of Cypress-bark, where their sleep was as sweet as it wou'd have been on a Bed of Finland Down. In the mean time, we who stay'd behind had nothing to do, but to make the best observations we cou'd upon that Part of the Country. The Soil of our Landlord's Plantation, though none of the best, seemed more fertile than any thereabouts, where the Ground is near as Sandy as the Desarts of Affrica, and consequently barren. The Road leading from thence to Edenton, being in distance about 27 Miles, lies upon a ridge call'd Sandy-Ridge, which is so wretchedly Poor that it will not bring Potatoes.

The Pines in this part of the country are of a different Species from those that grow in Virginia: their bearded Leaves are much longer and their Cones much larger. Each Cell contains a Seed of the Size and Figure of a black-ey'd Pea, which, Shedding in November, is a very good Mast for Hogs, and fattens them in a Short time. The smallest of these Pines are full of Cones, which are 8 or 9 Inches long, and each affords commonly 60 or 70 Seeds. This Kind of Mast has the Advantage of all other, by being more constant, and less liable to be nippt by the Frost, or eaten by the Caterpillars. The Trees also abound more with Turpentine, and consequently yield more Tarr, than either the Yellow or the White Pine; and for the same reason make more durable Timber for building. The Inhabitants hereabouts pick up Knots of Lightwood in abundance, which they burn into tar, and then carry it to Norfolk or Nansemond for a Market. The Tar made in this method is the less Valuable, because it is said to burn the Cordage, tho' it is full as good for all other uses, as that made in Sweden and Muscovy.

Surely there is no place in the World where the Inhabitants live with less Labour than in N Carolina. It approaches nearer to the Description of Lubberland than any other, by the great felicity of the Climate, the easiness of raising Provisions, and the Slothfulness of the People.

Indian corn is of so great increase, that a little Pains will Subsist a very large Family with Bread, and then they may have meat without any pains at all, by the Help of the Low Grounds, and the great Variety of Mast that grows on the High-land. The Men, for their Parts, just like the Indians, impose all the Work upon the poor Women. They make their Wives rise out of their Beds early in the Morning, at the same time that they lye and Snore, till the Sun has risen one-third of his course, and disperst all the unwholesome Damps. Then, after Stretching and Yawning for half an Hour, they light their Pipes, and, under the protection of a cloud of Smoak, venture out into the open Air; tho', if it happens to be never so little cold, they quickly return Shivering into the Chimney corner. When the Weather is mild, they stand leaning with both their arms upon the cornfield fence, and gravely consider whether they had best go and take a Small Heat at the Hough but generally find reasons to put it off till another time.

Thus they loiter away their Lives, like Solomon's Sluggard, with their Arms across, and at the Winding up of the Year Scarcely have Bread to Eat. To speak the Truth, tis a thorough Aversion to Labor that makes People file off to N Carolina, where Plenty and a Warm Sun confirm them in their disposition to Laziness for their whole Lives.

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1 **Patentees,** holders of grants of land • 28 **Landlord's Plantation,** the Speight plantation • 50 **Lightwood,** resinous pine • 58 **Lubberland,** imaginary country where people live in idleness • 78 **Hough,** hoe • 80 **Solomon's Sluggard.** See Proverbs 6:9: "How long wilt thou sleep, O sluggard?"

[March] 26. Since we were like to be confin'd to this place, till the People return'd out of the Dismal, twas agreed that our Chaplain might Safely take a turn to Edenton, to preach the Gospel to the Infidels there, and Christen their Children. He was accompany'd thither by Mr. Little, One of the Carolina Commissioners, who, to shew his regard for the Church, offered to treat Him on the Road with a Fricassee of Rum. They fry'd half a Dozen Rashers of very fat Bacon in a Pint of Rum, both which being disht up together, serv'd the company at once both for meat and Drink. Most of the Rum they get in this country comes from New England, and is so bad and unwholesome, that it is not improperly called "Kill-Devil." It is distilled there from forreign molosses, which, if Skilfully manag'd, yields near Gallon for Gallon. Their molosses comes from the same country, and has the name of "Long Sugar" in Carolina, I suppose from the Ropiness of it, and Serves all the purposes of Sugar, both in their Eating and Drinking.

When they entertain their Friends bountifully, they fail not to set before them a Capacious Bowl of Bombo, so call'd from the Admiral of that name. This is a Compound of Rum and Water in Equal Parts, made palatable with the said long Sugar. As good humour begins to flow, and the Bowl to Ebb, they take Care to replenish it with Shear rum, of which there always is a Reserve under the Table. But such Generous doings happen only when that Balsam of life is plenty; for they have often such Melancholy times, that neither Land-graves nor Cassicks can procure one drop for their Wives, when they ly in, or are troubled with the Colick or Vapours. Very few in this Country have the Industry to plant Orchards, which, in a Dearth of Rum, might supply them with much better Liquor. The Truth is, there is one Inconvenience that easily discourages lazy People from making This improvement: very often, in Autumn, when the Apples begin to ripen, they are visited with Numerous Flights of paraqueets, that bite all the Fruit to Pieces in a moment, for the sake of the Kernels. The Havock they make is sometimes so great, that whole orchards are laid waste in Spite of all the Noises that can be made, or Mawkins that can be dresst up, to fright 'em away. These Ravenous Birds visit North Carolina only during the warm Season, and so soon as the Cold begins to come on, retire back towards the Sun. They rarely Venture so far North as Virginia, except in a very hot Summer, when they visit the most Southern Parts of it. They are very Beautiful; but like some other pretty Creatures, are apt to be loud and mischievous.

[March] 27. Betwixt this and Edenton there are many thuckleberry Slashes, which afford a convenient Harbour for Wolves and Foxes. The first of these wild Beasts is not so large and fierce as they are in other countries more Northerly. He will not attack a Man in the Keenest of his Hunger, but run away from him as from an Animal more mischievous than himself. The Foxes are much bolder, and will Sometimes not only make a Stand, but likewise assault any one that would balk them of their Prey. The Inhabitants hereabouts take the trouble to dig abundance of Wolf-Pits, so deep and perpendicular, that when a Wolf is once tempted into them, he can no more Scramble out again, than a Husband who has taken the leap can Scramble out of Matrimony. Most of the Houses in this part of the country are Log-houses, covered with Pine or Cypress shingles, 3 feet long, and one broad. They are hung upon Laths with Peggs, and their doors too turn upon Wooden Hinges, and have wooden Locks to Secure them, so that the Building is finisht without Nails or other Iron-Work. They also set up their Pales without Nails at all, and indeed more Securely than those that are nailed. There are 3 Rails mortis'd into the Posts, the lowest of which serves as a Sill with a Groove in the Middle, big enough to receive the End of the Pales: the middle Part of the pale rests against the Inside of the Next Rail, and the Top of it is brought forward to the outside of the uppermost. Such Wreathing of the Pales in and out makes them stand firm, and much harder to unfix than when nail'd in the Ordinary way.

Within 3 or 4 miles of Edenton, the Soil appears to be a little more fertile, tho' it is much cut with Slashes, which seem all to have a tendency towards the Dismal. This Towne is Situate on the North side of Albemarle Sound, which is thereabout 5 miles over. A Dirty Slash

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31 **Land-graves nor Cassicks**, high officials provided for in John Locke's "The Fundamental Constitutions of Carolina" (1669). Byrd is here gibing at some of the stuffy titles suggested by Locke • 43 **Mawkins**, scarecrows • 53 **thuckleberry**, huckleberry • 53 **Slashes**, swamps which, as Byrd goes on to say, drain into the Dismal Swamp • 72 **Pales**, fence pales

runs all along the Back of it, which in the Summer is a foul annoyance, and furnishes abundance of that Carolina plague, musquetas. There may be 40 or 50 Houses, most of them Small, and built without Expense. A Citizen here is counted Extravagant, if he has Ambition enough to aspire to a Brick-chimney. Justice herself is but indifferently Lodged, the Court-House having much of the Air of a common Tobacco-House. I believe this is the only Metropolis in the Christian or Mahometan World, where there is neither Church, Chappel, Mosque, Synagogue, or any other Place of Publick Worship of any Sect or Religion whatsoever. What little Devotion there may happen to be is much more private than their vices. The People seem easy without a Minister, as long as they are exempted from paying Him. Sometimes the Society for propagating the Gospel has had the Charity to send over Missionaries to this Country; but unfortunately the Priest has been too Lewd for the people, or, which oftener happens, they too lewd for the Priest. For these Reasons these Reverend Gentlemen have always left their Flocks as arrant Heathen as they found them. Thus much however may be said for the Inhabitants of Edenton, that not a Soul has the least taint of Hypocrisy, or Superstition, acting very Frankly and aboveboard in all their Excesses.

Provisions here are extremely cheap, and extremely good, so that People may live plentifully at a triffleing expense. Nothing is dear but Law, Physick, and Strong Drink, which are all bad in their Kind, and the last they get with so much Difficulty, that they are never guilty of the Sin of Suffering it to Sour upon their Hands. Their Vanity generally lies not so much in having a handsome Dining-Room, as a Handsome House of Office: in this Kind of Structure they are really extravagant. They are rarely guilty of Flattering or making Court to their governors, but treat them with all the Excesses of Freedom and Familiarity. They are of Opinion their rulers wou'd be apt to grow insolent, if they grew Rich, and for that reason take care to keep them poorer, and more dependent, if possible, than the Saints in New England used to do their Governors. They have very little corn, so they are forced to carry on their Home-Traffick with Paper-Money. This is the only Cash that will tarry in the Country, and for that reason the Discount goes on increasing between that and real Money, and will do so to the End of the Chapter.

[March] 28. Our Time passt heavily in our Quarters, where we were quite cloy'd with the Carolina Felicity of having nothing to do. It was really more insupportable than the greatest Fatigue, and made us even envy the Drudgery of our Friends in the Dismal. Besides, tho' the Men we had with us were kept in Exact Discipline, and behav'd without Reproach, yet our Landlord began to be tired of them, fearing they would breed a Famine in his Family. Indeed, so many keen Stomachs made great Havock amongst the Beef and Bacon which he had laid in for his Summer Provision, nor cou'd he easily purchase More at that time of the Year, with the Money we paid him, because the People having no certain Market seldom provide any more of these Commodities than will barely supply their own Occasions. Besides the Weather was now grown too warm to lay in a fresh Stock so late in the Spring. These Considerations abated somewhat of that chearfulness with which he bidd us Welcome in the Beginning, and made him think the time quite as long as we did until the Surveyors return'd. While we were thus all Hands uneasy, we were comforted with the News that this Afternoon the Line was finisht through the Dismal. The Messenger told us it had been the hard work of three days to measure the Length of only 5 miles, and mark the Trees as they passt along, and by the most exact Survey they found the Breadth of the Dismal in this Place to be completely 15 miles. How wide it may be in other Parts, we can give no Account, but believe it grows narrower towards the North; possibly towards Albemarle Sound it may be something broader, where so many Rivers issue out of it. All we know for certain is, that from the Place where the line enter'd the Dismal, to where it came out, we found the Road round that Portion of it belongs to Virginia to be about 65 Miles. How great the Distance may be from Each of those Points, round that Part that falls within the Bounds of Carolina, we had no certain Information: Tho' tis conjectur'd it cannot be so little as 30 Miles. At which rate the whole Circuit must be about an Hundred. What a Mass of Mud and Dirt is treasur'd up within this filthy circumference, and what a Quantity of Water must perpetually drain into it from the riseing ground that Surrounds it on every

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41 Saints in New England, a gibe at New England Puritanism • 53 behav'd without Reproach. Compare The Secret History

Side? Without taking the Exact level of the Dismal, we may be sure that it declines towards the Places where the Several Rivers take their Rise, in order to carry off the constant Supplies of Water. Were it not for such Discharges, the whole Swamp would long Since have been converted into a Lake. On the other Side this Declension must be very gentle, else it would be laid perfectly dry by so many continual drains; Whereas, on the contrary, the Ground seems everywhere to be thoroughly drenched even in the dryest Season of the Year. The Surveyors concluded this day's Work with running 25 chains up into the Firm Land, where they waited further Orders from the Commissioners.

1728·1841

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12 chains, surveyor's chains, sixty feet long, for measuring

From • The History of the Dividing Line

A Progress to the Mines

In September and October 1732 Byrd took a trip to inspect some of his mining properties and to collect what data he could on the cost of manufacturing iron. Along the way he stopped to inspect properties of his or to visit with various prosperous planters. This excerpt tells of the first two stops. He halted first at his father's old place near the falls of the James River, where he supervised some drilling and talked with the miller, the weaver, the overseer's wife, and the overseer. His second stop was at Colonel Randolph's home at Tuckahoe. There with Mrs. Fleming, another friend of the Randolph's, he was delayed for a time by rainy weather.

1732, Sept. 18. For the pleasure of the good company of Mrs. Byrd, and her little Governuor, my Son, I went about half way to the Falls in the Chariot. There we halted, not far from a purling Stream, and upon the Stump of a propagate Oak picket the Bones of a Piece of Roast Beef. By the Spirit which that gave me, I was the better able to part with the dear Companions of my Travels, and to perform the rest of my Journey on Horseback by myself. I reached Shaccoa's before 2 o'clock, and crost the River to the Mills. I had the Grief to find them both stand as still, for the want of Water, as a dead Woman's Tongue, for want of Breath. It had rain'd so little for many Weeks above the Falls, that the Naides had hardly Water enough left to wash their Faces. However, as we ought to turn all our Misfortunes to the best Advantage, I directed Mr. Booker, my first Minister there, to make use of the lowness of the water for blowing up the Rocks at the Mouth of the Canal. For that purpose I order'd Iron Drills to be made about 2 foot long, pointed with Steel, Chizzel fashion, in order to make holes, into which we put our Cartridges of Powder, containing each about 3 Ounces. There wanted Skill among my Engineers to chuse the best parts of the Stone for boring, that we might blow to the most advantage. They made all their Holes quite perpendicular, whereas they should have humour'd the Grain of the Stone for the more effectual Execution. I order'd the points of the Drills to be made Chizzel way, rather than the Diamond, that they might need to be Seldomer repair'd, tho' in Stone the Diamond points would make the most despatch. The Water now flow'd out of the River so slowly, that the Miller was oblig'd to pond it up in the Canal, by setting open the Floodgates at the Mouth, and shutting those close at the Mill. By this contrivance, he was able at any time to grind two or three Bushels, either for his choice Customers, or for the use of my Plantations. Then I walkt to the place where they broke the Flax, which is wrought with much greater ease than the Hemp, and is much better for Spinning. From thence I paid a Visit to the Weaver, who needed a little of Minerva's Inspiration to make the most of a piece of fine Cloth. Then I lookt in upon my Caledonian Spinster, who was mended more in her looks than in her

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14 **Naides**, naiads • 41 **Minerva**, the goddess of spinning and weaving • 42 **Caledonian Spinster**, the wife of the overseer

Humour. However, she promised much, tho' at the same time intended to perform little. She is too high-Spirited for Mr. Booker, who hates to have his sweet Temper ruffled, and will rather suffer matters to go a little wrong sometimes, than give his righteous Spirit any uneasiness. He is very honest, and would make an admirable Overseer where Servants will do as they are bid. But Eye-Servants, who want abundance of over-looking, are not so proper to be committed to his Care. I found myself out of order, and for that reason retir'd Early; yet with all this precaution had a gentle feaver in the Night, but towards morning Nature set open all her Gates, and drove it out in a plentiful perspiration.

[Sept.] 19. The worst of this fever was, that it put me to the Necessity of taking another Ounce of Bark. I moisten'd every dose with a little Brandy, and fill'd the Glass up with Water, which is the least Nauseous way of taking this Popish Medicine, and besides hinders it from Purging. After I had swallow'd a few Poacht Eggs, we rode down to the Mouth of the Canal, and from thence crost over to the broad Rock Island in a Canoe. Our errand was to view some Iron Ore, which we dug up in two places. That on the surface seemed very spongy and poor, which gave us no great Encouragement to search deeper, nor did the Quantity appear to be very great. However, for my greater Satisfaction, I order'd a hand to dig there for some time this Winter. We walkt from one End of the Island to the other, being about half a Mile in length, and found the Soil very good, and too high for any Flood, less than that of Deucalion, to do the least damage. There is a very wild prospect both upward and downward, the River being full of Rocks, over which the Stream tumbled with a Murmur, loud enough to drown the Notes of a Scolding Wife. This Island would make an agreeable Hermitage for any good Christian, who had a mind to retire from the World. Mr. Booker told me how Dr. Ireton had cured him once of a Looseness, which had been upon him two whole years. He order'd him a Dose of Rhubarb, with directions to take 25 Drops of Laudanum so Soon as he had had 2 Physical Stools. Then he rested one day, and the next order'd him another Dose of the same Quantity of Laudanum to be taken, also after the 2d Stool. When this was done, he finisht the Cure by giving him 20 drops of Laudanum every night for five Nights running. The Doctor insisted upon the necessity of Stopping the Operation of the Rhubarb before it workt quite off, that what remained behind might strengthen the Bowels. I was punctual in Swallowing my Bark, and that I might use exercise upon it, rode to Prince's Folly, and my Lord's Islands, where I saw very fine Corn. In the meantime Vulcan came in Order to make the drills for boring the Rocks, And gave me his Parole he wou'd, by the grace of God, attend the works till they were finisht, which he perform'd as lamely as if he had been to labour for a dead Horse, and not for ready Money. I made a North Carolina dinner upon Fresh Pork, though we had a plate of Green Peas after it, by way of Desert, for the Safety of our Noses. Then my first minister and I had some serious Conversation about my affairs, and I find nothing disturb'd his peaceable Spirit so much as the misbehavior of the Spinster above-mention'd. I told him I cou'd not pity a Man, who had it always in his Power to do himself and her Justice, and wou'd not. If she were a Drunkard, a Scold, a Thief, or a Slanderer, we had wholesome Laws, that would make her Back Smart for the diversion of her other Members, and it was his Fault he had not put those wholesome Severities in Execution. I retired in decent time to my own Apartment, and Slept very comfortably upon my Bark, forgetting all the little crosses arising from Overseers and Negroes.

[Sept.] 20. I continued the Bark, and then tost down my Poacht Eggs, with as much ease as some good Breeders Slip Children into the World. About Nine I left the Prudentest Orders I could think of with my Visier, and then crost the River to Shacc's. I made a running Visit to 3 of my Quarters, where, besides finding all the People well, I had the Pleasure to see better Crops than usual both of Corn and Tobacco. I parted there with my Intendant, and pursued my Journey to Mr. Randolph's, at Tuckahoe, without meeting with any Adventure by the way. Here I found Mrs. Fleming, who was packing up her Baggage with design to follow her Husband the next day, who was gone to a new Settlement in Goochland. Both he and She have been about Seaven Years persuading themselves to remove to that retired part of

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31 **Deucalion,** son of Prometheus. When Jupiter punished the race of men with a vast flood, Deucalion and his wife Pyrrha alone survived by finding refuge on towering Parnassus • 52 **Vulcan,** god of fire, hence of the glow of the forge. Here, of course, the name is humorously applied to a very un-Vulcan-like worker • 76 **Visier,** vizier

the Country, tho' they had the two strong Arguments of Health and Interest for doing so. The Widow smiled graciously upon me, and entertain'd me very handsomely. Here I learnt all the tragical Story of her Daughter's humble Marriage with her Uncle's Overseer. Besides the meanness of this mortal's Aspect, the Man has not one visible Qualification, except Impudence, to recommend him to a Female's Inclinations. But there is sometimes such a Charm in that Hibernian Endowment, that frail Woman cannot withstand it, tho' it stand alone without any other Recommendation. Had she run away with a Gentleman or a pretty Fellow, there might have been some Excuse for her, tho' he were of inferior Fortune: but to stoop to a dirty Plebeian, without any kind of merit, is the lowest Prostitution. I found the Family justly enraged at it; and tho' I had more good Nature than to join in her Condemnation, yet I cou'd devise no Excuse for so senceless a Prank as this young Gentlewoman had play'd. Here good Drink was more Scarce than good Victuals, the Family being reduc'd to the last Bottle of Wine, which was therefore husbanded very carefully. But the Water was excellent. The Heir of the Family did not come home till late in the Evening. He is a pretty Young Man, but had the misfortune to become his own master too soon. This puts young Fellows upon wrong pursuits, before they have Sence to Judge rightly for themselves. Tho' at the same time they have a strange conceit of their own Sufficiency, when they grow near 20 Years old, especially if they happen to have a small Smattering of Learning. Tis then they fancy themselves wiser than all their Tutors and Governors, which makes them headstrong to all advice, and above all Reproof and Admonition.

[Sept.] 21. I was sorry in the morning to find myself stopt in my Career by bad Weather brought upon us by a North-East Wind. This drives a World of Raw unkindly Vapours upon us from Newfoundland, laden with Blite, Coughs, and Pleurisys. However, I complain'd not, lest I might be suspected to be tir'd of the good Company. Tho' Mrs. Fleming was not so much upon her Guard, but mutiny'd strongly at the Rain, that hinder'd her from pursuing her dear Husband. I said what I cou'd to comfort a Gentlewoman under so sad a Disappointment. I told her a husband, that staid so much at Home as her's did, cou'd be no such violent Rarity, as for a Woman to venture her precious Health, to go dagging thro' the Rain after him, or to be miserable if she happen'd to be prevented. That it was prudent for marry'd people to fast Sometimes from one another, that they might come together again with the better Stomach. That the best things in this World, if constantly us'd, are apt to be cloying, which a little absence and Abstinence wou'd prevent. This was Strange Doctrine to a fond Female, who fancys People shou'd love with as little Reason after Marriage as before. In the afternoon Monsieur Marij, the Minister of the Parish, came to make me a Visit. He had been a Romish Priest, but found Reasons, either Spiritual or temporal, to quit that gay Religion. The fault of this new Convert is, that he looks for as much Respect from his Protestant Flock, as is paid to the Popish Clergy, which our ill-bred Hugonots dont understand. Madam Marij, had so much Curiosity as to want to come too; but another Horse was wanting, and she believ'd it would have too Vulgar an Air to ride behind her Husband. This Woman was of the true Exchange Breed, full of Discourse, but void of Discretion, and marry'd a Parson, with the Idle hopes he might some time or other come to be his Grace of Canterbury. The Gray Mare is the better Horse in that Family, and the poor man Submits to her wild Vagarys for Peace' Sake. She has just enough of the fine Lady, to run in debt, and be of no signification in her Household. And the only thing that can prevent her from undoing her loving Husband will be, that nobody will trust them beyond the 16000, which is soon run out in a Goochland store. The way of Dealing there is, for some small Merchant or Pedler to buy a Scots Pennyworth of Goods, and clap 150 per cent upon that. At this Rate the Parson cant be paid much more for his preaching than tis worth. No sooner was our Visitor retired, but the facetious Widow was so kind as to let me into all this Secret History, but was at the same time exceedingly Sorry that the Woman should be so indiscreet, and the man so tame as to be govern'd by an unprofitable and fantastical Wife.

[Sept.] 22. We had another wet day, to try both Mrs. Fleming's Patience and my good Breeding. The N E Wind commonly sticks by us 3 or 4 days, filling the Atmosphere with damps, injurious both to man and

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75 16000. Sixteen thousand pounds of tobacco was the legal salary of a minister

Beast. The worst of it was, we had no good Liquor to warm our Blood, and fortify our Spirits against so strong a Malignity. However, I was cheerful under all these Misfortunes, and expresst no Concern but a decent Fear lest my long visit might be troublesome. Since I was like to have thus much Leizure, I endeavour'd to find out what Subject a dull marry'd man cou'd introduce that might best bring the Widow to the Use of her Tongue. At length, I discover'd she was a notable Quack, and therefore paid that regard to her Knowledge, as to put some Questions to her about the bad distemper that raged then in the Country. I mean the Bloody Flux, that was brought us in the Negro-ship consigned to Colo. Braxton. She told me she made use of very Simple remedys in that Case, with very good Success. She did the Business either with Hartshorn Drink, that had Plantain Leaves boil'd in it, or else with a Strong decoction of St. Andrew's Cross, in New milk instead of Water. I agreed with her that those remedys might be very good, but would be more effectual after a dose or two of Indian Physick. But for fear this Conversation might be too grave for a Widow, I turn'd the discourse, and began to talk of Plays, & finding her Taste lay most towards Comedy, I offer'd my Service to read one to Her, which she kindly accepted. She produced the 2d part of the Beggar's Opera, which had diverted the Town for 40 nights successively, and gain'd four thousand pounds to the Author. This was not owing altogether to the Wit or Humour that Sparkled in it, but to some Political Reflections, that seem'd to hit the Ministry. But the great Advantage of the Author was, that his Interest was solicited by the Dutchess of Queensbury, which no man could refuse who had but half an Eye in his head, or half a Guinea in his Pocket. Her Grace, like Death, spared nobody, but even took my Lord Selkirk in for 2 Guineas, to repair which Extravagance he liv'd upon Scots Herrings 2 Months afterwards. But the best Story was, she made a very Smart Officer in his Majesty's Guards give her a Guinea, who Swearing at the same time twas all he had in the world, she sent him 50 for it the next day, to reward his Obedience. After having acquainted my Company with the History of the Play, I read 3 Acts of it, and left Mrs. Fleming and Mr. Randolph to finish it, who read as well as most Actors do at a Rehearsal. Thus we kill'd the time, and triumpht over the bad Weather.

1732·1866

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26 **the Beggar's Opera** (1727), a play by John Gay (1688-1732) produced very successfully, as Byrd indicates, in London. Actually it ran for sixty-three successive nights • 32 **the Dutchess of Queensbury,** Catherine Douglas, the wife of the third Duke of Queensbury, Charles Douglas —a leading figure in London society and one of Gay's staunchest friends

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Samuel Peters

1735 · 1826

Samuel Peters, an early writer of American "whoppers," was born in Hebron, Connecticut, in 1735, the descendant of an old colonial Puritan family. He graduated from Yale in 1757, went abroad, and was converted to Anglicanism. Following his ordination in 1760, he was appointed Rector of Hebron and Hertford.

In the dispute between the colonies and England, Peters was persecuted because of his Toryism. On one

occasion, for instance, a mob, coming to his home, "fired balls into the house, and with stones, bricks and clubs broke the doors, windows, and furniture, wounding his mother, the nurse of his infant son, and his two brothers, and seizing him, tore off his hat, wig, gown, and cassock, made him naked (except his breeches, stocking, and shoes), struck him with their staves and spat in his face," and threatened to tar and feather him. Imperiled by additional violence, he escaped to England in 1774 and did not return until 1805. He died in 1826.

In England, in 1781, Peters published his *General History of Connecticut* . . . which purposed, he said, "to bring to light truths long concealed," and which included "a description of the country, and many curious and interesting anecdotes." The scientific accuracy of the history and description in the book was somewhat militated against by Peters' prejudices. Furthermore the Rev. Peters had a sense of humor which caused him to enjoy working into a solemn description of a river the statement that it flowed so fast a crowbar would float on it.

The result was a book foreshadowing *Knickerbocker's History of New York* and the tall tales later to be published by Western writers. As Irving was to do, Peters maliciously satirized life in New England, emphasizing the harsh Blue Laws, the practice of bundling, and the foolishness of some of the inhabitants. He also threw in some "stretchers," included, apparently, for the pure joy of drawing a long bow. Such passages as the following have in them the fantasy and solemn-faced mendacity typical of much later American humor.

General History of Connecticut, ed. S. J. McCormick, New York, 1877 • E. A. Duyckinck and G. L. Duyckinck, "Samuel Peters," Cyclopedia of American Literature, New York, 1856

From

General History of Connecticut

BIRDS AND TREE-FROGS

The partridges in New England are near as large as a Dorking fowl; the quails, as an English partridge; and the robins twice as big as those in England. The dewmink, so named from its articulating those syllables, is black and white, and of the size of an English robin. Its flesh is delicious. The humility is so called because it speaks the word *humility*, and seldom mounts high in the air. Its legs are long enough to enable it to outrun a dog for a little way; its wings long and narrow, body meager, and of the size of a blackbird's; plumage variegated with white, black, blue, and red. It lives on tadpoles, spawn, and worms; has an eye more piercing than the falcon, and the swiftness of an eagle. Hence it can never be shot: for it sees the sparks of fire even before they enkindle the powder, and by the extreme rapidity of its flight, gets out of reach in an instant. It is never known to light upon a tree, but is always seen upon the ground or wing. These birds appear in New England in summer only; what becomes of them afterwards is not discovered. They are caught in snares, but can never be tamed.

The whippoorwill has so named itself by its nocturnal songs. It is also called the pope, by reason of its darting with great swiftness from the clouds to the ground, and bawling out *Pope!* which alarms young people and the fanatics very much, especially as they know it to be an ominous bird. However, it has hitherto proved friendly, always giving travellers and others notice of an approaching storm, by saluting them every minute with *Pope! Pope!* It flies only a little before sunset, unless for this purpose of giving notice of a storm. It never deceives the people with false news. If the tempest is to continue long, the augurs appear in flocks, and nothing can be heard but the word *Pope! Pope!* The whippoorwill is about the size of a cuckoo, has a short beak, long and narrow wings, a large head and mouth enor-

22 whippoorwill. In his remarks about this bird, Peters makes fun of the Puritan fear of popery



After the engraving in the edition of 1829.

mous, yet it is not a bird of prey. Under its throat is a pocket, which it fills with air at pleasure, whereby it sounds forth the fatal words *Pope* in the day, and *Whip-her-I-will* in the night. The superstitious inhabitants would have exorcised this harmless bird long ago, as an emissary from Rome and an enemy to the American vine, had they not found out that it frequents New England only in the summer, and prefers the wilderness to a palace. Nevertheless, many cannot but believe it a spy from some foreign court, an agent of Antichrist, a lover of persecution, and an enemy of Protestants, because it sings of *whipping*, and of the *Pope*, which they think portends misery and a change of religion.

The tree-frog cannot be called an insect, a reptile, or one of the winged host. He has four legs, the two foremost short, with claws as sharp as those of a squirrel: the hind legs five inches long, and folding by three joints. His body is about as big as the first joint of a man's thumb. Under his throat is a wind-bag, which assists him in singing the word *I-sa-ac*, all the night. When it rains and is very dark, he sings the loudest. His voice is not so pleasing as that of a nightingale; but this would be a venial imperfection if he would but keep silence on Saturday nights, and not forever prefer *I-sa-ac* to *Abraham* and *Jacob*. He has more elasticity in his long legs than any other creature yet known. By this means he will leap five yards up a tree, fastening himself to it by his fore feet; and in a moment will hop or spring as far as from one tree to another. It is from the singing of the tree-frog that the Americans have acquired the name of *Little Isaac*. Indeed, like a certain part of them, the creature appears very devout, noisy, arbitrary, and phlegmatic, and associates with none but what agree with him in his ways.

THE FROGS OF WINDHAM

Windham, the second county in the ancient kingdom of Sassacus, or colony of Saybrook, is hilly; but the soil being rich, has excellent butter, cheese, hemp, wheat, Indian corn, and horses. Its towns are twelve.

Windham resembles Rumford, and stands on Winnomantic river. Its meeting-house is elegant, and has a steeple, bell, and clock. Its court-house is scarcely to be looked upon as an ornament. The township forms four parishes, and is ten miles square.

Strangers are very much terrified at the hideous noise made on summer evenings by the vast number of frogs in the brooks and ponds. There are about thirty different voices among them, some of which resemble the bellowing of a bull. The owls and whippoor-wills complete the rough concert, which may be heard several miles. Persons accustomed to such serenades are not disturbed by them at their proper stations; but one night, in July, 1758, the frogs of an artificial pond, three miles square, and about five from Windham, finding the water dried up, left the place in a body, and marched, or rather hopped, towards Winnomantic river. They were under the necessity of taking the road and going through the town, which they entered about midnight. The bull frogs were the leaders, and the pipers followed without number. They filled a road 40 yards wide for four miles in length, and were for several hours, in passing through the town, unusually clamorous. The inhabitants were equally perplexed and frightened: some expected to find an army of French and Indians; others feared an earthquake, and dissolution of nature. The consternation was universal. Old and young, male and female, fled naked from their beds with worse shriekings than those of the frogs. The event was fatal to several women. The men, after a flight of half a mile, in which they met with many broken shins, finding no enemies in pursuit of them, made a halt and summoned resolution enough to ven-

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31 **like . . . them.** Here Peters makes fun of what he considers the fanaticism and dogmatism of the Puritans • 39 **Winnomantic river,** the Willimantic

ture back to their wives and children; when they distinctly heard from the enemy's camp these words, "*Wight, Hilderken, Dier, Tete.*" This last they thought meant *treaty;* and plucking up courage, they sent a triumvirate to capitulate with the supposed French and Indians. These three men approached in their shirts, and begged to speak with the General; but it being dark, and no answer given, they were sorely agitated for some time betwixt hope and fear; at length, however, they discovered that the dreaded inimical army was an army of thirsty frogs, going to the river for a little water.

Such an incursion was never known before nor since; and yet the people of Windham have been ridiculed for their timidity on this occasion. I verily believe an army under the Duke of Marlborough would, under like circumstances, have acted no better than they did.

In 1768, the inhabitants on Connecticut river were as much alarmed at an army of caterpillars, as those of Windham were at the frogs; and no one found reason to jest at their fears. Those worms came in one night, and covered the earth on both sides of that river to an extent of three miles in front and two in depth. They marched with great speed and eat up everything green for the space of one hundred miles, in spite of rivers, ditches, fires, and the united efforts of 1,000 men. They were, in general, two inches long, had white bodies covered with thorns, and red throats. When they had finished their work, they went down to the river Connecticut, where they died, poisoning the waters until they were washed into the sea. This calamity was imputed by some to the vast number of trees and logs lying in the creeks, and to the cinders, smoke, and fires made to consume the waste wood for three or four hundred miles up the Connecticut; while others thought it augured future evils similar to those in Egypt. The inhabitants of the Verdmonts would unavoidably have perished by famine in consequence of the devastation of these worms, had not a remarkable providence filled the wilderness with wild pigeons, which were killed by sticks as they sat on the branches of trees in such multitudes, that 30,000 people lived on them for three weeks. If a natural cause may be assigned for the coming of the frogs and caterpillars, yet the visit of the pigeons to a wilderness in August has been necessarily ascribed to an interposition of infinite power and goodness. Happy will it be for America, if the smiling providence of Heaven produces gratitude, repentance, and obedience amongst her children!

HEBRON

Hebron is the center of the province; and it is remarkable that there are thirty-six towns larger, and thirty-six less. It is situated between two ponds, about two miles in length and one in breadth, and is intersected by two small rivers, one of which falls into the Connecticut, the other into the Thames. A large meeting[-house] stands on a square, where four roads meet. The town resembles Finchley. The township eight miles square; five parishes, one is Episcopal. The number of houses is 400; of the inhabitants, 3,200. It pays one part out of seventy-three of all governmental taxes, and is a bed of farmers on their own estates. Frequent suits about the Indian titles have rendered them famous for their knowledge in law and self-preservation. In 1740, Mr. George Whitefield gave them this laconic character: "Hebron," says he, "is the stronghold of Satan; for its people mightily oppose the work of the Lord, being more fond of earth than of heaven."

This town is honored by the residence of the Rev. Dr. Benjamin Pomeroy, an excellent scholar, an exemplary gentleman, and a most thundering preacher of the New Light order. His great abilities procured him the favor and honor of being the instructor of Abimeleck, the present King of Mohegin. He is of a very persevering, sovereign disposition; but just, polite, generous, charitable, and without dissimulation.—*Avis alba.*

Here also reside some of the descendants of William Peters, Esq., already spoken of; among whom is the Rev. Samuel Peters, an Episcopal clergyman, who, by his generosity and zeal for the Church of England and loyalty to the House of Hanover, has rendered himself famous both in New and Old England, and in some degree made an atonement for the fanaticism and treasons of his uncle Hugh, and of his ancestor on his mother's side, Major-general Thomas Harrison, both hanged at Charing-Cross in the last century. . . .

1781

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36 **the Verdmonts,** Vermont • 69 **New Light,** a particular sect of the Congregationalists • 74 **Avis alba,** a white bird. The modern equivalent would be "a rare bird" • 77 **Samuel Peters.** The author speaks of himself anonymously

William Bartram

1739 · 1823

Benjamin Franklin probably thought "Billy" Bartram a little unsteady in comparison with his shrewd farmer-botanist-nurseryman father, John. Billy could draw and color pictures of Pennsylvania turtles well enough to have them published in the *Gentleman's Magazine* in London, but he was not anxious to be apprenticed to an engraver. He failed to make his living either as a trader or as a farmer. Wandering with his father into the back country, collecting seeds and plants to send to wealthy gardening enthusiasts in England, he had learned a great many things, none of them especially profitable. By Poor Richard's standards, he had been spoiled.

Bartram's Quaker faith and family loyalties accentuated intense shyness and personal humility. He never married; he was never conspicuous in Philadelphia scientific circles, although he was a member of the American Philosophical Society and could have been, late in life, professor of botany at the University of Pennsylvania. He was glad to pass on whatever he knew to his friends for them to use as they wished.

In another environment, perhaps, Bartram's meticulous observations might have made him a great botanist, ornithologist, geologist, or anthropologist, but he would not have been happy. In his time the study of nature was relatively unspecialized, and it was still possible to see a plant, a bird, a landscape, or an Indian as an individual rather than as a specimen. Nature to Bartram was animistic, sublime, unspoiled, and beautiful; his Seminoles and Cherokees were, except when corrupted by the white man, unblemished in their nobility, as became nature's children. The great adventure of his life was as much poetic as scientific—a series of excursions into the deep South between 1773 and 1777, when the guns were firing at Lexington, Trenton, and Charleston. At the expense of a London physician, John Fothergill, Bartram walked and sailed and paddled through enchanting country, taking notes for a book wherein poetry is modestly hidden behind a prosaic title: *Travels Through North & South Carolina, Georgia, East & West Florida, the Cherokee Country, the Extensive Territories of the Muscogules, or Creek Confederacy, and the Country of the Chactaws; Containing an Account of the Soil and Natural Productions of Those Regions, Together with Observations on the Manners of the Indians* (Philadelphia, 1791).

The *Travels* was reprinted in London editions in 1792 and 1794, in a Dublin edition in 1793, and translations were soon available in German (1793), Dutch (1794-1797), and French (1799-1801). It has twice been reprinted in recent years (1928, 1940). Scholars have demonstrated that it was read and much admired by Coleridge, Wordsworth, Chateaubriand, and others, who paid it the compliment of echoing or borrowing outright many of its passages, notably in "The Rime of the Ancient Mariner," "Kubla Khan," "Ruth," *The Prelude,* and *Les Natchez.* Very probably, as has been claimed, Bartram's was the first American book to have wide literary influence abroad. It is difficult to read as an organic whole, because Bartram interspersed notes on natural history (sometimes lists of scientific

names according to the Linnaean classification) with passages of poetic description, philosophical comment, religious ecstasy, and thumbnail narratives of his encounters with men and beasts in the lush semitropical regions which he visited. He was able, nevertheless, to communicate his delight in the external world with disarming and attractive freshness. One can readily understand why he was a favorite among the writers of the Romantic period.

Ernest Earnest, **John and William Bartram, Botanists and Explorers,** Philadelphia, 1940 • **The Travels of William Bartram, ed.** Mark Van Doren, with introduction by J. L. Lowes, New York, 1940 • N. B. Fagin, **William Bartram, Interpreter of the American Landscape,** Baltimore, 1933

From

Travels

Part I of the **Travels** describes a sea trip from Philadelphia to Savannah, with a stop at Charleston, and several excursions into what is now the interior of Georgia, between April 1773 and March 1774. Part II, the longest and most popular section, covers travels in northern Florida in 1774. Part III is an account of a trip from Charleston across South Carolina and northern Georgia into Alabama and Louisiana, covering most of 1775 and 1776. Part IV is "An Account of the Persons, Manners, Customs and Government of the Muscogules or Creeks, &c. Aborigines of the Continent of North America."

The first selection printed here is the first quarter of Chapter 5, Part II; it is an example both of Bartram's attitude toward nature and of his narrative skill. Its portrayal of man alone in the wilderness amid the alligators has long been classic. The second selection, from Chapter 3, Part III, illustrates eighteenth-century primitivism in its full development, as well as Bartram's acquaintance with the traditions of pastoral literature.

Being desirous of continuing my travels and observations, higher up the river, and having an invitation from a gentleman who was agent for, and resident at a large plantation, the property of an English gentleman, about sixty miles higher up, I resolved to pursue my researches to that place; and having engaged in my service a young Indian, nephew to the White Captain, he agreed to assist me in working my vessel up as high as a certain bluff, where I was, by agreement, to land him, on the West or Indian shore, whence he designed to go in quest of the camp of the White Trader, his relation.

Provisions and all necessaries being procured, and the morning pleasant, we went on board and stood up the river. We passed for several miles on the left, by islands of high swamp land, exceedingly fertile, their banks for a good distance from the water, much higher than the interior part, and sufficiently so to build upon, and be out of the reach of inundations. They consist of a loose black mould, with a mixture of sand, shells and dissolved vegetables. The opposite Indian coast is a perpendicular bluff, ten or twelve feet high, consisting of a black sandy earth, mixed with a large proportion of shells, chiefly various species of fresh water Cochlea and Mytuli. Near the river, on this high shore, grew Corypha palma, Magnolia grandiflora, Live Oak, Callicarpa, Myrica cerifera, Hybiscus spinifex, and the beautiful evergreen shrub called Wild lime or Tallow nut. This last shrub grows six or eight feet high, many erect stems rising from a root; the leaves are lanciolate and intire, two or three inches in length and one in breadth, of a deep green colour, and polished; at the foot of each leaf grows a stiff, sharp thorn; the flowers are small and in clusters,

2 **the river,** the St. John's River in northeastern Florida • 7 **the White Captain,** a Seminole chief, mentioned in the preceding chapter • 23 **Cochlea . . . Tallow nut.** Here, as elsewhere, Bartram's scientific terms are a curious mixture of the technical, the popular, the obsolete, and the current. His generic names ordinarily follow the classification of Linnaeus (Carl von Linné, 1707-1778), Swedish dictator of eighteenth-century natural history • 29 **lanciolate,** lanceolate, spearlike

of a greenish yellow colour, and sweet scented; they are succeeded by a large oval fruit, of the shape and size of an ordinary plumb, of a fine yellow colour when ripe, a soft sweet pulp covers a nut which has a thin shell, enclosing a white kernel somewhat of the consistence and taste of the sweet Almond, but more oily and very much like hard tallow, which induced my father when he first observed it, to call it the Tallow nut.

At the upper end of this bluff is a fine Orange grove. Here my Indian companion requested me to set him on shore, being already tired of rowing under a fervid sun, and having for some time intimated a dislike to his situation, I readily complied with his desire, knowing the impossibility of compelling an Indian against his own inclinations, or even prevailing upon him by reasonable arguments, when labour is in the question; before my vessel reached the shore, he sprang out of her and landed, when uttering a shrill and terrible whoop, he bounded off like a roebuck, and I lost sight of him. I at first apprehended that as he took his gun with him, he intended to hunt for some game and return to me in the evening. The day being excessively hot and sultry, I concluded to take up my quarters here until next morning.

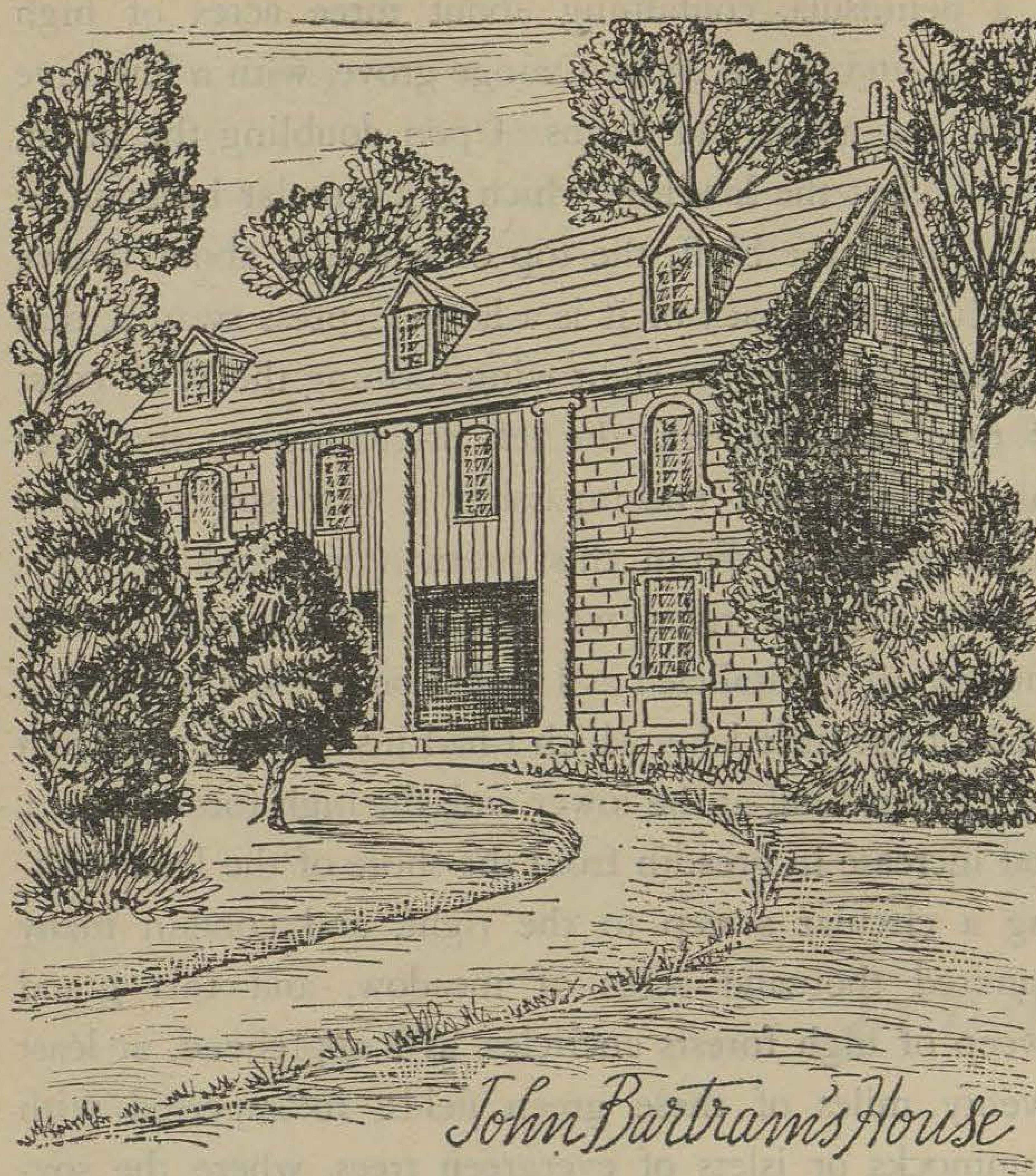
The Indian not returning this morning, I sat sail alone. The coasts on each side had much the same appearance as already described. The Palm trees here seem to be of a different species from the Cabbage tree; their strait trunks are sixty, eighty or ninety feet high, with a beautiful taper of a bright ash colour, until within six or seven feet of the top, where it is a fine green colour, crowned with an orb of rich green plumed leaves: I have measured the stem of these plumes fifteen feet in length, besides the plume, which is nearly of the same length.

The little lake, which is an expansion of the river, now appeared in view; on the East side are extensive marshes, and on the other high forests and Orange groves, and then a bay, lined with vast Cypress swamps, both coasts gradually approaching each other, to the opening of the river again, which is in this place about three hundred yards wide; evening now drawing on, I was anxious to reach some high bank of the river, where I intended to lodge, and agreeably to my wishes, I soon after discovered on the West shore, a little promontory, at the turning of the river, contracting it here to about one hundred and fifty yards in width. This promontory is a peninsula, containing about three acres of high ground, and is one entire Orange grove, with a few Live Oaks, Magnolias and Palms. Upon doubling the point, I arrived at the landing, which is a circular harbour, at the foot of the bluff, the top of which is about twelve feet high; and back of it is a large Cypress swamp, that spreads each way, the right wing forming the West coast of the little lake, and the left stretching up the river many miles, and encompassing a vast space of low grassy marshes. From this promontory, looking Eastward across the river, we behold a landscape of low country, u[n]paralleled as I think; on the left is the East coast of the little lake, which I had just passed, and from the Orange bluff at the lower end, the high forests begin, and increase in breadth from the shore of the lake, making a circular sweep to the right, and contain many hundred thousand acres of meadow, and this grand sweep of high forests encircles, as I apprehend, at least twenty miles of these green fields, interspersed with hommocks or islets of evergreen trees, where the sovereign Magnolia and lordly Palm stand conspicuous. The islets are high shelly knolls, on the sides of creeks or branches of the river, which wind about and drain off the super-abundant waters that cover these meadows, during the winter season.

The evening was temperately cool and calm. The crocodiles began to roar and appear in uncommon numbers along the shores and in the river. I fixed my camp in an open plain, near the utmost projection of the promontory, under the shelter of a large Live Oak, which stood on the highest part of the ground and but a few yards from my boat. From this open, high situation, I had a free prospect of the river, which was a matter of no trivial consideration to me, having good reason to dread the subtle attacks of the alligators, who were crouding about my harbour. Having collected a good quantity of wood for the purpose of keeping up a light and smoke during the night, I began to think of preparing my supper, when, upon examining my stores, I found but a scanty provision, I thereupon determined, as the most expeditious way of supplying my necessities,

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7 **my father.** Bartram was retracing a route he had followed with his father in 1765. John Bartram's journal of that expedition, which has been called "a kind of first draft of the **Travels**," was printed in the third edition (1769) of William Stork's **Description of East-Florida**



to take my bob and try for some trout. About one hundred yards above my harbour, began a cove or bay of the river, out of which opened a large lagoon. The mouth or entrance from the river to it was narrow, but the waters soon after spread and formed a little lake, extending into the marches, its entrance and shores within I observed to be verged with floating lawns of the Pistia and Nymphea and other aquatic plants; these I knew were excellent haunts for trout.

The verges and islets of the lagoon were elegantly embellished with flowering plants and shrubs; the laughing coots with wings half spread were tripping over the little coves and hiding themselves in the tufts of grass; young broods of the painted summer teal, skimming the still surface of the waters, and following the watchful parent unconscious of danger, were frequently surprised by the voracious trout, and he in turn, as often by the subtle, greedy alligator. Behold him rushing forth from the flags and reeds. His enormous body swells. His plaited tail brandished high, floats upon the lake. The waters like a cataract descend from his opening jaws. Clouds of smoke issue from his dilated nostrils. The earth trembles with his thunder. When immediately from the opposite coast of the lagoon, emerges from the deep his rival champion. They suddenly dart upon each other. The boiling surface of the lake marks their rapid course, and a terrific conflict commences. They now sink to the bottom folded together in horrid wreaths. The water becomes thick and discoloured. Again they rise, their jaws clap together, re-echoing through the deep surrounding forests. Again they sink, when the contest ends at the muddy bottom of the lake, and the vanquished makes a hazardous escape, hiding himself in the muddy turbulent waters and sedge on a distant shore. The proud victor exulting returns to the place of action. The shores and forests resound his dreadful roar, together with the triumphing shouts of the plaited tribes around, witnesses of the horrid combat.

My apprehensions were highly alarmed after being a spectator of so dreadful a battle; it was obvious that every delay would but tend to encrease my dangers and difficulties, as the sun was near setting, and the alligators gathered around my harbour from all quarters; from these considerations I concluded to be expeditious in my trip to the lagoon, in order to take some fish. Not thinking it prudent to take my fusee with me, lest I might lose it overboard in case of a battle, which I had every reason to dread before my return, I therefore furnished myself with a club for my defence, went on board, and penetrating the first line of those which surrounded my harbour, they gave way; but being pursued by several very large ones, I kept strictly on the watch, and paddled with all my might towards the entrance of the lagoon, hoping to be sheltered there from the multitude of my assailants; but ere I had half-way reached the place, I was attacked on all sides, several endeavouring to overset the canoe. My situation now became precarious to the last degree: two very large ones attacked me closely, at the same instant, rushing up with their heads and part of their bodies above the water, roaring terribly and belching floods of water over me. They struck their jaws together so close to my ears, as almost to stun me, and I expected every moment to be dragged out of the boat and instantly devoured, but I applied my weapons so effectually about me, though at random, that I was so successful as to beat them off a little; when, finding that they designed to renew the battle, I made for the shore, as the only means left me for my preservation, for,

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46 fusee, a light musket or firelock

by keeping close to it, I should have my enemies on one side of me only, whereas I was before surrounded by them, and there was a probability, if pushed to the last extremity, of saving myself, by jumping out of the canoe on shore, as it is easy to outwalk them on land, although comparatively as swift as lightning in the water. I found this last expedient alone could fully answer my expectations, for as soon as I gained the shore they drew off and kept aloof. This was a happy relief, as my confidence was, in some degree, recovered by it. On recollecting myself, I discovered that I had almost reached the entrance of the lagoon, and determined to venture in, if possible to take a few fish and then return to my harbour, while day-light continued; for I could now, with caution and resolution, make my way with safety along shore, and indeed there was no other way to regain my camp, without leaving my boat and making my retreat through the marshes and reeds, which, if I could even effect, would have been in a manner throwing myself away, for then there would have been no hopes of ever recovering my bark, and returning in safety to any settlements of men. I accordingly proceeded and made good my entrance into the lagoon, though not without opposition from the alligators, who formed a line across the entrance, but did not pursue me into it, nor was I molested by any there, though there were some very large ones in a cove at the upper end. I soon caught more trout than I had present occasion for, and the air was too hot and sultry to admit of their being kept for many hours, even though salted or barbecued. I now prepared for my return to camp, which I succeeded in with but little trouble, by keeping close to the shore, yet I was opposed upon re-entering the river out of the lagoon, and pursued near to my landing (though not closely attacked) particularly by an old daring one, about twelve feet in length, who kept close after me, and when I stepped on shore and turned about, in order to draw up my canoe, he rushed up near my feet and lay there for some time, looking me in the face, his head and shoulders out of water; I resolved he should pay for his temerity, and having a heavy load in my fusee, I ran to my camp, and returning with my piece, found him with his foot on the gunwale of the boat, in search of fish, on my coming up he withdrew sullenly and slowly into the water, but soon returned and placed himself in his former position, looking at me and seeming neither fearful or any way disturbed. I soon dispatched him by lodging the contents of my gun in his head, and then proceeded to cleanse and prepare my fish for supper, and accordingly took them out of the boat, laid them down on the sand close to the water, and began to scale them, when, raising my head, I saw before me, through the clear water, the head and shoulders of a very large alligator, moving slowly towards me; I instantly stepped back, when, with a sweep of his tail, he brushed off several of my fish. It was certainly most providential that I looked up at that instant, as the monster would probably, in less than a minute, have seized and dragged me into the river. This incredible boldness of the animal disturbed me greatly, supposing there could now be no reasonable safety for me during the night, but by keeping continually on the watch; I therefore, as soon as I had prepared the fish, proceeded to secure myself and effects in the best manner I could: in the first place, I hauled my bark upon the shore, almost clear out of the water, to prevent their oversetting or sinking her, after this every moveable was taken out and carried to my camp, which was but a few yards off; then ranging some dry wood in such order as was the most convenient, cleared the ground round about it, that there might be no impediment in my way, in case of an attack in the night, either from the water or the land; for I discovered by this time, that this small isthmus, from its remote situation and fruitfulness, was resorted to by bears and wolves. Having prepared myself in the best manner I could, I charged my gun and proceeded to reconnoitre my camp and the adjacent grounds; when I discovered that the peninsula and grove, at the distance of about two hundred yards from my encampment, on the land side, were invested by a Cypress swamp, covered with water, which below was joined to the shore of the little lake, and above to the marshes surrounding the lagoon, so that I was confined to an islet exceedingly circumscribed, and I found there was no other retreat for me, in case of an attack, but by either ascending one of the large Oaks, or pushing off with my boat.

It was by this time dusk, and the alligators had nearly ceased their roar, when I was again alarmed by a tumultuous noise that seemed to be in my harbour, and therefore engaged my immediate attention. Returning to my

camp I found it undisturbed, and then continued on to the extreme point of the promontory, where I saw a scene, new and surprising, which at first threw my senses into such a tumult, that it was some time before I could comprehend what was the matter; however, I soon accounted for the prodigious assemblage of crocodiles at this place, which exceeded every thing of the kind I had ever heard of.

How shall I express myself so as to convey an adequate idea of it to the reader, and at the same time avoid raising suspicions of my want of veracity. Should I say, that the river (in this place) from shore to shore, and perhaps near half a mile above and below me, appeared to be one solid bank of fish, of various kinds, pushing through this narrow pass of St. Juans into the little lake, on their return down the river, and that the alligators were in such incredible numbers, and so close together from shore to shore, that it would have been easy to have walked across on their heads, had the animals been harmless. What expressions can sufficiently declare the shocking scene that for some minutes continued, whilst this mighty army of fish were forcing the pass? During this attempt, thousands, I may say hundreds of thousands of them were caught and swallowed by the devouring alligators. I have seen an alligator take up out of the water several great fish at a time, and just squeeze them betwixt his jaws, while the tails of the great trout flapped about his eyes and lips, ere he had swallowed them. The horrid noise of their closing jaws, their plunging amidst the broken banks of fish, and rising with their prey some feet upright above the water, the floods of water and blood rushing out of their mouths, and the clouds of vapour issuing from their wide nostrils, were truly frightful. This scene continued at intervals during the night, as the fish came to the pass. After this sight, shocking and tremendous as it was, I found myself somewhat easier and more reconciled to my situation, being convinced that their extraordinary assemblage here, was owing to this annual feast of fish, and that they were so well employed in their own element, that I had little occasion to fear their paying me a visit.

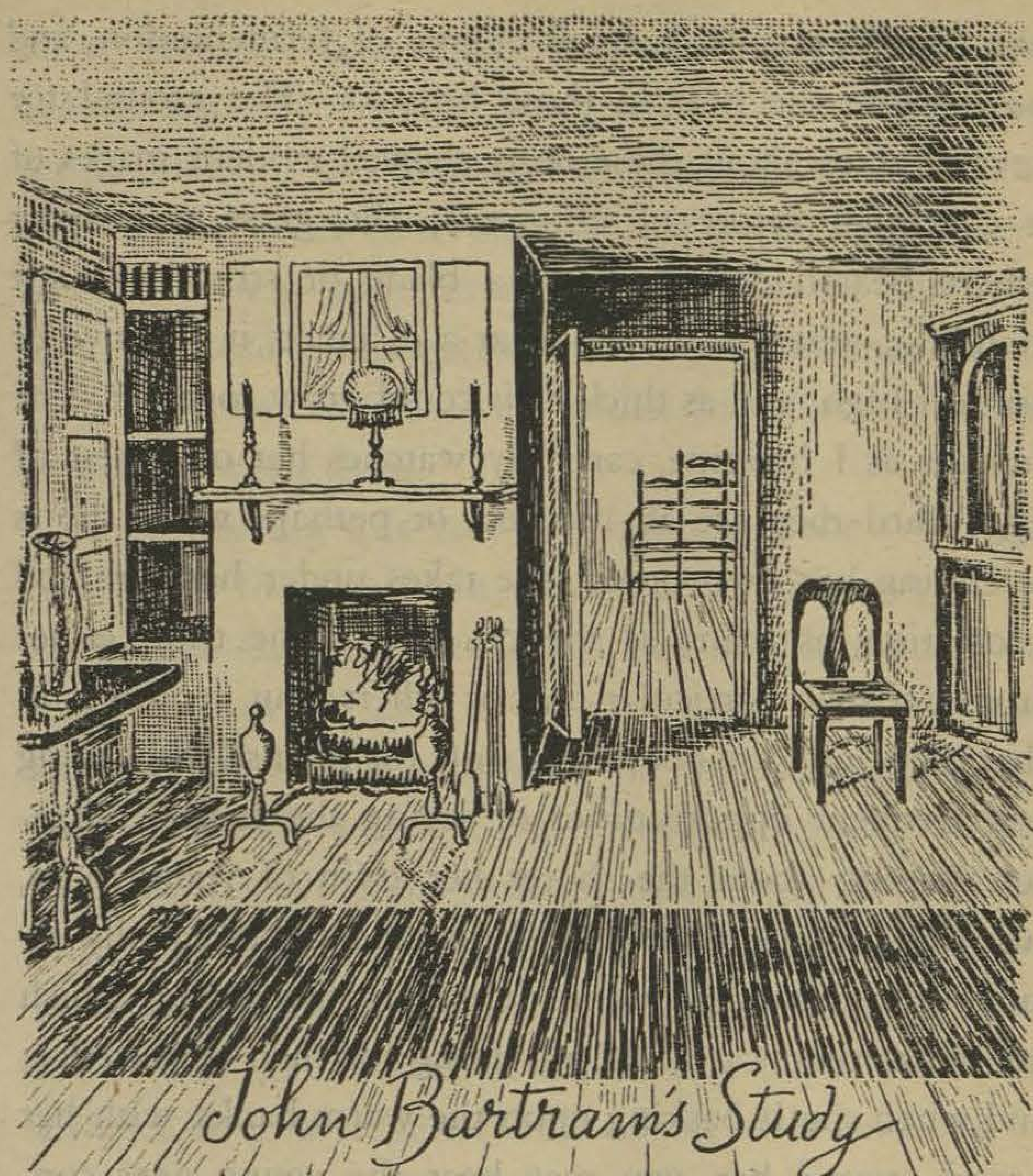
It being now almost night, I returned to my camp, where I had left my fish broiling, and my kettle of rice stewing, and having with me, oil, pepper and salt, and excellent oranges hanging in abundance over my head (a valuable substitute for vinegar) I sat down and regaled myself chearfully; having finished my repast, I re-kindled my fire for light, and whilst I was revising the notes of my past day's journey, I was suddenly roused with a noise behind me toward the main land; I sprang up on my feet, and listning, I distinctly heard some creature wading in the water of the isthmus; I seized my gun and went cautiously from my camp, directing my steps towards the noise; when I had advanced about thirty yards, I halted behind a coppice of Orange trees, and soon perceived two very large bears, which had made their way through the water, and had landed in the grove, about one hundred yards distance from me, and were advancing towards me. I waited until they were within thirty yards of me, they there began to snuff and look towards my camp, I snapped my piece, but it flashed, on which they both turned about and galloped off, plunging through the water and swamp, never halting as I suppose, until they reached fast land, as I could hear them leaping and plunging a long time; they did not presume to return again, nor was I molested by any other creature, except being occasionally awakened by the whooping of owls, screaming of bitterns, or the wood-rats running amongst the leaves.

The wood-rat is a very curious animal, they are not half the size of the domestic rat; of a dark brown or black colour; their tail slender and shorter in proportion, and covered thinly with short hair; they are singular with respect to their ingenuity and great labour in the construction of their habitations, which are conical pyramids about three or four feet high, constructed with dry branches, which they collect with great labour and perseverance, and pile up without any apparent order, yet they are so interwoven with one another, that it would take a bear or wild-cat some time to pull one of these castles to pieces, and allow the animals sufficient time to secure a retreat with their young.

The noise of the crocodiles kept me awake the greater part of the night, but when I arose in the morning, contrary to my expectations, there was perfect peace; very few of them to be seen, and those were asleep on the shore, yet I was not able to suppress my fears and apprehensions of being attacked by them in future; and indeed yesterday's combat with them, notwithstanding

I came off in a manner victorious, or at least made a safe retreat, had left sufficient impression on my mind to damp my courage, and it seemed too much for one of my strength, being alone in a very small boat to encounter such collected danger. To pursue my voyage up the river, and be obliged every evening to pass such dangerous defiles, appeared to me as perilous as running the gauntlet betwixt two rows of Indians armed with knives and fire brands; I however resolved to continue my voyage one day longer, if I possibly could with safety, and then return down the river, should I find the like difficulties to oppose. Accordingly I got every thing on board, charged my gun, and set sail cautiously along shore; as I passed by Battle lagoon, I began to tremble and keep a good look out, when suddenly a huge alligator rushed out of the reeds, and with a tremendous roar, came up, and darted as swift as an arrow under my boat, emerging upright on my lea quarter, with open jaws, and belching water and smoke that fell upon me like rain in a hurricane; I laid soundly about his head with my club and beat him off, and after plunging and darting about my boat, he went off on a strait line through the water, seemingly with the rapidity of lightning, and entered the cape of the lagoon; I now employed my time to the very best advantage in paddling close along shore, but could not forbear looking now and then behind me, and presently perceived one of them coming up again; the water of the river hereabouts, was shoal and very clear, the monster came up with the usual roar and menaces, and passed close by the side of my boat, when I could distinctly see a young brood of alligators to the number of one hundred or more, following after her in a long train, they kept close together in a column without straggling off to the one side or the other, the young appeared to be of an equal size, about fifteen inches in length, almost black, with pale yellow transverse waved clouds or blotches, much like rattle snakes in colour. I now lost sight of my enemy again.

Still keeping close along shore; on turning a point or projection of the river bank, at once I beheld a great number of hillocks or small pyramids, resembling hay cocks, ranged like an encampment along the banks, they stood fifteen or twenty yards distant from the water, on a high marsh, about four feet perpendicular above the



water; I knew them to be the nests of the crocodile, having had a description of them before, and now expected a furious and general attack, as I saw several large crocodiles swimming abreast of these buildings. These nests being so great a curiosity to me, I was determined at all events immediately to land and examine them. Accordingly I ran my bark on shore at one of their landing places, which was a sort of nick or little dock, from which ascended a sloping path or road up to the edge of the meadow, where their nests were, most of them were deserted, and the great thick whitish egg-shells lay broken and scattered upon the ground round about them.

The nests or hillocks are of the form of an obtuse cone, four feet high and four or five feet in diameter at their bases; they are constructed with mud, grass and herbage: at first they lay a floor of this kind of tempered mortar upon the ground, upon which they deposit a layer of eggs, and upon this a stratum of mortar seven or eight inches in thickness, and then another layer of eggs, and in this manner one stratum upon another, nearly to the top: I believe they commonly lay from one to two hundred eggs in a nest: these are hatched I suppose by the heat of the sun, and perhaps the vegetable substances mixed with the earth, being acted upon by

the sun, may cause a small degree of fermentation, and so increase the heat in those hillocks. The ground for several acres about these nests shewed evident marks of a continual resort of alligators; the grass was every where beaten down, hardly a blade or straw was left standing; whereas, all about, at a distance, it was five or six feet high, and as thick as it could grow together. The female, as I imagine, carefully watches her own nest of eggs until they are all hatched, or perhaps while she is attending her own brood, she takes under her care and protection, as many as she can get at one time, either from her own particular nest or others: but certain it is, that the young are not left to shift for themselves, having had frequent opportunities of seeing the female alligator, leading about the shores her train of young ones, just like a hen does her chickens, and she is equally assiduous and courageous in defending the young, which are under their care, and providing for their subsistence; and when she is basking upon the warm banks, with her brood around her, you may hear the young ones continually whining and barking, like young puppies. I believe but few of the brood live to the years of full growth and magnitude, as the old feed on the young as long as they can make prey of them.

The alligator when full grown is a very large and terrible creature, and of prodigious strength, activity and swiftness in the water. I have seen them twenty feet in length, and some are supposed to be twenty-two or twenty-three feet; their body is as large as that of a horse; their shape exactly resembles that of a lizard, except their tail, which is flat or cuniform, being compressed on each side, and gradually diminishing from the abdomen to the extremity, which, with the whole body is covered with horny plates or squammae, impenetrable when on the body of the live animal, even to a rifle ball, except about their head and just behind their fore-legs or arms, where it is said they are only vulnerable. The head of a full grown one is about three feet, and the mouth opens nearly the same length, the eys are small in proportion and seem sunk deep in the head, by means of the prominency of the brows; the nostrils are large, inflated and prominent on the top, so that the head in the water, resembles, at a distance, a great chunk of wood floating about. Only the upper jaw moves, which they raise almost perpendicular, so as to form a right angle with the lower one. In the fore part of the upper jaw, on each side, just under the nostrils, are two very large, thick, strong teeth or tusks, not very sharp, but rather the shape of a cone, these are as white as the finest polished ivory, and are not covered by any skin or lips, and always in sight, which gives the creature a frightful appearance; in the lower jaw are hols opposite to these teeth, to receive them; when they clap their jaws together it causes a surprising noise, like that which is made by forcing a heavy plank with violence upon the ground, and may be heard at a great distance.

But what is yet more surprising to a stranger, is the incredible loud and terrifying roar, which they are capable of making, especially in the spring season, their breeding time; it most resembles very heavy distant thunder, not only shaking the air and waters, but causing the earth to tremble; and when hundreds and thousands are roaring at the same time, you can scarcely be persuaded, but that the whole globe is violently and dangerously agitated.

An old champion, who is perhaps absolute sovereign of a little lake or lagoon (when fifty less than himself are obliged to content themselves with swelling and roaring in little coves round about) darts forth from the reedy coverts all at once, on the surface of the waters, in a right line; at first seemingly as swift as lightning, but gradually more slowly until he arrives at the center of the lake, when he stops; he now swells himself by drawing in wind and water through his mouth, which causes a loud sonorous rattling in the throat for near a minute, but it is immediately forced out again through his mouth and nostrils, with a loud noise, brandishing his tail in the air, and the vapour ascending from his nostrils like smoke. At other times, when swolen to an extent ready to burst, his head and tail lifted up, he spins or twirls round on the surface of the water. He acts his part like an Indian chief, when rehearsing his feats of war, and then retiring, the exhibition is continued by others who dare to step forth, and strive to excel each other, to gain the attention of the favorite female.

Having gratified my curiosity at this general breeding place and nursery of crocodiles, I continued my voyage up the river without being greatly disturbed by them: in my way I observed islets or floating fields of the bright green Pistia, decorated with other amphibious

plants, as Senecio Jacobea, Persicaria amphibia, Coreopsis bidens, Hydrocotile fluitans, and many others of less note. . . .

I arrived at Cowe about noon; this settlement is esteemed the capital town; it is situated on the bases of the hills on both sides of the river, near to its bank, and here terminates the great vale of Cowe, exhibiting one of the most charming natural mountainous landscapes perhaps any where to be seen; ridges of hills rising grand and sublimely one above and beyond another, some boldly and majestically advancing into the verdant plains, their feet bathed with the silver flood of the Tanase, whilst others far distant, veiled in blue mists, sublimely mount aloft, with yet greater majesty lift up their pompous crests and overlook vast regions. . . .

Next day after my arrival I crossed the river in a canoe, on a visit to a trader who resided amongst the habitations on the other shore.

After dinner, on his mentioning some curious scenes amongst the hills, some miles distance from the river, we agreed to spend the afternoon in observations on the mountains.

After riding near two miles through Indian plantations of Corn, which was well cultivated, kept clean of weeds and was well advanced, being near eighteen inches in height, and the Beans planted at the Corn-hills were above ground; we leave the fields on our right, turning towards the mountains and ascending through a delightful green vale or lawn, which conducted us in amongst the pyramidal hills and crossing a brisk flowing creek, meandering through the meads which continued near two miles, dividing and branching in amongst the hills; we then mounted their steep ascents, rising gradually by ridges or steps one above another, frequently crossing narrow, fertile dales as we ascended; the air feels cool and animating, being charged with the fragrant breath of the mountain beauties, the blooming mountain cluster Rose, blushing Rhododendron and fair Lilly of the valley: having now attained the summit of this very elevated ridge, we enjoyed a fine prospect indeed; the enchanting Vale of Keowe, perhaps as celebrated for fertility, fruitfulness and beautiful prospects as the Fields of Pharsalia or the Vale of Tempe: the town, the elevated peaks of the Jore mountains, a very distant prospect of the Jore village in a beautiful lawn, lifted up many thousand feet higher than our present situation, besides a view of many other villages and settlements on the sides of the mountains, at various distances and elevations; the silver rivulets gliding by them and snow white cataracts glimmering on the sides of the lofty hills; the bold promontories of the Jore mountain stepping into the Tanase river, whilst his foaming waters rushed between them.

After viewing this very entertaining scene we began to descend the mountain on the other side, which exhibited the same order of gradations of ridges and vales as on our ascent, and at length rested on a very expansive, fertile plain, amidst the towering hills, over which we rode a long time, through magnificent high forests, extensive green fields, meadows and lawns. Here had formerly been a very flourishing settlement, but the Indians deserted it in search of fresh planting land, which they soon found in a rich vale but a few miles distance over a ridge of hills. Soon after entering on these charming, sequestered, prolific fields, we came to a fine little river, which crossing, and riding over fruitful strawberry beds and green lawns, on the sides of a circular ridge of hills in front of us, and going around the bases of this promontory, came to a fine meadow on an arm of the vale, through which meandered a brook, its humid vapours bedewing the fragrant strawberries which hung in heavy red clusters over the grassy verge; we crossed the rivulet, then rising a sloping, green, turfy ascent, alighted on the borders of a grand forest of stately trees, which we penetrated on foot a little distance to a horse-stamp, where was a large squadron of those useful creatures, belonging to my friend and companion, the trader, on the sight of whom they assembled together from all quarters; some at a distance saluted him with shrill neighings of gratitude, or came prancing up to lick the salt out of his hand; whilst the younger and

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4 **Cowe**, a Cherokee town, in what is now Oconee County, South Carolina, bordering northern Georgia • 13 **Tanase**, Tennessee • 41 **Vale of Keowe.** The Keowee River forms the present boundary between Oconee and Pickens Counties • 43 **Pharsalia**, the central plain of Thessaly, renowned for Pompey's defeat there by Caesar (48 B.C.) • 43 **Tempe**, a valley in the north of Thessaly, between Mounts Olympus and Ossa, renowned for its beauty • 44 **Jore mountains**, apparently the southern extremity of the Blue Ridge • 76 **horse-stamp**, an enclosure or habitual standing-place for horses

more timorous came galloping onward, but coyly wheeled off, and fetching a circuit stood aloof, but as soon as their lord and master strewed the chrystaline salty bait on the hard beaten ground, they all, old and young, docile and timorous, soon formed themselves in ranks and fell to licking up the delicious morsel.

It was a fine sight; more beautiful creatures I never saw; there were of them of all colours, sizes and dispositions. Every year as they become of age he sends off a troop of them down to Charleston, where they are sold to the highest bidder.

Having paid our attention to this usefull part of the creation, who, if they are under our dominion, have consequently a right to our protection and favour. We returned to our trusty servants that were regaling themselves in the exuberant sweet pastures and strawberry fields in sight, and mounted again; proceeding on our return to town, continued through part of this high forest skirting on the meadows; began to ascend the hills of a ridge which we were under the necessity of crossing, and having gained its summit, enjoyed a most enchanting view, a vast expanse of green meadows and strawberry fields; a meandering river gliding through, saluting in its various turnings the swelling, green, turfy knolls, embellished with parterres of flowers and fruitful strawberry beds; flocks of turkies strolling about them; herds of deer prancing in the meads or bounding over the hills; companies of young, innocent Cherokee virgins, some busily gathering the rich fragrant fruit, others having already filled their baskets, lay reclined under the shade of floriferous and fragrant native bowers of Magnolia, Azalea, Philadelphus, perfumed Calycanthus, sweet Yellow Jessamine and cerulian Glycine frutescens, disclosing their beauties to the fluttering breeze, and bathing their limbs in the cool fleeting streams; whilst other parties, more gay and libertine, were yet collecting strawberries or wantonly chasing their companions, tantalizing them, staining their lips and cheeks with the rich fruit.

This sylvan scene of primitive innocence was enchanting, and perhaps too enticing for hearty young men long to continue as idle spectators.

In fine, nature prevailing over reason, we wished at least to have a more active part in their delicious sports. Thus precipitately resolving, we cautiously made our approaches, yet undiscovered, almost to the joyous scene of action. Now, although we meant no other than an innocent frolic with this gay assembly of hamadryades, we shall leave it to the person of feeling and sensibility to form an idea to what lengths our passions might have hurried us, thus warmed and excited, had it not been for the vigilance and care of some envious matrons who lay in ambush, and espying us gave the alarm, time enough for the nymphs to rally and assemble together; we however pursued and gained ground on a group of them, who had incautiously strolled to a greater distance from their guardians, and finding their retreat now like to be cut off, took shelter under cover of a little grove, but on perceiving themselves to be discovered by us, kept their station, peeping through the bushes; when observing our approaches, they confidently discovered themselves and decently advanced to meet us, half unveiling their blooming faces, incarnated with the modest maiden blush, and with native innocence and cheerfulness, presented their little baskets, merrily telling us their fruit was ripe and sound.

We accepted a basket, sat down and regaled ourselves on the delicious fruit, encircled by the whole assembly of the innocently jocose sylvan nymphs; by this time the several parties under the conduct of the elder matrons, had disposed themselves in companies on the green, turfy banks.

My young companion, the trader, by concessions and suitable apologies for the bold intrusion, having compromised the matter with them, engaged them to bring their collections to his house at a stipulated price, we parted friendly.

And now taking leave of these Elysian fields, we again mounted the hills, which we crossed, and traversing obliquely their flowery beds, arrived in town in the cool of the evening.

1774?-1776?·1791

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28 companies . . . virgins. One stanza from Wordsworth's "Ruth," composed in 1799, will illustrate the use which the English romantics made of Bartram's book. The Youth who broke Ruth's heart was from Georgia, and

He told of girls—a happy rout!
Who quit their folds with dance and shout,
Their pleasant Indian towns,
To gather strawberries all day long;
Returning with a choral song
When daylight is gone down.



Thomas Shepard

1604 · 1649

Among the leaders of the New England colonies were many forceful clergymen, notably John Cotton of Boston, Richard Mather of Dorchester, Thomas Hooker of Hartford, John Davenport of New Haven, and Roger Williams of Providence. In piety, however, and in subsequent influence, few exceeded that "gracious, sweet, heavenly minded and soul ravishing minister," Thomas Shepard of Cambridge. A "poore, weake, pale-complectioned man," he typified in many ways the religious life of his generation, the first in New England.

Shepard's career followed a familiar pattern. At twenty-three he left Emmanuel College, Cambridge, sometimes called the cradle of the Puritan party, with both his B.A. and his M.A. degrees. Because, like other Puritans, he disregarded prescribed ritual in favor of evangelical sermonizing, Shepard was three years later brought before William Laud, then Bishop of London, and forbidden to "preach, read, marry, bury, or exercise any ministerial function" in that diocese. In 1635, after narrow escapes from Laud's agents and from storms at sea, he landed in Massachusetts, with enough of a personal following to occupy Newton, or Cambridge, where he remained for the rest of his life, preaching, writing, and overseeing the infant college named after another Emmanuel alumnus, John Harvard.

Panel (l. to r.): Roger Williams teaching the Indians • Early meeting-houses, Sandown, New Hampshire, and Deerfield, Massachusetts • Thomas Shepard preaching • Pulpit of St. Botolph's Church, Boston, England

The core of Shepard's faith, and the great strength of Puritanism, was a spirituality which permeated every phase of living; a burning pietism which made the things of this world insignificant when compared with the exhilarating problem of the individual's relation to his God. "How many be there," Shepard asked in *The Sound Believer* (London, 1645), "that believe in Christ, that they may live as they list? If to drink, and whore, and scoff, and blaspheme; if to shake a lock, and follow every fond fashion; if to cross and cringe before a piece of wood; . . . if to set our hearts upon farms and merchandise, and so to be covetous; . . . if to have a name to live, and yet be dead at the heart,—if this be to live the life of Love, we have many that live this life; the Lord Jesus wants no love if this be to love. But O, woe unto you, if you thus requite the Lord, foolish people and unwise."

Like his colleagues, Shepard was primarily interested in conversion, and at times played upon the emotions of his congregation with descriptions of the perils of the damned. His reputation rested, however, upon systematic accounts of Calvinistic doctrine, which were exceedingly popular in both England and America.

The Works of Thomas Shepard, 3 vols., Boston, 1853 • S. E. Morison, Builders of the Bay Colony, Boston, 1930

From

The Sincere Convert

The systematic method of the following sermon is typical not only of Shepard but also of a fair majority of Puritan preachers. Note that he (1) takes a text from the Bible, (2) draws from it appropriate doctrines, (3) supports his doctrines by reasons and extensive Scriptural authority, and (4) concludes with an exhortation on the uses or practical application of the doctrine.

The following complete sermon forms the fifth chapter of Shepard's first book, of which the full title is an excellent brief statement of the characteristic tenets of Calvinism, only that of foreordination being without explicit mention: **The Sincere Convert: Discovering the Small Number of True Believers, and the Great Difficulty of Saving Conversion; Wherein Is Excellently and Plainly Opened These Choice and Divine Principles: 1. That There Is a God, and This God Is Most Glorious. 2. That God Made Man in a Blessed State. 3. Man's Misery by His Fall. 4. Christ the Only Redeemer by Price. 5. That Few Are Saved, and That with Difficulty.**

The primacy of God, the depravity of man through Adam's sin, the mediation of Christ, the election of the few, and the just reprobation of the many—this was the theology which dominated the seventeenth and a large part of the eighteenth century. Thomas Shepard displays it in perhaps its most attractive form, wherein the rigors of the doctrine are softened by the spiritual security which he quite evidently found.

That those that are saved are very few; and that those that are saved, are saved with very much difficulty. Strait is the gate, and narrow is the way that leadeth unto life, and few there be that finde it, Mat. 7. 14. **The fifth Principle.**

Here are two parts.

1. The paucity of them that shall be saved: *few finde the way thither.*

2. The difficulty of being saved: *Strait and narrow is the way and gate unto life.*

Hence arise two Doctrines.

1. That the number of them that **Doct. 1.** shall be saved is very small, *Luke* 13. 24. the Devill hath his drove, and swarmes to goe to hell, as fast as Bees to their Hive; Christ hath his *Flock,* and that is but *a little stock;* **Luk. 12. 32.** hence Gods children are called *Jewels, Mal.* 3. 17. which commonly are kept secret, in respect of the other lumber in the house; hence they are called *Strangers* and *Pilgrims,* which are very few in respect of the inhabitants of the countrey through

which they passe: hence they are called *sonnes of God*, 1 *John* 3. 2. *Of the bloud Royall*, which are few in respect of common subjects.

But see the truth of this point in these two things.

Few saved in all ages. 1.

First, look to all ages and times of the world. Secondly, to all places and persons in the world, and we shall see few men were saved.

1. Look to all ages, and we shall find but a handfull saved. As soon as ever the Lord began to keep house, and there were but two families in it, there was a bloudy *Cain* living, and a good *Abel* slain. And as the world increased in number, so in wickednesse, *Gen.* 6. 12. it is said, *All flesh had corrupted their wayes*, and amongst so many thousand men, not one righteous but *Noah*, and his family; and yet in the Ark there crept in a cursed *Cham*.

As the world increased in number, so in wickednesse.

Afterwards as *Abrahams* posterity increased, so we see their sin abounded. When his posterity was in *Egypt*, where one would think, if ever men were good, now it would appear, being so heavily afflicted by *Pharaoh*, being so many miracles miraculously delivered by the hand of *Moses*, yet most of these *God was wroth with*, *Heb.* 3. 12. and onely two of them, *Caleb* and *Joshua* went into *Canaan*, a type of heaven. Look into *Solomons* time, what glorious times! what great profession was there then! Yet after his death, *ten Tribes* fell to the odious sin of Idolatry, following the command of *Jeroboam* their King. Look further into *Isaiah's* time, where there were multitudes of Sacrifices and prayers, *Isa.* 1. 11. yet then there was but a *remnant*, nay a very *little* remnant that should be saved. And look to the time of Christs coming in the flesh, (for I pick out the best time of all) when one would think by such Sermons he preached, such miracles he wrought, such a life as he led, all the *Jewes* would have entertained him, yet it is said, *He came unto his own, and they received him not.* So few, that Christ himself admires at one good *Nathaniel*, *behold an Israelite in whom there is no guile.* In the Apostles time, many indeed were converted, but few comparatively, and amongst the best Churches many bad: as that at *Philippi*, Phil. 3. 18. Many had a name to live, but were dead, and few only kept their garments unspotted. And presently after the Apostles time, *many grievous wolves came and devoured the sheep;* and so in succeeding ages, *Rev.* 12. 9. *All the earth wondred at the whore in skarlet.*

Isai. 1. 9.

Job. 1. 12.

Rev. 3. 4.

Acts 20. 28, 29, 30.

Luther.

And in *Luthers time*, when the light began to arise again, he saw so many carnal Gospellers, that he breaks out in one Sermon, into these speeches, *God grant I may never live to see those bloudy dayes that are coming upon an ungodly world. Latimer* heard so much prophanenesse in his time, that he thought verily dooms days was just at hand. And have not our ears heard censuring those in the *Palatinate*, where (as 'tis reported) many have fallen from the glorious Gospell to Popery, as fast as leaves fall in *Autumn?* Who would have thought there had lurked such hearts under such a shew of detesting Popery, as was among them before? And at Christs comming, *shall he find faith on the earth?*

Latimer.

II. Few shall be saved in all places.

2. Let us look into all places and persons, and see how few shall be saved. The world is now split into four parts, *Europe, Asia, Africa*, and *America;* and the three biggest parts are drowned in a deluge of prophanenesse and superstition; they doe not so much as professe Christ; you may see the sentence of death written on these mens foreheads. *Jer.* 10. *ult.* But let us look upon the best part of the world, and that is *Europe*, how few shall be saved there? First, the *Grecian* Church, howsoever now in these daies, their good patriarch of *Constantinople* is about a general Reformation among them, and hath done much good; yet are they for the present, and have been for the most

Jer. 10. 25. Powre out thy fury upon the heathen that know thee not, and upon the families that call not upon thy name, &c.

Text: the London edition of 1655, "Corrected and much amended by the Author" • 51 **Luthers time.** The Pope excommunicated Martin Luther (1483-1546) in 1520, largely as the result of his vehement protests against abuses in the church • 55 **Latimer**, Hugh Latimer (1480?-1535), English religious reformer • 58 **Palatinate**, a district in southwestern Germany where the struggle between Catholics and Protestants prolonged the Thirty Years' War (1618-1648) • 77 **patriarch of Constantinople**, Cyril Lucar (1572-1638), holder of this office in the Greek Orthodox Church, 1620-1638. As a result of his friendship with a Swiss Calvinist, he published a strongly Protestant confession of faith in 1631, and in 1638 assisted in translating the Bible into modern Greek. Repeatedly banished and reinstated, he was finally strangled by order of the sultan

part of them, without the saving means of knowledge. They content themselves with their old superstitions, having little or no preaching at all. And for the other parts, as *Italy, Spain, France, Germany,* for the most part they are Popish; and see the end of these men, 2 *Thes* 2. 9, 10, 11, 12. And now amongst them that carry the badge of honesty, I will not speak what mine ears have heard, and my heart beleeves concerning other Churches: I will come into our own Church of *England,* which is the most flourishing Church in the world: never had Church such Preachers, such means; yet have we not some Chappels and Churches stand as darke lanthorns without light, where people are led with blind, or idle, or licentious Ministers, and so both fall into the ditch?

Few shall be saved in England. 1 Cor. 1. 29.

Nay, even amongst them that have the means of grace, but few shall be saved. It may be sometimes amongst ninety nine in a parish, Christ sends a minister to call some one lost sheep among them, *Mat.* 13. Three grounds were bad where the feed was sown, and only one ground good. It's a strange speech of *Chrysostom* in his fourth Sermon to the people of *Antioch,* where he was much beloved and did much good: *How many do you think* (saith he) *shall be saved in this city? It will be an hard speech to you, but I will speak it; though here be so many thousands of you, yet there cannot be found an hundred that shall be saved, and I doubt of them too; for what villany is there among youth? what sloth in old men?* and so he goes on. So say I, never tell me we are baptized, and are Christians, and trust to Christ; let us but separate the Goats from the sheep, and exclude none but such as the Scripture doth, and sets a crosse upon their doors, with, *Lord have mercy upon them,* and we shall see only few in the City shall be saved.

Luke 15. 24. 25.

Chrysostome thought in Antioch, an hundred could not be saved.

Those which the Scripture excludes from salvation.

1. Cast out all the *profane people* among us, as drunkards, swearers, whores, liers, which the Scripture brands for black sheep, and condemns them in an hundred places.

1. The profane.

2. Set by all *Civill men,* that are but Wolves chained up, tame Devils, swine in a fair meadow, that pay all they owe, and do no body any harm, yet do none any great good, that plead for themselvs and say, Who can say black is mine eye? These are righteous men, whom Christ never came to call; *For he came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance.*

2. The civill men.

3. Cast by all *Hypocrites,* that like stage-players, in the sight of others, act the parts of Kings, and honest men; when look upon them in their tyring hous, they are but base varlets.

3. The hypocrites.

4. *Formall Professors,* and *Carnall Gospellers,* that have a thing like *faith* and like *sorrow,* and like *true repentance,* and like *good desires,* but yet they be but pictures, they deceove others and themselves too, 2 *Tim.* 3. 5.

4. The formall professors.

Set by these four sorts, how few then are to be saved, even among them that are hatcht in the bosome of the Church?

First, here then is an Use of *encouragement.* Be not discouraged by the name of singularity. What? do you think your self wiser than others? and shall none be saved but such as are so precise as Ministers prate? Are you wiser than others that you think none shall go to heaven but your self? I tell you if you would be saved, you must be singular men, not out of *faction,* but out of *conscience, Acts* 24. 16.

Use 1. Of encouragement.

Tit. 2. 14.

Secondly, here is matter of *terrour* to all those that be of opinion, that few shall be saved; and therefore when they are convinced of the danger of sin by the Word, they flie to this shelter, If I be damned, it will be woe to many more beside me then; as though most should not be damned. Oh yes, the most of them that live in the Church shall perish; and this made an *Hermit* which *Theodoret* mentions, to live 15 years in a cell in a desolate wildernesse, with nothing but bread and water, and yet doubted after all his sorrow, whether he should be saved or no. Oh! Gods wrath is heavy, which thou shalt one day bear.

Use 2. Of terror.

Thirdly, this ministreth *exhortation* to all *confident people,* that think they beleeve and say, they doubt not but to be saved, and hence doe not much fear death. Oh! learn hence to suspect and fear your estates,

Use 3. Of exhortation to all confident people.

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22 **Chrysostom** (345?-407), a famous preacher of Antioch in Asia Minor, 386-398, and patriarch of Constantinople, 398-404 • 32 **separate . . . sheep.** A remarkably similar account of those men who will not be saved may be seen in Michael Wigglesworth's **Day of Doom** (1662), stanza 38 ff. • 78 **Theodoret** (393-457?), bishop of Cyrrhus, near Antioch, 423-449

and fear it so much, that thou canst not be quiet untill thou hast got some assurance thou shalt be saved. When Christ told his Disciples that one of them should betray him, they all said, *Master, Is it I?* but if he had said, eleven of them should betray him, all except one, would they not all conclude, *Surely it is I?* If the Lord had said, only *Few* shall be damned, every man might fear, It may be it is I; but now he saies *most* shall, every man may cry out and say, Surely it is I. No humble heart, but is driven to and fro with many stinging fears this way; yet there is a generation of presumptuous, brazen-fac'd, bold people, that confidently think of themselves, as the *Jewes* of the *Pharisees* (being so holy and strict) that if God save but two in the world, they shall make one.

Presumptuous men think of themselves as the Jews did of the Pharisees.

The childe of God indeed *is bold as a Lion:* but he hath Gods Spirit and promise, assuring him of his eternall welfare. But I speak of divers that have no sound ground to prove this point (which they pertinaciously defend) that they shall be saved. This confident humour rageth most of all in our old professors at large, who think, that's a jest indeed, that having been of a good belief so long, that they now should be so fare behind-hand, as to begin the work, and lay the foundation anew. And not only among these, but amongst divers sorts of people whom the Devill never troubles, because he is sure of them already, and therefore cries peace in their ears, whose *consciences* never trouble them, because *that* hath shut its eyes; and hence they sleep, and sleeping dreame, that God is mercifull unto them, and will be so; yet never see they are deceived, untill they awake with the flames of hell about their ears; and the *world* troubles them not, they have their hearts desire here, because they are friends to it, and so enemies to God. And *Ministers* never trouble them, for they have none such as are fit for that work neer them; or if they have, they can sit and sleep in the Church, and chuse whether they will beleeve him. And their friends never trouble them, because they are afraid to displease them. And God himself never troubles them, because that time is to come hereafter. This one truth well pondered and thought on, may damp thine heart and make thy conscience flie in thy face, and say, *Thou art the man;* it may be there are better in hell than thy self that art so confident; and therefore tell me what hast thou to say for thy self, that thou shalt be saved? In what thing hast thou gone beyond them that *think they are rich and want nothing, who yet are poor, blinde, miserable, and naked?*

Confidence rages most in professors at large.

The devil never troubles some men, because he is sure of them already.

Friends never reprove some men, because of displeasing them.

Obj. 1. Thou wilt say happily, first, I have left my sinners I once lived in, and am now no drunkard, no swearer, no lier, &c.

Answ. I answer, thou mayest be washt from thy mire (the pollution of the world) and yet be a swine in Gods account, 2 *Pet.* 2. 20. thou mayest live a blamelesse, innocent, honest, smooth life, and yet be a miserable creature still, *Phil.* 3. 6.

Obj. 2. But I pray, and that often.

Answ. This thou mayest doe, and yet never be saved, *Isai.* 1. 11. *To what purpose is your multitude of sacrifices?* Nay, thou mayest pray with much affection, with a good heart, as thou thinkest, yet a thousand miles off from being saved, *Prov.* 1. 28.

Obj. 3. But I fast sometimes, as well as pray.

Answ. So did the Scribes and Pharisees, even twice a week, which could not be publick, but private fasts. And yet this righteousnesse could never save them.

Obj. 4. But I hear the word of God, and like the best Preachers.

Answ. Ezek. 33. 31, 32. This thou mayst doe too, and yet never be saved. Nay, thou mayst so hear, as to receive much *joy* and comfort in hearing, nay, to beleeve and catch hold on Christ, and so say and think *he is thine,* and yet not be saved: as the stony ground did, *Matth.* 13. who heard the word with *joy,* and for a *season beleeved.*

Obj. 5. I read the Scriptures often.

Answ. This you may doe too, and yet never be saved; as the Pharisees, who were so perfect in reading the Bible, that Christ needed but only say, *It hath been said of old time,* for they knew the text and place well enough without intimation.

Obj. 6. But I am grieved and am sorrowfull, and repent for my sins past.

Answ. *Judas* did thus, *Mat.* 27. 3. he repents himself with a legall repentance for fear of hell, and with a naturall sorrow for dealing so unkindly with Christ, in betraying not only bloud, but innocent bloud. True humiliation is ever accompanyed with hearty reformation.

Obj. 7. Oh! but I love good men, and their company.

Answ. So did the *five foolish Virgins* love the company, and (at the time of *extremity*) the very *oyle* and grace of the *wise*, yet they were locked out of the gates of mercy.

Obj. 8. But God hath given me more *knowledge* than others, or than I my self had once.

Answ. Rom. 2. 18. This thou mayst have, and be able to teach others, and think so of thy self too, and yet never be saved.

Obj. 9. But I keep the Lords day strictly.

Answ. So did the Jewes, whom yet Christ condemned, and were never saved.

Obj. 10. I have very many *good desires* and *endeavours* to get heaven.

Answ. Luke 13. 24. These thou and thousands may have, and yet misse of heaven. Many still seek to enter in at that narrow gate, and not be able.

Obj. 11. True, thou wilt say, many men doe many duties, but without any *life* or *zeal:* I am zealous.

Answ. Phil. 3. 6. 11. So thou mayest be, and yet never be saved, as *Jehu; Paul* was zealous when he was a Pharisee, and if he was so for a false Religion, and a bad cause, why much more mayest thou be for a good cause; so zealous as not only to cry out against profanenesse in the wicked, but civill honesty of others, and hypocrisie of others, yea, even of the coldnesse of the best of Gods people: thou mayst be the fore-horse in the Team, and the Ring-leader of good exercises amongst the best men, (as *Joash* a wicked King was the first that complained of the negligence of his best Officers in not repairing the Temple) and so stirre them up unto it; nay, thou mayest be so forward, as to be persecuted, and not yeeld an inch, nor shrink in the wetting, but mayest manfully and courageously stand it out in time of persecution, as the *thorny ground* did: so zealous thou mayest be, as to like best of, and to flock most unto the most zealous preachers, that search mens consciences best, as the whole countrey of *Judea* came flocking to *John's* Ministry, and delighted to hear him for a season; nay, thou mayest be zealous as to take sweet delight in doing of all these things, *Isa.* 58. 2, 3. *They delight in approaching near unto God,* yet come short of heaven. 2 Chron. 44. 4, 5, 6.

Obj. 12. But thou wilt say, True many a man rides post, that breaks his neck at last: many a man is zealous, but his fire is soon quench'd, and his zeal is soon spent; they hold not out; whereas I am constant, and persevere in godly courses.

Answ. So did that young man, yet he was a gracelesse man, *Mat.* 19. 20. *All these things have I done from my youth:* what lack I yet?

Obj. 13. It is true, hypocrites may persevere, but they know themselves *to be naught* all the while, and so deceive others: but I am perswaded that I am in *Gods* favour, and in a safe and happy estate, since I do all with a good heart for God.

Answ. This thou mayest verily think of thy self, and yet be deceived, and damned, and goe to the Devill at last. *There is a way (saith Solomon) that seemeth right to a man, but the end thereof is the way of death.* Prov. 14. 12. For he is an hypocrite not only that makes a seeming outward shew of what he hath not, but also that hath a true shew of what indeed there is not. The first sort of hypocrites deceive others onely; the later having some inward, yet common work, deceive themselves too, *Jam.* 1. 26. *If any man seem to be religious* (so many are, and so deceive the world,) but it is added, *deceiving his own soule.* Nay, thou mayst go so fairly, and live so honestly, that all the best Christians about thee may think well of thee, and never suspect thee, and so mayst passe through the world, and die with a deluded comfort, that thou shalt goe to heaven, and be canonized for a Saint in thy Funerall Sermon, and never know thou art counterfeit, till the Lord brings thee to thy strict and last examination, and so thou receivest that dreadfull sentence, *Go ye cursed.* So it was with the *five foolish Virgins* that were never discovered by the *wise,* nor by themselves, untill the gate of grace was shut upon them. If thou hast therefore no better evidences to shew for thy selfe, that thine estate is good, than these, Ile not give a pins point for all thy flattering false hopes of being saved: but it may be thou hast never yet come so farre as to this pitch; and if not, Lord, what will become of thee? Suspect thy self much, and when in this shipwrack of souls thou seest so many thousands sink, cry out, and conclude, It's a wonder of wonders, and a thousand and a thousand to one, if ever thou comest safe to shore.

Some hypocrites deceive themselves, some deceive others.

Mar. 25. The five foolish virgins.

Use 4. Strive to be saved.

Oh! strive then to be one of them that shall be saved, though it cost thee thy bloud, and the losse of all that thou hast, labour to goe beyond all those that go so far, and yet perish at the last. Do not say, that seeing so few shall be saved, therefore this discourageth me from seeking, because all my labour may be in vain. Consider that Christ here makes another and a better use of it, *Luk.* 3. 24. *Seeing that many shall seek and not enter, therefore* (saith he) *strive to enter in at the strait gate;* venture at least, and try what the Lord will doe for thee.

Quest. Wherein doth the child of God, (and so how may I) go beyond these hypocrites that go so far?

Answ. In three things principally.

Wherein a childe of God goeth beyond an hypocrite.

1. No unregenerate man but lives in some known sin.

First, no unregenerate man, though he go never so farre, let him do never so much, but he lives in some one sinne or other, secret or open, little or great. *Judas* went farre, but he was covetous. *Herod* went farre, but he loved his *Herodias.* Every dog hath his kennel, every swine hath his swill, and every wicked man his lust; for no unregenerate man hath fruition of God to content him, and there is no mans heart but it must have some good to content it, which good is to be found only in the fountain of all good, and that is God; or in the cistern, and that is in the creatures: hence a man having lost full content in God, he seeks for, and feeds upon contentment in the creature which he makes a God to him, and here lies his lust or sinne, which he must needs live in. Hence, aske those men that goe very far, and take their penny for good silver, and commend themselves for their good desires: I say, ask them, if they have no sin; Yes, say they, who can live without sinne? and so they give way to sin, and therefore live in sin; Nay, commonly, all the duties, prayers, care, and zeal of the best hypocrites are to hide a lust; as the whore in the *Proverbs,* that wipes her mouth, and goes to the Temple, and paies her vowes; or to feed a lust, as *Jehu* his zeal against *Baal,* was to get a Kingdome.

Hypocrites like the whore in the Proverbs, or like Jehu, zealous against Baal, but for their own ends.

There remains a root of bitterness in the best hypocrites, which hosoever it be lopt off sometimes by sicknesse or horror of conscience, and a man hath purposes never to commit again, yet there it secretly lurks; and though it seemeth to be bound and conuqered [sic] by the *Word,* or by *Prayer,* or by outward *Crosses,* or while the hand of God is upon a man, yet the inward strength and power of it remains still; and therefore when temptations, like strong *Philistines,* are upon this man again, he breaks all vowes, promises, bonds of God, and will save the life of his sin.

2. Unregenerate men are not poor in spirit.

Secondly, no unregenerate man or woman ever came to be poor in spirit, and so to be carried out of all duties unto Christ: if it were possible for them to forsake and break loose for ever from all sinne, yet here they stick as the Scribes and Pharisees, and so like zealous *Paul* before his conversion, they fasted and prayed, and kept the Sabbath, but they rested in their legall righteousnesse, and in the performance of these and the like duties. Take the best Hypocrit that hath the most strong perswasions of Gods love to him, and ask him, why he hopes to be saved. He will answer, *I pray, read, hear,* love *good men,* cry out *of the sinnes of the time.* And tell him again, that an Hypocrite may climb these stairs and goe as farre; He will reply, true indeed, but they do not what they do with a sound heart, but to be seen of men. Mark now, how these men feel a good heart in themselves, and in all things they doe, and therefore feel not a want of all good, which is poverty of spirit, and therefore here they fall short. *Isai.* 66. 2. there were divers Hypocrites forward for the worship of God in the Temple, but God loathes these, because not poor in spirit, to them only it is said the Lord will look.

God looks on the poor in spirit.

I have seen many professors very forward for all good duties, but as ignorant of Christ when they are sifted, as blocks. And if a man (as few doe) know not Christ, he must rest in his duties, because he knowes not Christ, to whom he must goe and be carried if ever he be saved. I have heard of a man that being condemned to die, thought to escape the gallowes, and to save himselfe from hanging by a certain gift he said he had of whistling; so men seek to save themselves by their gifts of *knowledge,* gifts of *memory,* gifts of *prayer,* and when they see they must die for their sinnes, this is the ruine of many a soule, that though he forsake Egypt and his sins, and fleshpots there, and will never be so as he hath been, yet he never cometh into *Canaan,* but loseth himself and his soul in a wildernesse of many *duties,* and there perisheth.

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19 **Herod,** Herod Antipas, who beheaded John the Baptist, hated by Herodias. Herod's wife (Mark 6:14-29)

3. Unregenerate men never take their rest in Christ onely.

Thirdly, if any unregenerate man come unto *Christ,* he never gets into *Christ,* that is, never takes his *eternall rest* and *lodging in Jesus Christ only, Heb.* 4. 4. *Judas followed Christ for the Bagge,* he would have the *Bag* and *Christ* too. The young man came unto Christ to be his Disciple, but he would have *Christ* and the *world* too; they will not content themselves with Christ alone, nor with the world alone, but make their markets out of both, like whorish wives, that wil please their hu[s]bands and others too. Men is distresse of conscience, if they have comfort from Christ, they are contented; if they have salvation from hell by Christ, they are contented: but Christ himself contents them not. Thus far an hypocrite goes not. So much for the first Doctrine observed out of the Text. I come now to the second.

Doct. 2. Salvation difficult.

Doct. 2. *That those that are saved, are saved with much difficulty: or it is a wonderfull hard thing to be saved.*

The gate is strait, and therefore a man must sweat and strive to enter; both the entrance is difficult, and the progresse of salvation too. *Jesus Christ* is not got with a wet finger. It is not wishing and desiring to be saved, will bring men to heaven; hells mouth is full of *good wishes.* It is not shedding a tear at a Sermon, or blubbering now and then in a corner, and saying over thy prayers, and crying God mercy for thy sins, will save thee. It is not *Lord have mercy upon us,* will doe thee good. It is not coming constantly to Church; these are easie matters. But it is a tough work, a wonderfull hard matter to be saved, 1 *Pet.* 4. 18. Hence the way to heaven is compared to a *Race,* where a man must put forth all his strength, and stretch every limb, and all to get forward. Hence a Christians life is compared to *wrestling, Eph.* 6. 12. All the policy and power of hell buckle together against a Christian, therefore he must look to himself, or else he falls. Hence it is compared to *fighting,* 2 *Tim.* 4. 7. a man must fight against the *Devill,* the *World, Himself;* who shoot poysoned bullets in the soul, where a man must kill or be killed. God hath not lined the way to Christ with velvet, nor strewed it with rushes. He will never feed a slothfull humour in man, who will be saved in Christ and Heaven would drop into their mouthes, and if any would bear their charges thither: If *Christ* might be bought for a few cold wishes, and lazie desires, he would be of small reckoning amongst men, who would say, *lightly come lightly goe.* Indeed *Christs yoke is easie* in it self, and when a man is got into Christ, nothing is so sweet; but for a carnall dull heart, it is hard to draw in it; for,

Salvation compared to fighting.

Four strait gates to be past through before we can enter into heaven.

There are 4 strait gates w[ch] every one must pass through before he can enter into heavē.

1. The strait gate of humiliation.

1. There is the strait gate of *Humiliation:* God saveth none, but first he humbleth them, now it is hard to pass through the gates and flames of hell; for a heart as stiffe as a stake, to bow; as hard as a stone, to bleed for the least prick, not to mourne for one sin, but all sins; and not for a fit, but all a mans life time; Oh it is hard for a man to suffer himself to be loaden with sinne, and prest to death for sin, so as never to love sinne more, but to spit in the face of that which he once loved as dearly as his life. It is easie to drop a tear or two, and be Sermon-sick; but to have a heart rent *for* sinne, and *from* sinne, this is true humiliation, and this is hard.

2. Of the strait gate of faith.

2. The strait gate of *Faith, Eph.* 1. 19. It's an easie matter to presume, but hard to beleeve in Christ. It is easie for a man that was never humbled, to beleeve and say, *'Tis but beleeving:* but it is an hard matter for a man humbled, when he sees all his sins in order before him, the *Devill* and *Conscience* roaring upon him, and crying out against him, and God frowning upon him, now to call God *Father,* is an hard work. *Judas* had rather be hang'd than beleeve. It is hard to see a Christ as a rock to stand upon, when we are overwhelmed with sorrow of heart for sinne. It is hard to prize Christ above ten thousand words of pearl: 'tis hard to desire Christ, and nothing but Christ; hard to follow Christ all the day long, and never to be quiet till he is got in thine armes, and then with *Simeon* to say, *Lord now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace.*

3. Of the strait gate of repentance.

3. The strait gate of *Repentance.* It is an easie matter for a man to confesse himselfe to be a sinner, and to cry God

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23 got . . . finger. The sense is that salvation is not obtained by seeing which way the wind is blowing and accommodating oneself accordingly. The expression typifies Shepard's enlivening of his sermons by homely illustration

forgivenesse untill next time: but to have a bitter sorrow and to turn from all sin, and to return to God, and all the waies of God; which is true repentance indeed; this is hard.

4. Strait opposition.

4. The strait gate of *opposition of Devils,* the *World,* and a mans own *Self,* who knock a man down when he begins to look towards Christ and heaven.

Use 5. Of instruction.

Hence learn, that every easie way to heaven is a false way, although ministers should preach it out of their Pulpits, and Angels should publish it out of heaven.

Now there are nine easie wayes to heaven, (as men think) all which lead to hell.

Nine false waies to salvation discovered.

1. The broad way.

1. The common broad way, wherein a whole parish may all goe a breadth in it; tell these people they shal be damned; their answer is, then woe to many more besides me.

2. The way of civill education.

2. The way of *Civill education,* whereby many wilde natures are by little and little tamed, and like wolves are chained up *easily* when they are young.

3. The way of good wishes.

3. *Balams* way of *good wishes,* whereby many people will confesse their ignorance, forgetfulnesse, and that they cannot make such shewes as others doe, but they thank God their hearts are as good, and God for his part accepts (say they) the will for the deed. And, *My son give me thine heart;* the heart is all in all, and so long they hope to doe well enough. Poor deluded creatures thus think to break through armies of *sinnes, Devils, temptations,* and to break open the very gates of Heaven with a few good wishes; they think to come to their journeys end without legs, because their hearts are good to God.

4. The way of formality.

4. The way of *Formality,* whereby men rest in the *performance* of most or of all *externall duties* without inward life, *Mark.* 1. 14. Every man must have some *Religion,* some fig-leaves to hide their nakednesse. Now this Religion must be either true Religion, or the false one; if the true, he must either take up the power of it, but that he will not, because it is burdensome; or the *forme* of it, and this being easie men embrace it as their God, and will rather lose their lives than their Religion thus taken up. This form of Religion is the easiest Religion in the world; partly, because it easeth men of trouble of conscience, quieting that: Thou has sinned, saith conscience, and God is offended, take a book and pray, keep thy conscience better, and bring thy Bible with thee. Now conscience is silent, being charmed down with the form of Religion, as the Devill is driven away (as they say) with holy water; partly also because the form of religion credits a man, partly because it is easie in it self; it's of a light carriage, being but the shadow and picture of the substance of religion; as now, what an easie matter it is to come to Church? They hear (at least outwardly) very attentively an hour and more, and then to turn to a proof, and to turn down a leaf, here's the form. But now to spend Saturday night, and all the whole Sabbath day morning, in trimming the Lamp, and in getting oyle in the heart to meet the Bridegroom the next day, and so meet him in the Word, and there to tremble at the voice of God, and suck the brest while it is open, and when the word is done, to goe aside privately, and there to chew upon the word, there to lament with tears all the vain thoughts in duties, deadnesse in *hearing,* this is hard, because this is the power of godlinesse, and this men will not take up: so for private *prayer,* what an easie matter is it for a man to say over a few prayers out of some *devout book,* or to repeat some old prayer got by heart since a childe, or to have two or three short winded wishes for Gods mercy in the morning and at night; this form is easie: but now to prepare the heart by serious meditation of God and mans self before he praies, then to come to God with a bleeding hunger-starved heart, not only with a desire, but with a warrant, I must have such or such a mercy, and there to wrestle with God, although it be an hour or two together for a blessing, this is too hard; men think none doe thus, and therefore they will not.

The consciences of unregenerate men are often silenced with a form of religion.

5. The way of presumption.

Fifthly, the way of *presumption,* whereby men having seen their sins, catch hold easily upon Gods mercy, and snatch comforts, before they are reached out unto them. There is no word of comfort in the book of God intended for such as *regard iniquity in their hearts,* though they doe not act it in their lives. Their only comfort is, that the sentence of damnation is not yet executed upon them.

6. The way of sloth.

Sixthly, the way of *sloth,* whereby men lie still, and say God must doe all; If the

Lord would set up a Pulpit at the Alehouse door, it may be they would hear oftner. If God will alwaies thunder, they will alwaye pray; if strike them now and then with sicknesse, God shall be paid with good words and promises enow, that they will be better if they live; but as long as peace lasts, they will run to Hell as fast as they can; and if God will not catch them, they care not, they will not return.

7. The way of carelesnesse.

Seventhly, the way of *carelesnesse*, when men feeling many difficulties, pass through some of them, but not all, and what they cannot get *now*, they feed themselves with a false hope they shall *hereafter:* they are content to be called Precisions, and fools, and crazie brains, but they want brokennesse of heart, and they will pray (it may be) for it, and passe by that difficulty; but to keep the wound alwaies open, this they will not doe, to be alwaies sighing for help, and never to give themselves rest till their hearts are humbled; that they will not; *these have a name to live, yet are dead.*

8. The way of moderation.

Eighthly, the way of *moderation* or honest discretion, *Rev.* 3. 16. which indeed is nothing but lukewarmnesse of the soul, and that is, when a man contrives and cuts out such a way to Heaven, as he may be hated of none, but please all, and so do any thing for a quiet life, and so sleep in a whole skin. The Lord saith, *He that will live godly, must suffer persecution:* No, not so, Lord. Surely (think they) if men were discreet and wise, it would prevent a great deal of trouble and oposition in good courses; this man will commend those that are most zealous, if they were but wise; if he meet with a black-mouth'd forswearer, he will not reprove him, lest he be displeased with him; if he meet with an honest man, hee'l yeeld to all he saith, that so he may commend him; and when he meets them both together, they shall be both alike welcome, (what ever hee thinks) to his house and table, because he would fain be at peace with all men.

9. The way of self-love.

Ninthly, and lastly, the way of Self-love, whereby a man fearing terribly he shall be damned, useth diligently all means whereby he shall be saved. Here is the strongest difficulty of all, to row against the stream, and to hate a mans self, and then to follow Christ fully.

1641

Roger Williams

1603? · 1683

Roger Williams has an honored place in American history as the first vigorous proponent of the principles which stand first in the Bill of Rights: "Congress shall make no law respecting the establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof." The separation of church from state and the complete toleration of religious opinions, whatever they may be, are so basic to American democracy that it is easy to forget how rare they once were, and how bitter and long-continued a battle was necessary to achieve their general acceptance. As Nazi Germany revealed, the struggle is not merely a historical episode. Religious freedom is not even yet secure the world over. Roger Williams, whose central conviction was that the power of the civil state must not

be used to enforce a specious uniformity of religious belief, speaks of a matter still crucial in the tangled affairs of humanity.

The exact date of Williams' birth is unknown because of the destruction of records in the Great Fire of London in 1666. He was born between 1603 and 1606 in London, the son of a moderately prosperous merchant. Sometime in his teens he learned shorthand and became the protégé of one of England's greatest lawyers, Sir Edward Coke (1552-1634). Through Coke's influence he entered Charterhouse School in 1621 and there did so well that he won a scholarship. With it and other rewards for his distinction as a student, he was able to take his B.A. degree in 1627 as a member of Pembroke Hall, Cambridge, subscribing, as was required, to the authority of the King, the *Book of Common Prayer*, and the Thirty-Nine Articles (the accepted body of divinity) in the Church of England.

It is probable that Williams went to the university with the intention of preparing for the law. After taking his degree, however, he continued at Cambridge as a student of divinity. Already Puritan in his sympathies, he was unable to accept the prospect presented by the ecclesiastical measures and appointments of Charles I, who obviously planned to suppress all nonconformity. In the winter of 1628-1629, therefore, Williams left the university to become the household chaplain of an Essex country gentleman who had connections with a number of the leading promoters of the Massachusetts Bay Colony. By May of 1629 he was considering migration to New England, and in December of 1630 he sailed for Massachusetts. Meanwhile he had suffered the humiliation of having his proposal of marriage to a young lady rejected by her aunt on the ground of his low social rank, and had married a lady's maid—on the rebound but, as it turned out, very happily. By 1630 he had arrived at Separatist convictions; he believed, that is to say, that the individual congregation should be the ultimate authority in church government and that the civil state should not be permitted to enforce uniformity.

Williams' religious and political convictions did not become apparent, however, until he arrived in New England. There, chosen teacher of the church in Boston, he refused the post because that congregation still wished to regard themselves as Anglicans. Chosen teacher at Salem, where the church was Separatist, he was unable to take the post after John Winthrop and other officials remonstrated with the Salem people. He then spent some two years at Plymouth, working as a laborer and acquainting himself with the language and customs of the Indians—a missionary work for which all New England had cause to be thankful later. In the latter part of 1633 he returned to Salem; here followed the series of events which brought Williams into conflict with the ruling oligarchy of the Bay Colony and eventually resulted in his banishment. Much has been written about these events, which are intricately bound up with the political development of Massachusetts; it is sufficient here to note that the main points at issue were two: the validity of the royal charter upon which were based all titles to land in the colony, and the power of the civil magistrates to enforce religious conformity. Williams, through his acquaintance with the customs of the Indians, had come to believe that their land had been unjustly taken from them, and he had strenuously denied the right of the General Court to make laws regulating the churches. His congregation at Salem supported him until the civil authorities, in close consultation with the more conservative clergy, exerted strong economic pressure upon Salem. Finally, in 1635, he was banished, to find refuge with friendly Indians in what is now Rhode Island.

The remainder of Williams' life is a complicated story of religious and political events in a frontier colony. He left Separatism to join the first Baptist church to be organized in America; but a few months later he decided that he could belong to no church and became a Seeker, acknowledging no authority but the Bible and the works of God and waiting for the light of revelation. At the same time, he devoted himself to organizing a new colony where all churches should be free from civil control. Circumstances favored him. To lands purchased from the Indians there came settlers, many of them exiles like himself from the more authoritarian colonies. In 1644 Williams visited England, where he found the temper of the Puritans in power more akin to his own than to that of the Bay Colony; he was able to obtain a charter granting full self-government to the Providence Plantations. Later charters in 1655 and 1663 confirmed the first, and despite many internal and external difficulties a colony which separated church from state succeeded and eventually became the model for a nation.

Roger Williams the man is much better remembered

than Roger Williams the writer. *A Key into the Language of America* (London, 1643) is, however, one of the most readable of the seventeenth-century books about the Indians. He was also the author of a lengthy tract against the doctrines of the founder of the Society of Friends, *George Fox Digg'd out of His Burrowes* (Boston, 1676). His chief activity as a writer was connected with two periods of residence in London, on behalf of his fellow settlers in Rhode Island. He was there in 1643-1644, at the time of the meeting of the Westminster Assembly of Divines, and again in 1652-1654, when the Puritan Commonwealth became a Protectorate under Oliver Cromwell. His associates in London included many famous men, among them John Milton; and the situation there called forth his most sustained literary work, a series of pamphlets in which he debated the subject of persecution for cause of conscience (as we would say now, freedom of thought) with John Cotton, one of the ministers who had been responsible for his banishment from Massachusetts.

The Works of Roger Williams, Narragansett Club Publications, 6 vols., Providence, 1866-1874 • James Ernst, **Roger Williams, New England Firebrand,** New York, 1932 • S. H. Brockunier, **The Irrepressible Democrat: Roger Williams,** New York, 1940 • James Ernst, **The Political Thought of Roger Williams,** University of Washington Publications in Language and Literature, Vol. VI, No. 1, Seattle, 1929

From

The Bloudy Tenent

Of Persecution, for Cause of Conscience, Discussed, in a Conference Between Truth and Peace

The debate between John Cotton and Roger Williams on religious liberty began with the appearance of **A Letter of Mr. John Cotton to Mr. Williams,** published in London in the fall of 1643, at a time when the Westminster Assembly was debating the reorganization of the Church of England. In it Cotton defended the Bay Colony for banishing Williams and incidentally argued in favor of enforced uniformity of religion. Williams countered in January with **Mr. Cottons Letter Lately Printed, Examined and Answered,** following it the next month with **Queries of Highest Consideration,** in which he advocated separation of church and state. In July, moreover, he published **The Bloudy Tenent of Persecution for Cause of Conscience.** He was then in London and so sympathetic with the Levellers, one of the most democratic of the extreme Puritan parties, that he asserted in **The Bloudy Tenent** that the foundation of the civil power lies in the people and "that such Governments as are by them erected and established, have no more power, nor for no longer time, than the civill power or people consenting and agreeing shall betrust them with." Parliament decided that such remarks were dangerous enough to justify an order that the book be burned by the public hangman. It was perhaps fortunate for Williams that he published it anonymously.

Cotton remained in Boston but the debate went on. His **Keyes of the Kingdom of Heaven and Power Thereof,** an argument for a Congregational establishment, was published in 1644, and another work, **The Controversies Concerning Liberty of Conscience in Matters of Religion Truly Stated,** appeared in 1646. He answered Williams specifically in 1647 with **The Bloudy Tenent Washed, and Made White in the Bloud of the Lambe** and **A Reply to Mr. Williams His Examination, and Answer of the Letter Sent to Him by John Cotton.** The discussion was concluded five years later, in 1652, with Williams' **The Bloudy Tenent Yet More Bloody: By Mr. Cottons Endevour to Wash It White in the Blood of the Lambe.**

Since all these books are interdependent, each being organized in terms of its predecessor, they are difficult to represent adequately in short space. The selection which follows consists of the introduction and the first two chapters of **The Bloudy Tenent of Persecution for Cause of Conscience.** Only a part of Williams' argument is included, but the humanity of his position, the dialogue method which he used, and the occasional eloquence of his style are sufficiently evident.

To *every Courteous Reader.*

While I plead the Cause of *Truth* and *Innocencie* against the bloody *Doctrine* of *Persecution* for cause of *conscience,* I judge it not unfit to give *alarme* to my selfe, and all men to prepare to be *persecuted* or hunted for cause of *conscience.*

Whether thou standest charged with 10 or but 2 *Talents,* if thou huntest any for cause of *conscience,* how canst thou say thou followest the *Lambe* of *God* who so abhorr'd that practice?

If *Paul,* if *Jesus Christ* were present here at *London,* and the *question* were proposed what *Religion* would they approve of: The *Papists, Prelatists, Presbyterians, Independents,* &c. would each say, Of mine, of mine.

But put the second question, if one of the several sorts should by *major vote* attaine the *Sword* of steel: what weapons doth Christ Jesus authorize them to fight with in His cause? Doe not all men hate the *persecutor,* and every *conscience* true or false complaine of cruelty, tyranny? &c.

Two *mountaines* of crying *guilt* lye heavie upon the backes of All that name the name of *Christ* in the eyes of *Jewes, Turkes* and *Pagans.*

First, The blasphemies of their *Idolatrous inventions, superstitions,* and most *unchristian conversations.*

Secondly, The bloody irreligious and inhumane *oppressions* and *destructions* under the maske or vaile of the Name of *Christ,* &c.

O how like is the *jealous Jehovah,* the consuming fire to end these present *slaughters* in a greater slaughter of the holy Witnesses? *Rev.* 11.

Six yeares preaching of so much Truth of *Christ* (as that time afforded in K. *Edwards* dayes) kindles the flames of Q. Marie's bloody *persecutions.*

Who can now but expect that after so many scores of yeares *preaching* and *professing* of more *Truth,* and amongst so many great *contentions* amongst the very best of *Protestants,* a fierie furnace should be heat, and who sees not now the *fires* kindling?

I confesse I have little hopes till those flames are over, that this Discourse against the *doctrine* of *persecution* for cause of *conscience* should passe currant (I say not amongst the *Wolves* and *Lions,* but even amongst the *Sheep* of *Christ* themselves) yet *liberavi animam meam,* I have not hid within my *breast* my *souls* belief: And although sleeping on the bed either of the pleasures or profits of sinne thou thinkest thy conscience bound to smite at him that dares to waken thee? Yet in the middest of all these *civill* and *spirituall Wars* (I hope we shall agree in these particulars.)

First, how ever the proud (upon the advantage of an higher earth or ground) or'elooke the poore and cry out *Schismatickes, Hereticks,* &c. shall *blasphemers* and *seducers* scape unpunished? &c. Yet there is a sorer punishment in the *Gospel* for despising of *Christ* then *Moses,* even when the despiser of *Moses* was put to death without mercie, *Heb.* 10. 28, 29. He that beleeveth not shall bee damned, *Marke* 16. 16.

Secondly, what ever Worship, Ministry, Ministration, the best and purest are practised without *faith* and true perswasion that they are the true institutions of God, they are sin, sinfull worships, Ministries, &c. And however in Civill things we may be servants unto men, yet in Divine and Spirituall things the poorest *pesant* must disdaine the service of the highest *Prince:* Be ye not the servants of men, I Cor. 14.

Thirdly, without search and triall no man attaines this faith and right perswasion, I *Thes.* 5. Try all things.

In vaine have *English Parliaments* permitted *English Bibles* in the poorest *English* houses, and the simplest man or woman to search the Scriptures, if yet against their soules perswasion from the Scripture, they should be forced (as if they lived in *Spaine* or *Rome* it selfe without the sight of a *Bible*) to beleeve as the Church beleeves.

Fourthly, having tried, we must hold fast, I *Thessal.* 5. upon the losse of a Crowne, *Revel.* 13. we must not let goe for all the flea bitings of the present afflictions, &c. having bought Truth deare, we must not sell it cheape, not the least graine of it for the whole World, no not for the saving of Soules, though our owne most precious; least of all for the bitter sweetning of a little vanishing pleasure.

Text: Narragansett Club Publications, ed. Samuel Caldwell, III, 1867 • 13 **Papists . . . Independents,** forms of church governments, differing on whether the supreme authority should rest with the Pope, the King and his bishops, the elders (presbyters), or the individual congregations • 33 **K. Edwards dayes . . . persecutions.** The reign of Edward VI (1547-1553) brought the **Book of Common Prayer** and the Forty-Two Articles; the reign of Mary (1553-1558), in which an attempt was made to restore Roman Catholicism, saw about two hundred "heretics" burned at the stake • 44 **liberavi animam meam,** I have liberated my soul

For a little puffe of credit and reputation from the changeable breath of uncertaine sons of men.

For the broken bagges of Riches on Eagles wings: For a dreame of these, any or all of these which on our death-bed vanish and leave tormenting stings behinde them: Oh how much better is it from the love of Truth, from the love of the Father of lights, from whence it comes, from the love of the Sonne of God, who is the way and the Truth, to say as he, *John* 18. 37. For this end was I borne, and for this end came I into the World that I might beare witnesse to the Truth.

THE *ANSWER* OF MR. IOHN COTTON OF *BOSTON* IN *NEW-ENGLAND,* TO THE AFORESAID ARGUMENTS AGAINST PERSECUTION FOR CAUSE OF *CONSCIENCE* PROFESSEDLY MAINTAINING *PERSECUTION* FOR *CAUSE* OF CONSCIENCE

The *Question* which you put, is, Whether *Persecution* for cause of *Conscience,* be not against the *Doctrine* of *Jesus Christ* the *King of Kings.*

Now by *Persecution* for Cause of *Conscience,* I conceive you meane, either for professing some point of *Doctrine* which you believe in Conscience to be the Truth, or for practising some *Worke* which in *Conscience* you believe to be a *Religious Duty.*

Now in Points of *Doctrine* some are *fundamentall,* without right beliefe whereof a Man cannot be *saved:* Others are *circumstantiall* or lesse principall, wherein Men may differ in judgement, without prejudice of *salvation* on either part.

In like sort, in Points of *Practice,* some concerne the waightier Duties of the *Law,* as, What *God* we worship, and with what kinde of *Worship;* whether such, as if it be *Right,* fellowship with *God* is held; if *Corrupt,* fellowship with Him is lost.

Againe, in Points of *Doctrine* and *Worship* lesse Principall: either they are held forth in a meeke and *peaceable* way, though the Things be *Erroneous* or unlawfull: Or they are held forth with such *Arrogance* and *Impetuousnesse,* as tendeth and reacheth (even of it selfe) to the disturbance of *Civill Peace.*

Finally, let me adde this one distinction more: When we are persecuted for *Conscience* sake, It is either for *Conscience* rightly informed, or for erronious and blind *Conscience.*

These things premised, I would lay down mine Answer to the Question in certaine *Conclusions.*

First, it is not lawfull to persecute any for *Conscience* sake *Rightly informed;* for in *persecuting* such, *Christ* himselfe is persecuted in them. *Acts* 9. 4.

Secondly, for an *Erronious* and *blind Conscience,* (even in fundamentall and weighty Points) It is not lawfull to persecute any, till after *Admonition* once or twice: and so the Apostle directeth, *Tit.* 3. 10. and giveth the Reason, that in *fundamentall* and principall points of Doctrine or Worship, the Word of *God* in such things is so cleare, that hee cannot but bee convinced in *Conscience* of the dangerous Errour of his way, after once or twice *Admonition,* wisely and faithfully dispensed. And then if any one persist, it is not out of *Conscience,* but against *his Conscience,* as the Apostle saieth, *vers.* 11. He is subverted and sinneth, being condemned of Himselfe, that is, of his owne *Conscience.* So that if such a Man after such Admonition shall still persist in the Errour of his way, and be therefore punished; He is not *persecuted* for Cause of *Conscience,* but for sinning *against* his Owne *Conscience.*

A REPLY TO THE AFORESAID ANSWER OF MR. COTTON IN A CONFERENCE BETWEENE TRUTH AND PEACE

Chapter I

Truth. In what *darke corner* of the World *(sweet Peace)* are *we two* met? How hath this present evill *World* banished *Me* from all the Coasts & Quarters of it? and how hath the Righteous *God* in judgement taken *Thee* from the *Earth,* Rev. 6. 4.

Truth and Peace rarely and seldom meete.

Peace. 'Tis lamentably true *(blessed Truth)* the *foundations* of the *World* have long been out of course: the *Gates* of *Earth* and *Hell* have conspired together to intercept our joyfull *meeting* and our holy *kisses:* With what a wearied, *tyred Wing* have I flowne over *Na-*

Answer, a paper written by Cotton (1585-1652) in answer to questions sent him, apparently, by a Baptist. It was not directly aimed at Williams' position. In logic and cocksureness it is typical of Cotton, who was sublimely certain that he was right in his interpretation of Scripture doctrine

tions, Kingdomes, Cities, Townes, to finde out precious *Truth?*

Truth. The like enquiries in my flights and travells have I made for *Peace,* and still am told, she hath left the *Earth,* and fled to *Heaven.*

Peace. Deare *Truth,* What is the *Earth* but a *dungeon of darknesse,* where *Truth* is not?

Truth. And what's the *Peace* thereof but a fleeting *dreame,* thine *Ape* and *Counterfeit?*

Peace. O where's the Promise of the *God* of *Heaven,* that *Righteousnes* and *Peace* shall *kisse* each other?

Truth. Patience (sweet *Peace*) these *Heavens* and *Earth* are growing *Old,* and shall be changed like a *Garment,* Psal. 102. They shall melt away, and be burnt up with all the *Works* that are therein; and the most high *Eternall Creatour,* shall gloriously create *New Heavens* and *New Earth,* wherein dwells *Righteousnesse,* 2 Pet. 3. Our *kisses* then shall have their *endlesse* date of pure and sweetest ioyes? till then both *Thou* and *I* must hope, and wait, and beare the furie of the *Dragons* wrath, whose *monstrous Lies* and *Furies* shall with himselfe be cast into the *lake* of *Fire,* the *second death,* Revel. 20.

Peace. Most precious Truth, thou knowest we are both pursued and laid for: Mine *heart* is full of sighes, mine *eyes* with teares: Where can I better vent my full oppressed *bosome,* then into *thine,* whose faithfull *lips* may for these few houres revive my drooping wandring *spirits,* and here begin to *wipe Teares* from mine eyes, and the eyes of my dearest *Children?*

Truth. Sweet daughter of the *God* of *Peace,* begin; powre out thy *sorrowes,* vent thy *complaints:* how joyfull am I to improve these precious Minutes to revive our *Hearts,* both thine and mine, and the hearts of all that *love* the *Truth* and *Peace,* Zach. 8.

Peace. Deare Truth, I know thy *birth,* thy *nature,* thy *delight.* They that know thee, will *prize* thee farre above themselves and lives, and *sell themselves* to *buy thee.* Well spake that famous *Elizabeth* to her famous *attorney* Sir *Edward Coke:* Mr. *Attourney,* goe on as thou hast begun, and still plead, not *pro Domina Regina,* but *pro Domina Veritate.*

Truth. 'Tis true, my *Crowne* is high, my *Scepter's* strong to breake down *strongest holds,* to throw down highest *Crownes* of all that plead (though but in thought) against me. Some few there are, but oh how few are valiant for the *Truth,* and dare to *plead* my *Cause,* as my *Witnesses* in sack-cloth, Revel. 11. While all men's *Tongues* are bent like *Bowes* to shoot out lying words against Me!

Peace. O how could I spend *eternall dayes* and *endlesse dates* at thy holy feet, in listning to the precious Oracles of thy mouth! All the Words of thy mouth are *Truth,* and there is no *iniquity* in them; Thy *lips* drop as the hony-combe. But oh! since we must part anon, let us (as thou saidst) improve our *Minutes,* and (according as thou promisedst) revive me with thy words, which are sweeter then the honey and the honey-combe.

Chapter II

Great complaints of Peace.

Deare *Truth,* I have two sad *Complaints:*

First, the most sober of thy *Witnesses,* that dare to *plead* thy *Cause,* how are they charged to be *mine Enemies, contentious, turbulent, seditious?*

Secondly, Thine *Enemies,* though they speake and raile against thee, though they outragiously *pursue, imprison, banish, kill* thy faithfull *Witnesses,* yet how is all vermillion'd o're for *Justice* 'gainst the *Hereticks?* Yea, if they kindle coales, and blow the flames of *devouring Warres,* that leave neither *Spirituall* nor *Civill State,* but burns up *Branch* and *Root,* yet how doe all pretend an *holy War?* He that *kills,* and hee that's *killed,* they both cry out, It is for *God,* and for their *conscience.*

Persecutors seldom plead Christ, but Moses for their Author.

Tis true, nor one nor other seldome dare to plead the mighty Prince *Christ Jesus* for their *Authour,* yet both (both *Protestant* and *Papist*) pretend they have spoke with *Moses* and the *Prophets,* who all, say they (before *Christ* came) allowed such *holy persecutions, holy Warres* against the enemies of holy *Church.*

Truth. Deare Peace (to ease thy first *complaint*) tis true, thy dearest *Sons,* most like their mother, *Peacekeeping, Peace-making* Sons of *God,* have borne and still must beare the *blurs* of *troublers* of *Israel,* and

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21 **Dragons wrath,** Satan's wrath. Revelation 20:2: "And he laid hold on the dragon, that old serpent, which is the Devil, and Satan. . . ." There are many echoes of the Book of Revelation in this chapter • 41 **pro . . . Veritate,** not for Mistress Queen, but for Mistress Truth

turners of the *World* upside downe. And tis true againe, what *Salomon* once spake: The *beginning* of *strife* is as when one letteth out *Water*, therefore (saith he) leave off *contention* before it be medled with. This *Caveat* should keepe the *bankes* and *sluces* firme and strong, that *strife*, like a *breach of waters*, breake not in upon the sons of men.

Strife distinguished.

Yet *strife* must be distinguished: It is *necessary* or *unnecessary*, *godly* or *ungodly*, *Christian* or *unchristian*, &c.

1. Ungodly strife.

It is *unnecessary*, *unlawfull*, *dishonourable*, *ungodly*, *unchristian*, in most cases in the world, for there is a *possibility* of keeping *sweet Peace* in most cases, and if it be *possible*, it is the expresse command of *God* that *Peace* be kept, *Rom.* 13.

2. Godly strife.

Againe, it is *necessary*, *honourable*, *godly*, &c. with *civill* and earthly *weapons* to *defend* the *innocent*, and to *rescue* the oppressed from the violent *pawes* and *jaws* of oppressing persecuting *Nimrods*, Psal. 73. Job 29.

It is as *necessary*, yea more *honourable*, *godly*, and *Christian*, to *fight* the *fight* of *faith*, with *religious* and *spirituall Artillery*, and to *contend earnestly* for the *faith* of *Jesus*, *once* delivered to the *Saints* against all *opposers*, and the *gates* of *earth* and *hell*, *men* or *devils*, yea against *Paul* himselfe, or an *Angell* from *heaven*, if he bring any other *faith* or *doctrine*, *Jude* vers. 4. *Gal.* 1. 8.

A threefold dolefull cry. Christs worship is his bed, Cant. 1. 16.

Peace. With the *clashing* of such *Armes* am I never *wakened*. Speake once againe (deare Truth) to my second *complaint* of bloody *persecution*, and devouring *wars*, marching under the colours of upright *Justice*, and holy *Zeale*, &c.

Truth. Mine eares have long beene filled with a threefold dolefull *Outcry*.

False worship therefore is a false bed.

First, of one hundred forty Foure thousand *Virgins* (*Rev.* 14.) forc'd and ravisht by *Emperours*, *Kings* and *Governours* to their beds of *worship* and *Religion*, set up (like *Absaloms*) on high in their severall *States* and *Countries*

The cry of the soules under the Altar.

Secondly, the cry of those precious *soules* under the *Altar* (*Rev.* 6.) the *soules* of such as have beene persecuted and slaine for the testimony and *witnesse* of *Jesus*, whose *bloud* hath beene spilt like *water* upon the *earth*, and that because they have held fast the *truth* and *witnesse* of *Jesus*, against the *worship* of the *States* and *Times*, compelling to an *uniformity* of *State Religion.*

These *cries* of *murthered Virgins* who can sit still and *heare?* Who can but run with zeale inflamed to prevent the *deflowring* of *chaste soules*, and spilling of the *bloud* of the *innocent? Humanity* stirs up and prompts the *Sonnes* of men to draw *materiall swords* for a *Virgins chastity* and *life*, against a *ravishing murtherer?* And *Piety* and *Christianity* must needs awaken the *Sons* of *God* to draw the *spirituall sword* (the Word of God) to preserve the *chastity* and *life* of *spirituall Virgins*, who abhorre the spirituall *defilements* of *false worship*, *Rev.* 14.

A cry of the whole earth.

Thirdly, the *cry* of the *whole earth*, made *drunke* with the *bloud* of its *inhabitants*, slaughtering each other in their *blinded zeale*, for *Conscience*, for *Religion*, against the *Catholickes*, against the *Lutherans*, &c.

What fearfull *cries* within these twenty years of hundred *thousands* men, women, children, fathers, mothers, husbands, wives, brethren, sisters, old and young, high and low, *plundred*, *ravished*, *slaughtered*, *murthered*, *famished?* And hence these cries, that men fling away the *spirituall sword* and *spirituall artillery* (in *spirituall* and *religious* causes) and rather trust for the suppressing of each others *God*, *Conscience*, and *Religion* (as they suppose) to an *arme* of *flesh*, and *sword* of *steele?*

Truth. *Sweet Peace*, what hast thou there?

Peace. *Arguments* against *persecution* for cause of *Conscience.*

Truth. And what there?

Peace. An *Answer* to such *Arguments*, contrarily maintaining such *persecution* for cause of *Conscience.*

The wonderfull providẽce of God in the writing of the Arguments against persecution in Milke.

Truth. These *Arguments* against such persecution, and the *Answer* pleading for it, written (as *Love* hopes) from godly *intentions*, *hearts*, and *hands*, yet in a marvellous different *stile* and *manner*. The *Arguments* against *persecution* in *milke*, the *Answer* for it (as I may say) in *bloud.*

The *Authour* of these *Arguments* (against *persecution*) (as I have beene informed) being committed by

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2 Salomon. See Proverbs 17:14 • 5 Caveat, warning • 41 like Absaloms. See II Samuel 15

some then in power, *close prisoner* to *Newgate,* for the witnesse of some *truths* of *Jesus,* and having not the use of *Pen* and *Inke,* wrote these *Arguments* in *Milke,* in sheets of Paper, brought to him by the *Woman* his *Keeper,* from a friend in *London,* as the *stopples* of his *Milk bottle.*

In such Paper written with *Milk* nothing will appeare, but the way of reading it by *fire* being knowne to this *friend* who received the Papers, he transcribed and kept together the Papers, although the *Author* himselfe could not correct, nor view what himselfe had written.

It was in *milke,* tending to soule *nourishment,* even for *Babes* and Sucklings in *Christ.*

It was in *milke,* spiritually *white,* pure and innocent, like those *white horses* of the *Word* of *truth* and *meeknesse,* and the *white Linnen* or *Armour* of *righteousnesse,* in the *Army* of *Jesus. Rev.* 6. & 19.

It was in *milke,* soft, meeke, peaceable and gentle, tending both to the *peace* of *soules,* and the *peace* of *States* and Kingdomes.

The Answer writ in Bloud.

Peace. The *Answer* (though I hope out of milkie pure intentions) is returned in *bloud: bloudy* & slaughterous *conclusions; bloudy* to the *souls* of all men, forc'd to the *Religion* and *Worship* which every civil State or Common-weale agrees on, and compells all subjects to in a dissembled *uniformitie.*

Bloudy to the *bodies,* first of the holy *witnesses* of *Christ Jesus,* who testifie against such invented worships.

Secondly, of the *Nations* and Peoples slaughtering each other for their severall respective Religions and Consciences.

1644? ·1644

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8 way . . . fire, that is, by heating paper so that the writing appears

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Cotton Mather

1663 · 1728

Pedant, neurotic, megalomaniac, reactionary, benighted witch hunter—so has Cotton Mather come to be known to later generations, who have accepted him as the best example of New England Puritanism gone to seed. There is truth in the judgment, or enough so that no one is likely to grow fond of either the man or the writer; and yet to understand Cotton Mather is possibly a sure way to explore the intellectual labyrinth of provincial America in the period between 1680 and 1728.

Mather's outward life was uneventful. He was born in Boston in 1663, the son of the Rev. Increase Mather and the grandson of the Rev. John Cotton. Of his boyhood, if it can be called that, we know very little except that he was incredibly pious and industrious and that he suffered from an impediment in his speech. Writing of his early life, for the benefit of his son, he lamented "early Ebullitions of *Original Sin,*" but confessed that at the age of seven or eight he was composing forms of prayer for his schoolmates and rebuking them for "their wicked *words* and *ways.*" "And sometimes," he added, "I suffered from them, the persecution of not only *Scoffs* but Blows also for my Rebukes." At eleven, according to the same account, he wrote and spoke Latin with great facility, had gone through most of the New Testament in Greek, and had begun his Hebrew grammar. When he received his B.A. degree from Harvard College in 1678, he was fourteen, the youngest graduate then on record. His stammering relieved (convincing evidence to him of God's special favor), he put aside his plan of becoming a physician to



follow his family's calling, the ministry. After taking his M.A. in 1681, he continued to assist his father at the Second, or Old North, Church, where he was installed as co-minister in 1685. There he remained all his life, marrying three times, burying most of his fifteen children, preaching literally thousands of sermons, and writing untiringly. He published 444 separate items, and great quantities of material are still extant in manuscript.

Outside of his personal idiosyncrasies, which were many and, at this distance, unpleasant, Mather was handicapped chiefly by nostalgia. He suffered from a lifelong yearning for the good old days when a New England clergyman wielded virtually sovereign power and regarded himself, quite rightly, as playing a leading rôle in a world-wide drama. Doubtless the good old days were never quite what Cotton Mather thought they were, and the Puritan Revolution not as all-important as it seemed. So intent was Mather upon preserving the "old New England way" that he was in many ways backward-looking, committed to a delaying action against new forces. Although he was never such a popular leader as his father, he was so prolific a writer that he has come to represent to many people the whole story of American Puritanism, a result which he himself would have regarded as unfortunate.

His most famous books, and indeed the bulk of his works, are best interpreted as efforts to strengthen the position of the church in a society which was growing steadily more worldly. *The Wonders of the Invisible World* (1693), the classic account of the tragedy of Salem witchcraft, is a monument to credulity; but it is also the result of a conviction, which Cotton Mather shared with pious and intelligent men on both sides of the Atlantic, that to give up a belief in spirits was to sell out to materialism. The vast *Magnalia Christi Americana* (1702) was designed to bind New Englanders to the religion of their forefathers by arousing pride in their spiritual inheritance. *The Christian Philosopher* (1721) sought to demonstrate that science was "no *Enemy,* but a mightly and wondrous *Incentive to Religion.*" And the *Manuductio ad Ministerium* (1726), which Moses Coit Tyler regarded as the most vigorous and entertaining of Mather's books, was his mature advice to prospective candidates for the ministry.

For all his efforts, Mather did not reinvigorate religion, as Jonathan Edwards was soon to do. He wrote too much and thought too little for that. His inveterate habit of paraphrasing freely from the books of others, on the theory that he could thereby edify his provincial audience, kept him almost always upon the surface of the world of ideas. There, however, he ranged widely, and often modified or shifted his intellectual position. *The Christian Philosopher, Manuductio ad Ministerium,* and *Bonifacius* (1710), better known as *Essays to Do*

Panel (l. to r.): Boston's first Town House • Cotton Mather at 65; from the Pelham portrait • Harvard in 1726 • Title page of Mather's Magnalia Christi Americana • Old State House, Boston

Good, show an amazing adjustment to scientific, humanitarian, and philanthropic movements which were, in the end, to build a new kind of society. Mather did not always understand their implications, but he was so anxious to be well-informed and informative about all branches of knowledge that his books are a mirror of their age.

Sermons, biographies, theological treatises, essays, handbooks for his parishioners, letters, poems, and various other types of writing flowed steadily from his pen. He also kept one of the fullest and most self-revealing of Puritan diaries. He cultivated and defended an elaborate, allusion-studded style which modern readers are likely to find pedantic and antiquated. Both his literary forms and his style, however, were intimately related to provincial Boston, seeking to preserve its traditions and to maintain its place in the sun.

Selections from Cotton Mather, ed. K. B. Murdock, New York, 1926 • T. J. Holmes, **Cotton Mather, a Bibliography of His Works**, 3 vols., Cambridge, 1940 • Barrett Wendell, **Cotton Mather, the Puritan Priest**, New York, 1891

From

The Wonders of the Invisible World

The Salem "witchcraft episode" began at Salem Village, now Danvers, Massachusetts, during the winter of 1691-1692, with the nine-year-old daughter, the eleven-year-old niece, and the West Indian servant, half Indian, half Negro, of the Rev. Samuel Parris. The children became "afflicted"; that is, they flew into fits and complained of being pricked, bitten, pinched, or choked by invisible hands, of being tormented by apparitions. When a gathering of ministers examined them and decided they were bewitched, they named, after much urging, three tormentors: an obvious neurotic, a miserable old woman, and Tituba, the West Indian servant. In March, publicly examined by Salem magistrates, Tituba confessed to the practice of witchcraft, naming the other two women as her accomplices. Soon there were more accusations, more examinations, more commitments to jail, and by May about one hundred persons were confined, awaiting trial, partly because the community was rural and disunited, full of bitterness among neighbors and relatives.

To meet this situation the new governor, Sir William Phips, appointed a special court of oyer and terminer, to investigate and to try the witchcraft cases. On evidence such as appears in this selection, the seven magistrates sent Bridget Bishop to the gallows in June. In July five others were hanged; in August, six; in September, fourteen. One eighty-year-old man was pressed to death beneath heavy stones because, fearing that his conviction would forfeit the property he hoped to leave his family, he refused to plead either guilty or not guilty. Forty-five individuals confessed themselves witches and thus escaped death; all those who were executed maintained their innocence to the end. Altogether, more than two hundred persons were accused or suspected. At length the accusations became so numerous and so absurd that the prosecutions were abandoned, the confessed witches freed, and before many years Samuel Sewall was publicly asking forgiveness for his share in the judicial decisions (see p. 90).

Scholars have disagreed violently about the extent to which Increase and Cotton Mather should be held responsible for this amazing episode. Their apologists point out (1) that the vast majority of educated men of the day, whatever their religious affiliations, believed in witchcraft; (2) that Increase Mather, who returned from England in the midst of the mania, urged the utmost caution in weighing the evidence; and (3) that Cotton Mather wrote his account of the trials out of friendship for the magistrates involved. Against these facts one must weigh the intangible effects of Increase Mather's **Essay for the Recording of Illustrious Providences** (1684) and Cotton Mather's **Memorable Providences, Relating to Witchcrafts and Possessions** (1689). Both books collected accounts of Satan's activities against New England, with the intention of combating materialism and religious indifference. Although the

Mathers were following in the footsteps of such English writers as Joseph Glanvill, Henry More, and Richard Baxter, it is possible that their stories of supernatural phenomena contributed to the state of mind which lay behind the explosion at Salem Village.

The Wonders of the Invisible World, for which many generations have condemned Cotton Mather as benighted and superstitious, was written in September and October 1692. Two Boston imprints appeared in 1693, and there were three London editions in the same year. More recently it has been several times reprinted, together with Robert Calef's **More Wonders of the Invisible World** (London, 1700), a rationalist's attack upon the procedure and the principals of the Salem outbreak.

THE TRIAL OF BRIDGET BISHOP, ALIAS, OLIVER AT THE COURT OF OYER AND TERMINER HELD AT SALEM, JUNE 2, 1692

I

She was Indicted for Bewitching of several persons in the Neighbourhood, the Indictment being drawn up, according to the *Form* in such Cases usual. And pleading, *Not Guilty*, there were brought in several persons, who had long undergone many kinds of Miseries, which were preternaturally Inflicted, and generally ascribed unto an horrible *Witchcraft.* There was little Occasion to prove the *Witchcraft;* it being Evident and Notorious to all Beholders. Now to fix the *Witchraft* on the Prisoner at the Bar, the first thing used, was, the Testimony of the *Bewitched;* whereof, several Testify'd That the *Shape* of the Prisoner did oftentimes very grievously Pinch them, choak them, Bite them, & Afflict them; urging them to write their Names in a *Book,* which the said Spectre called, *Ours.* One of them did further Testify, that it was the *Shape* of this Prisoner, with another, which one Day took her from her Wheel, and carrying her to the River side, threatned there to Drown her, if she did not Sign to the Book mentioned: which yet she refused. Others of them did also Testify, that the said *Shape* did in her Threats brag to them that she had been the Death of sundry persons, then by her Named; that she had *Ridden* a man, then likewise Named. Another Testify'd, the Apparition of *Ghosts* unto the Spectre of *Bishop,* crying out, *You Murdered us!* About the Truth whereof, there was in the matter of Fact, but too much Suspicion.

II. It was Testify'd, That at the Examination of the Prisoner, before the Magistrates, the Bewitched were extreamly Tortured. If she did but cast her Eyes on them, they were presently struck down; and this in such a manner as there could be no Collusion in the Business. But upon the Touch of her Hand upon them, when they lay in their Swoons, they would immediately Revive; and not upon the Touch of any ones else. Moreover, upon some Special Actions of her Body, as the shaking of her Head, or the Turning of her Eyes, they presently and painfully fell into the like postures. And many of the like Accidents now fell out, while she was at the Bar. One at the same time testifying, That she said, *She could not be Troubled to see the Afflicted thus Tormented.*

III. There was Testimony likewise brought in, that a man striking once at the place, where a Bewitched person said, the *Shape* of this *Bishop* stood, the bewitched cryed out, that he had Tore her Coat, in the place then particularly specify'd; and the Womans Coat, was found to be Torn in that very place.

IV. One *Deliverance Hobbs,* who had Confessed her being a Witch, was now Tormented by the Spectres, for her Confession. And she now Testify'd, That this *Bishop,* tempted her to Sign the *Book* again, and to Deny what she had Confess'd. She affirmed, that it was the Shape of this Prisoner, which whipped her with Iron Rods, to compel her thereunto. And she affirmed, that

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Text: the first Boston edition, 1693 • **Bridget Bishop,** previously married to a man named Oliver, had long had a bad reputation in Salem Village and had once before been accused of witchcraft. She was the first to be tried and hanged • 3 **the Form . . . usual,** based upon procedures of the English common law, developed during frequent prosecutions for witchcraft under statutes adopted in 1563 and 1604 and not repealed until 1736 • 12 **Shape . . . Prisoner.** The crucial point in the prosecutions was "spectral evidence." The magistrates acted on the assumption that evil spirits could not assume the shape of innocent persons. This meant that if an accuser testified under oath to seeing the apparition of his tormentor, and identified it, his very accusation was accepted as proof of guilt • 14 **Book,** the large black book in which a witch inscribed his name to seal his contract with Satan. The signature was ordinarily made with the blood of the signer, as in the Faust legend • 17 **Wheel,** spinning wheel • 23 **Ridden a man,** an allusion to the folk belief in incubi, from which the term "nightmare" is derived • 30 **cast her Eyes,** an instance of the "evil eye," upon which the Salem judges pondered at some length

this *Bishop* was at a General Meeting of the Witches, in a Field at *Salem*-Village and there partook of a Diabolical Sacrament, in Bread and Wine then Administred!

V. To render it further Unquestionable, that the prisoner at the Bar, was the Person truly charged in THIS *Witchcraft,* there were produced many Evidences of OTHER *Witchcrafts,* by her perpetrated. For Instance, *John Cook* testify'd, that about five or six years ago, One morning, about Sun-Rise, he was in his Chamber assaulted by the *Shape* of this prisoner: which Look'd on him, grin'd at him, and very much hurt him, with a Blow on the side of the Head: and that on the same day, about Noon, the same *Shape* walked in the Room where he was, and an Apple strangely flew out of his Hand, into the Lap of his mother, six or eight foot from him.

VI. *Samuel Gray,* testify'd, That about fourteen years ago, he wak'd on a Night, & saw the Room where he lay, full of Light; & that he then saw plainly a Woman between the Cradle, and the Bed-side, which look'd upon him. He Rose, and it vanished; tho' he found the Doors all fast. Looking out at the Entry-Door he saw the same Woman, in the same Garb again; and said, *In Gods Name, what do you come for?* He went to Bed, and had the same Woman again assaulting him. The Child in the Cradle gave a great schreech, and the Woman Disappeared. It was long before the Child could be quieted; and tho' it were a very likely thriving Child, yet from this time it pined away, and after divers months dy'd in a sad Condition. He knew not *Bishop,* nor her Name; but when he saw her after this, he knew by her Countenance, and Apparrel, and all Circumstances, that it was the Apparition of this *Bishop,* which had thus troubled him.

VII. *John Bly* and his wife, testify'd, that he bought a sow of *Edward Bishop,* the Husband of the prisoner; and was to pay the price agreed, unto another person. This Prisoner being Angry that she was thus hindred from fingring the money, Quarrell'd with *Bly.* Soon after which the Sow, was taken with strange Fits; Jumping, Leaping, and Knocking her head against the Fence; she seem'd Blind and Deaf, and would neither eat nor be suck'd. Whereupon a neighbour said, she believed the Creature was *Over-Looked;* & sundry other circumstances concurred, which made the Deponents Belive that *Bishop* had Bewitched it.

VIII. *Richard Coman* testify'd, that eight years ago, as he lay Awake in his Bed, with a Light Burning in the Room, he was annoy'd with the Apparition of this *Bishop,* and of two more that were strangers to him; who came and oppressed him so that he could neither stir himself, nor wake any one else; and that he was the night after, molested again in the like manner; the said *Bishop* taking him by the Throat, and pulling him almost out of the Bed. His Kinsman offered for this cause to lodge with him; and that Night, as they were Awake, Discoursing together: this *Coman* was once more visited, by the Guests which had formerly been so troublesome; his kinsman being at the same time strook speechless and unable to move Hand or Foot. He had laid his sword by him; which these unhappy spectres, did strive much to wrest from him; only he held too fast for them. He then grew able to call the People of his house; but altho' they heard him, yet they had not power to speak or stirr, until at last, one of the people crying out, *what's the matter!* the spectres all vanished.

IX. *Samuel Shattock* testify'd, That in the Year 1680, this *Bridget Bishop,* often came to his house upon such frivolous and foolish errands, that they suspected she came indeed with a purpose of mischief. Presently whereupon his eldest child, which was of as promising Health & Sense, as any child of its Age, began to droop exceedingly; & the oftener that *Bishop* came to the House, the worse grew the Child. As the Child would be standing at the Door, he would be thrown and bruised against the Stones, by an Invisible Hand, and in like sort knock his Face against the sides of the House, and bruise it after a miserable manner. Afterwards this *Bishop* would bring him things to Dy, whereof he could not Imagine any use; and when she paid him a piece of Money, the Purse and Money were unaccountably conveyed out of a Lock'd box, and never seen more. The Child was immediately hereupon taken with terrible fits, whereof his Friends thought he would have dyed: indeed he did almost nothing but cry and Sleep for several Months together: and at length his understanding

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1 General . . . Witches, the Sabbat, the sacrilegious and obscene parody of the mass and other sacraments which constituted a central feature of the folklore of witchcraft. Goethe used it skillfully in **Faust,** Hawthorne in **Young Goodman Brown;** it survives in the Hallowe'en figures of witches on broomsticks, on which they were supposed to ride to such meetings • 16 Samuel Gray, who, according to Calef, repented his "wholly groundless" accusation on his deathbed

was utterly taken away. Among other Symptoms of an Inchantment upon him, one was, that there was a Board in the Garden, whereon he would walk; and all the invitations in the world could never fetch him off. About Seventeen or Eighteen years after, there came a Stranger to Shattocks House, who seeing the Child, said, *This poor Child is Bewitched; and you have a Neighbour living not far off, who is a Witch.* He added, *Your Neighbour has had a falling out with your Wife; and she said in her Heart, your Wife is a proud Woman, and she would bring down her Pride in this Child:* He then Remembred, that *Bishop* had parted from his Wife in muttering and menacing Terms, a little before the Child was taken Ill. The abovesaid Stranger would needs carry the Bewitched Boy with him, to *Bishops* House, on pretence of buying a pot of Cyder. The Woman Entertained him in furious manner; and flew also upon the Boy, scratching his Face till the Blood came, and saying, *Thou Rogue, what? dost thou bring this Fellow here to plague me?* Now it seems the man had said before he went, that he would fetch Blood of *her.* Even after the Boy was follow'd with grievous Fits, which the Doctors themselves generally ascribed unto *Witchcraft;* and wherein he would be thrown still into the *Fire* or the *Water,* if he were not constantly look'd after; and it was verily believed that *Bishop* was the cause of it.

X. *John Louder* testify'd, that upon some little controversy with *Bishop* about her fowles, going well to Bed, he did awake in the Night by moonlight, and did see clearly the likeness of this woman grievously oppressing him; in which miserable condition she held him unable to help him self, till near Day. He told *Bishop* of this; but she deny'd it, and threatned him, very much. Quickly after this, being at home on a Lords Day, with the doors shutt about him, he saw a Black Pig approach him; at which he going to kick, it vanished away. Immediately after, sitting down, he saw a Black Thing Jump in at the Window, & come & stand before him. The Body, was like that of a Monkey, the Feet like a Cocks, but the Face much like a mans. He being so extreemly affrighted, that he could not speak; this Monster spoke to him, and said, *I am a Messenger sent unto you, for I understand that you are in some Trouble of Mind, and if you will be ruled by me, you shall want for nothing in this world.* Whereupon he endeavoured to clap his hands upon it; but he could feel no substance, and it jumped out of the window again; but immediately came in by the Porch, though the Doors were shut, and said, *You had better take my Counsel!* He then struck at it with a stick, but struck only the Ground-sel, and broke the Stick. The Arm with which he struck was presently Disenabled, and it vanished away. He presently went out at the Back-Door, and spyed, this *Bishop,* in her Orchard, going toward her House; but he had not power to set one foot forward unto her. Whereupon returning into the House, he was immediately accosted by the Monster he had seen before; which Goblin was now going to Fly at him: whereat he cry'd out, *The whole Armour of God, be between me and you!* So it sprang back, and flew over the Apple Tree; shaking many Apples off the Tree, in its flying over. At its Leap, it flung Dirt with its Feet, against the Stomack of the man; whereon he was then struck Dumb, and so continued for three Days together. Upon the producing of this Testimony, *Bishop* deny'd that she knew this Deponent: yet their two Orchards joined, and they had often had their Little Quarrels for some years together.

XI. *William Stacy, Testifyed,* That receiving Money of this *Bishop* for work done by him, he was gone but a matter of Three Rods from her, and looking for his money, found it unaccountably gone from him. Some time after, *Bishop* asked him whether his Father would grind her grist for her? He demanded why? She Reply'd, *Because Folks count me a witch.* He answered, *No Question, but he will grind it for you.* Being then gone about six Rods from her, with a small Load in his Cart, suddenly the Off-wheel slump't and sunk down into an Hole, upon plain ground, so that the Deponent, was forced to get help for the Recovering of the wheel. But stepping Back to look for the Hole which might give him this disaster, there was none at all to be found. Some time after, he was waked in the Night; but it seem'd as Light as Day, and he perfectly saw the shape of this *Bishop,* in the Room, Troubling of him; but upon her going out, all was Dark again. He charg'd *Bishop*

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27 some little controversy, suggestion that neighborhood quarrels and malice formed part of the explanation for the witchcraft episode • 35 **Black Pig,** evidently the animal "familiar" of the witch, supposedly nourished by blood or by the supernatural teat mentioned in Section XIII • 38 **Black Thing,** the Devil • 51 **Ground-sel,** threshold • 59 **The whole . . . God,** an allusion to the traditional protection from witchcraft: the name of God, the Bible, a crucifix or some other sacred object

afterwards with it: and she deny'd it not; but was very angry. Quickly after, this Deponent having been threatned by *Bishop,* as he was in a dark Night going to the Barn, he was very suddenly taken or lifted from the ground, and thrown against a stone wall; After that, he was again hoisted up and thrown down a Bank, at the end of his House. After this again, passing by this *Bishop,* his Horse with a small load, striving to Draw, all his Gears flew to pieces, and the Cart fell down; and this deponent going then to lift a Bag of corn, of about two Bushels; could not budge it, with all his might.

Many other pranks of this *Bishops,* this deponent was Ready to testify. He also testify'd, that he verily Believed, the said *Bishop,* was the Instrument of his Daughter, *Priscilla's* Death; of which suspicion, pregnant Reasons were assigned.

XII. To Crown all, *John Bly,* and *William Bly,* Testify'd, That being Employ'd by *Bridget Bishop,* to help take down the Cellar-wall of the old House, wherein she formerly Lived, they did in Holes of the said old Wall, find several *Poppets,* made up of Rags, and Hogs Brussels, with Headless Pins in them, the points being outward. Whereof she could now give no Account unto the Court, that was Reasonable or Tolerable.

XIII. One thing that made against the Prisoner was, her being evidently convicted of *Gross Lying* in the Court, several Times, while she was making her Plea. But besides this, a Jury of Women, found a preternatural Teat upon her Body; but upon a second search, within three or four Hours, there was no such thing to be seen. There was also an account of other people whom this woman had afflicted. And there might have been many more, if they had been, enquired for. But there was no need of them.

XIV. There was one very strange thing more, with which the Court was newly Entertained. As this Woman was under a Guard, passing by the Great and Spacious Meeting-House of *Salem,* she gave a Look towards the House. And immediately a *Daemon* Invisibly Entring the Meeting-house, Tore down a part of it; so that tho' there were no person to be seen there, yet the people at the Noise running in, found a Board, which was strongly fastned with several Nails, transported unto another quarter of the House.

1692·1693

21 **Poppets,** images. The practice described is commonplace in primitive magic and survives in voodooism

From

Magnalia Christi Americana

Cotton Mather's best-known book is the **Magnalia Christi Americana: or, The Ecclesiastical History of New-England, from Its First Planting in the Year 1620, unto the Year of Our Lord 1698.** It was begun in 1693 to bring together "Discoveries of the Divine Providence, in the Government of the World." Mather evidently hoped to continue the work begun by his father in the **Essay for the Recording of Illustrious Providences.** Soon, however, he was calling the project his "Church History of New England" and was working somewhat along the lines of Thomas Fuller's **Church-History of Britain** (1655) and John Vicars' **Magnalia Dei Anglicana** (1646). Largely completed by the end of 1696, the work was first published at London in 1702. Later editions appeared at Hartford in 1820 and in 1853-1855.

The "great American deeds of Christ" are described in seven books: (1) a general account of the settlement of New England; (2) the lives of the governors; (3) the lives of the ministers; (4) an account of Harvard College and its leaders; (5) acts and monuments of the New England churches; (6) "Illustrious Discoveries and Demonstrations of the Divine Providence" (the remnant of the original plan); and (7) a description of the various church controversies and the troubles with the Indians. A vast storehouse of information on New England history, the **Magnalia** shows its author at his best and worst. Vivid biographies and narratives are interspersed with pedantic quotations and allusions, accurate history with doubtful speculations. Yet it remains one of the great books of colonial America,

and it will always be read appreciatively by those who wish to catch the flavor of the seventeenth century.

The section which follows forms Chapter III of Book III, Part II. The Rev. Jonathan Burr (1604-1641) was associated with Richard Mather, the author's grandfather, at Dorchester, for less than two years. His life is described as carefully, however, as that of the most conspicuous leaders of the Puritan Migration. Cotton Mather seldom expressed his attitude toward the laborers in the vineyard more clearly and happily.

NATUS AD EXEMPLAR
THE LIFE OF MR. JONATHAN BURR
EXEMPLO MONSTRANTE VIAM

1

When the Interests of *David* were carried into a *Wilderness,* the Respects and Regards by his *Jonathan,* had thereunto were such, that he at last uttered this Exclamation thereupon, *Thy Love to me was wonderful!* The Interests of our *Jesus,* the true *David,* being lodged very much in an *American* Wilderness, there was a *Jonathan,* whose *Love* thereunto was indeed so *wonderful,* that it carried him through the *many Waters* of the *Atlantic* Ocean, to be serviceable thereunto; and this was Mr. *Jonathan Burr.*

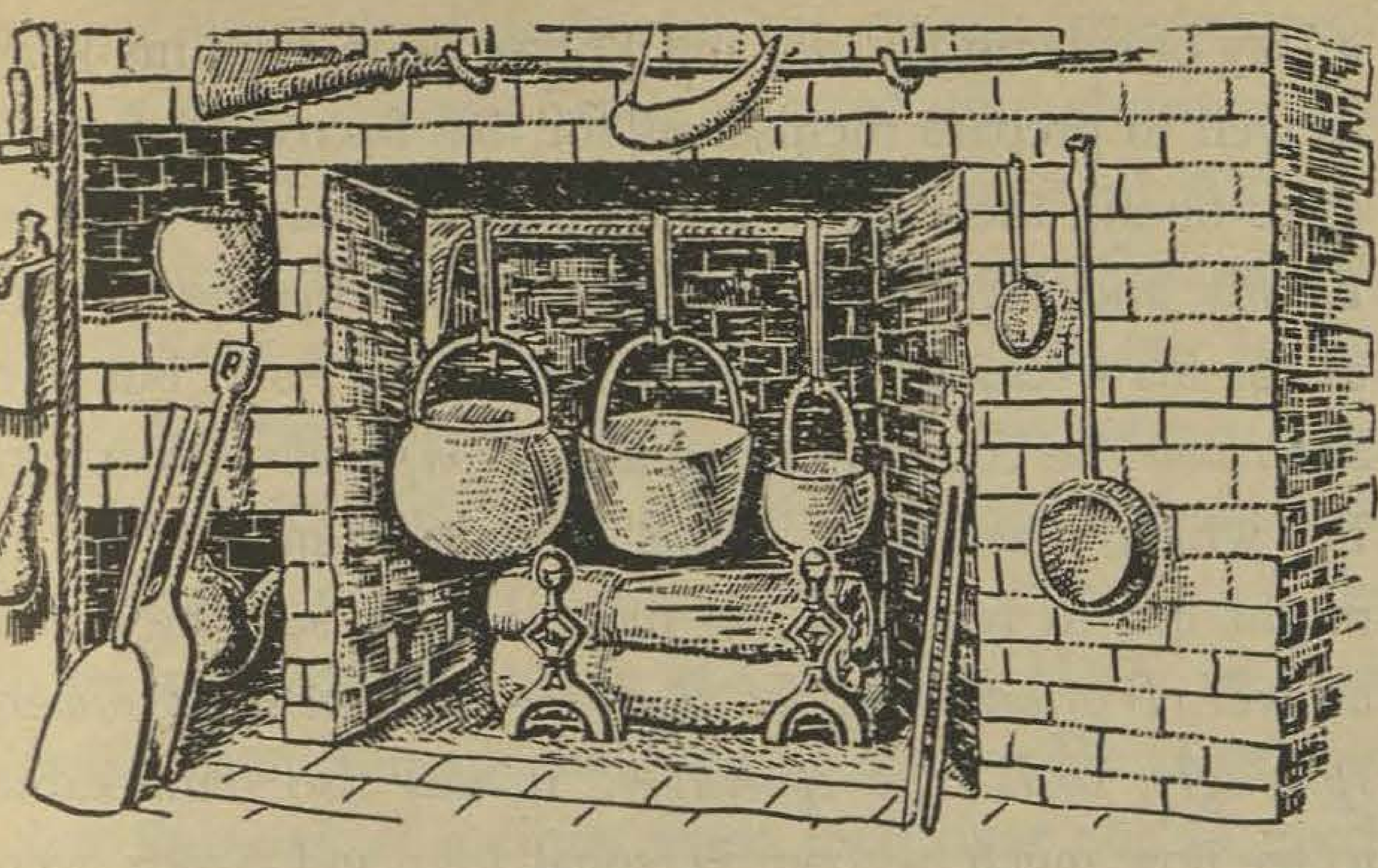
2. He was born at *Redgrave,* in *Suffolk,* about the Year 1604; descended of Godly Parents, who gratified the Inclinations of this their Son, with a Learned Education. But altho' *Literature* did much adorn his Childhood, *Religion* did so much more; for he had *from a Child known the Holy Scriptures, which made him wise unto Salvation.* It is noted, that the *Rod* of *Aaron* was made of an *Almond-Tree;* of which 'twill be no *Plinyism* to observe (tho' *Pliny* observe it), that it flowers the first of all *Trees,* even in *January,* in the more Southern Countries, and bears in *March;* which has been sometimes employ'd as an Intimation, how *quickly* those that are designed for the Ministry, should *Blossom* towards Heaven, and be young *Jeremiahs,* and *Johns,* and *Timothies.* Thus did our *Jonathan.* Even in his very Childhood, so *studious* he was, as to leave his *Food* for his *Book,* but withal so *pious,* that he could neither Morning nor Evening dare to go without *Prayers* to God for his Blessing. And as it was his endeavour, whilst a School-boy, to be *every Day* in the *Fear of the Lord,* so he would on the *Lord's Day* discover a singular Measure of that *Fear;* not only by abstaining from the *Liberties* which others of his Age then use to take, to *pass the time away,* but also by *devoting the time* to the Exercises of *Devotion.* His Father, observing this Disposition of the *Child,* hoped, as well he might, that whatever was expended in fitting him for *Service,* would be well repaid, in the Service which might be done by him for the Church of God; and therefore after due Preparations for it, he sent him unto the University.

3. After he had spent three or four Years in *Academical* Studies, the Death of his *Father* fetch'd him sooner than he would have gone, into the country; where, thou' he kept a *School,* yet he pursued the Design of accomplishing himself with every part of Learning, that when those of his Years were to take their Degrees of *Mastership,* he was one of the *Moderators,* which place he discharged with great Acceptation. But he afterwards would say, That the awful and humbling Providence of God, in the Death of his *Father,* which hindred him from those Employments and Preferments in the *University,* for which he had a particular Fondness, had an effect upon him, for which he had Reason to admire the Wisdom of Heaven; inasmuch as it reduced him to that modest, gracious, careful Frame, which made him the fitter for the Work of *turning many to Righteousness.*

4. Having for a while attended that Work at *Horninger,* near *Bury* in *Suffolk,* he afterwards undertook the Charge of *Reckingshal,* in the same County, wherein he did most exemplarily express the Spirit of a *Minister of the New Testament.* He would therein be sometimes ready to envy the more easie Condition of the *Husbandmen;* but in Submission and Obedience unto the Call of God, he now set his Hand unto the *Plough* of the Lord Jesus Christ: And therefore in the Form of a Solemn *Covenant,* he obliged himself unto the most Conscien-

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Text: the London edition of 1702 • **Natus ad Exemplar,** born to be an example. (This and subsequent translations are those made by Lucius Robinson for the 1853-1855 edition.) • **Exemplo monstrante Viam,** example shows the way • 11 **Redgrave, in Suffolk,** a village near the north central border of the county • 17 **Rod of Aaron.** See Numbers 17 • 18 **Plinyism,** a statement of doubtful truth, such as might appear in the **Historia Naturalis** of Gaius Plinius Secundus (23-79). Mather's use of the word is the only one recorded in the **New English Dictionary.** Pliny's statement about the almond-tree appears in Bk. XVI, Chap. 42 • 40 **the University,** Cambridge, where Burr matriculated at Corpus Christi College in 1620. According to the records, he took his B.A. in 1623-1624; his M.A., in 1627



tious Discharge of his Ministerial Duties; in which Discharge he would always beg of God, that whatever *Exhortation* he gave unto others, might first be shaped in his own *Experience:* And yet sometimes he would complain unto his Friends: *Alas, I preach not what I am, but what I ought to be.*

5. This *gracious* Man, was indeed a very *humble* Man, and his *Humility* carried him even into a *Dejection* of Spirit; especially when by Importunities he had been prevailed upon to *preach abroad.* Once particularly, there was a Person of Quality, for whose Conversion many Prayers had been put up to God, by those who hoped that God might have much *Honour* from a *Man of Honour* brought unto himself. Mr. *Burr* preaching at a place, far from his own Congregation, had a most happy Success in the Conversion of this Gentleman, who not only acknowledged this Change, with much Thankfulness, both to God, and the Instrument; but also approved himself a *changed Man,* in the whole Frame of his After-Conversation. And yet coming home, from the Preaching of that Sermon, Mr. *Burr* had a particular Measure of his lowly and modest Reflections thereupon; adding, *I shall conclude, it is of God, if any Good be done by any thing preached by such an Unworthy Instrument.*

6. Hence on the *Lord's Day,* after he came home from his publick Work, it was his manner presently to *Retire,* and spend some time in *praying* to God, for the *pardon* of the Sins, which accompanied him in his Work, and in *praising* of God, for enabling him to go, in any measure, through it; with Petitions for the good Success of his Labours.

He then would come down to his *Family-Worship,* wherein he spent some Hours *instructing* of the *Family,* and performing of other Duties: And when his Wife desired him to abate of his excessive Pains, his Answer would be, *'Tis better to be worn out with Work, than to be eaten out with Rust.* It was indeed his *Joy,* to be spending his *Life* unto the uttermost for God, and for his People; yea, he would say, tho' he should have no *Temporal Rewards.* Accordingly, when any that had been benefited by his Ministry, sent him any *Tokens* of their Gratitude, he would (like *Luther*) beg of God, *That he might not have his Portion in such things:* And he desired of his grateful Friends, *That if they had gotten any good of him, they would give unto God alone the Glory of it.* Moreover, if he had understood, that any had gained in the Concern of their Souls, by his Labours, he would mention it, in some of his privater Devotions, with this Expression, *Lord, of thine own have I given, take then the Glory unto thy self: As for me, let my Portion be in thy self, and not in the Things of this World.* But when he was debarred of his Liberty to preach, he was even *like a Fish out of the Water;* and his very *Body* languished through a Sympathy, with the Resentments of his *Mind;* saying, *That his Preaching was his Life; and if he were laid aside from that, he should quickly be dead.*

7. It was not on the *Lord's Day* only but *every Day,* that this good Man was usually, *In the Fear of the Lord all the Day long.* He might say with the *Psalmist, When I awake, I am still with God:* For at his first *awaking,* he would bless God for the Mercies of the Night, and then pray, *That he might so number his Days, as to apply his Heart to Wisdom:* And if he awaked in the Night, it would commonly be with some *Thanksgivings* unto Heaven. Rising in the Morning, he would repair to his beloved *Study,* where he began the Day with *Secret Prayer* before the Lord: After this he would read a Chapter in the *Old Testament,* spending some time in Serious and Solemn, and Heart-searching *Meditations* thereupon: He would then come down into his *Family;* where, with his *Prayers,* he would then Read and Expound, and apply the same Chapter unto his own Folks, and such of the Neighbours as would come in, to enjoy his *Meditations,* at the usual Season of them. Retiring then to his *Study* again, he would continue there, till called unto his *Dinner;* and if none came to speak with him after Dinner, he would, after some Diversion for a while with his *Children,* return to his Study, where he

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43 Luther, who, especially in the early days of the Reformation, refused the gifts of his admirers lest he be criticized by his enemies

would then have a time to pray with his Wife: But if at any time he were invited unto a Dinner abroad, he would have a time for *that* Service in the Forenoon, before his going out.

As the Evening drew on, after the like manner, he would read a Chapter in the *New Testament,* making his *Family* Partakers of his *Reflections,* with his Prayer upon it. And before his going to Bed, he usually walked up and down the Room, for half an Hour, or more, pondering upon *something,* which his Wife desiring to know, *What it was?* He replied, *Seeing thou art so near me, if it may do thee good, I'll tell thee: First,* He said, he called himself unto an Account, *How he had spent the day?* And what sinful *Commissions,* or *Omissions,* he had been overtaken with; for which, he then, begg'd Pardon of God. *Secondly,* He reckon'd up the particular *Mercies* he had receive'd *in the Day,* rendring of Praises to Heaven for those Mercies. *Lastly,* He made his *Petitions* to God, that he might be prepared for *sudden Death:* Unto which *Third Article* in his Thoughts, that which gave more special Occasion was, the *sudden Death* of his *Brother,* an eminent and excellent *Christian, whom,* he said, he *could never forget.*

8. When he travelled abroad, he thought long to be *at home* again, through his Dissatisfaction at his not having elsewhere, so convenient Seasons for his *Communion* with God. And when he took any Journeys with his Friends, it was his manner to enquire, *What good had been done, or gained therein?* and *what good Examples had been seen?* and *what good Instructions had been heard?* and that there might be no loss of *time* in the Journeys, he would be full of *profitable Discourse,* especially by way of *Occasional Reflection,* upon things that then occurr'd unto Observation. What he was in a *Journey,* the same he was at the Table; even like the Fire, (what was once writ of *Athenodorus*) 'Εξάπτων πάντα τὰ παρακείμενα. So that they who would bear no part in a gracious *Communication,* would be *dumb,* where-ever he came; and some of the roughest and rudest Hearers, who have *Tears* fetched from their Eyes, at the Soul melting Expressions that passed from his Mouth. Moreover, at a *Feast* he would eat more sparingly than at another time, giving us his Reason for his Temperance, the Advice of the Wise Man: *Put a Knife to thy Throat:* And he would say, *Where there are many Varieties, there are many Temptations.*

9. It was his wont, before the *Lord's Supper,* to keep a Day of solemn *Fasting* and *Prayer* alone, with his *Wife,* as well to prepare themselves for that Sacred *Ordinance;* as to obtain the manifold Blessings of Heaven upon his Family and Neighbourhood. Such was his *Piety.* And as for his *Charity,* he seldom visited the *Poor,* but with *Spirituals,* he communicated also *Temporals* unto them: For which, when some of his Friends intimated, that he might err, in reserving no more for himself, he would answer, *I often think of those Words, he that soweth sparingly, shall reap sparingly.* It was also remarkable, to see how much his own Personal *Joys,* and *Griefs,* were swallowed up in the *Simpathy* which he had, with the Condition of the whole Church abroad: When he heard it was *well* with the Church, he would say, *Blessed be God, that it goes well with them, whatever becomes of me!* But if *ill,* none of his own private Prosperity kept him from feeling it, as a true Member of that *Mystical Body.* Finally, All the Graces which thus rendred him amiable to those that were about him, were attended with such *Mosaic Meekness,* as made him yet further amiable: He would be *zealous,* when he saw Dishonour cast on the Name of God, but *patient* under Injury offer'd unto himself. If he were informed, that any thought meanly of him, he would not be moved at it, but say, *I think as meanly of my self, and therefore may well be content, that others think meanly of me:* And when *Evil* hath been charged on him, he has replied, *If Men see so much, what does God see?* Disgraceful and unworthy Speeches bestowed upon him, he would call, *his Gains;* but it was his Trouble to find himself applauded. His Friends might indeed have said of him, as *Luther* of *Melancthon, Mihi plane videtur saltem in hoc errare, quod Christum ipse fingat longius abesse à Corde suo, quàm sit reverà, certè nimis Nullus in hoc est noster* Jonathan.

10. This bright *Star* must move *Westward.* He, with many Fellow-Sufferers for the *Testimony of Jesus,* being silenced in *England;* and foreseeing a dismal *Storm* a

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36 'Εξάπτων... παρακείμενα, which troubles everything near it. The reference is probably to Athenodorus of Tarsus (74 B.C.-8 A.D.), teacher of Augustus and Tiberius, and friend of Cicero • 44 **Put . . . Throat.** Proverbs 23:2: "And put a knife to thy throat, if thou be a man given to appetite" • 79 **Luther of Melancthon,** Melancthon (Philip Schwarzerd, 1497-1560) was one of Luther's great allies in the German Reformation. The sense of the quotation is: It is evident to me that he errs in pretending that Christ is farther from his heart than is really true. Surely in this my Jonathan seems to deprecate himself to an unreasonable extent

coming upon the Nation, till the overpassing whereof he saw many *Praying Saints* directed unto *America,* for *Chambers of Safety;* and willing to forego all Worldly Advantages, for the Enjoyment of Gospel Ordinances, administred without the mixtures of *Humane Inventions;* he removed into *New England,* having his three Children with him, and his Wife big with a Fourth, in his Remove; where arriving, it refreshed him not a little, to see the escaped People of God, with *Harps in their Hands,* there singing the *Song of Moses.* He came into *New-England,* at a time, when there was not so much want of *Lights,* as of *Golden Candlesticks,* wherein to place the *Lights;* but he was not long there, before he was invited by the Church of *Dorchester,* to be an Assistant unto the well-known Mr. *Richard Mather.*

11. The *Evil One,* disturbed at the Happiness of Dorchester, very strongly endeavoured a *Misunderstanding* between Mr. *Mather* and Mr. *Burr;* and the *Misunderstanding* did proceed so far, as to produce a *Paroxism.* It was judged by some of the Brethren in the Church, that Mr. *Burr* had expressed himself erroneously in certain Points, then much agitated throughout the Country; and Mr. *Mather,* upon their Desire, examining the Propositions which this Good Man had written, thought he could not altogether clear them from Exceptions. Hereupon grew such Alienations, that they could not be well Re-united, without calling in the Help of Neighbour-Churches in a *Council;* which *Council* directing both Mr. *Mather* and Mr. *Burr,* to acknowledge what *Misunderstandings* were then discovered in this Business, those two Good Men set apart a Day for the *Reconciliation;* and with such Exemplary Expressions of *Humility* and *Affection,* Rectified all that had been out of Joint, that God was exceedingly Glorified, and the Peace of the *Church* effectually restored and maintained.

12. This true *Barnabas,* was not only to give the Churches of *New England* a *Consolatory Visit,* in his Passage unto Glory, that he might leave them an Example of that *Love, Patience, Holiness,* and *Fruitfulness,* which would make them an Happy People. Tho' he had not *Persecution* to try him in this Wilderness, yet he was not without his Trials: For, as 'tis well observed in the Discourse, *De Duplici Martyrio,* which goes under the Name of *Cyprian; Si deest Tyrannus, si Tortor, si Spoliator, non deerit concupiscentia, Martyrii, Materiam, quotidianam nobis exhibens.* The next Year after he came to *New-England,* he was taken Sick of the *Small-Pox;* out of which he nevertheless recovered, and came forth as *Gold that had been tryed in the Fire.* He then renewed and applied the *Covenant of Grace,* by the suitable Recognitions of the following *Instrument.*

'I *Jonathan Burr,* being brought in the Arms of Almighty God over the Vast *Ocean,* with my Family and 'Friends, and Graciously provided for in a Wilderness; 'and being sensible of my own *Unprofitableness* and '*Self-seeking;* yet of Infinite Mercy, being called unto the 'Tremendous Work of *Feeding Souls,* and being of late 'with my Family deliver'd out of a Great Affliction of 'the *Small-Pox;* and having found the Fruit of that Affliction; God Tempering, Ordering, Mitigating the *Evil* 'thereof, so as I have been graciously and speedily deliver'd; I do promise and *vow* to him, that hath done all 'things for me; *First,* That I will aim only at his *Glory,* 'and the *Good* of *Souls,* and not *my self* and *Vain Glory:* 'And that, *Secondly,* I will walk *Humbly,* with *lower 'Thoughts of my self,* considering what a poor Creature 'I am; a Puff of Breath, sustained only by the *Power* of 'his *Grace;* And therefore, *Thirdly,* I will be more *watch'ful* over my Heart, to *keep* it in a due Frame of *Holiness* 'and *Obedience,* without running out so far to the Crea'ture; for I have seen, That he is mine only Help in time 'of need; *Fourthly,* That I will put more weight upon 'that *firm Promise,* and *sure Truth,* That God is a *God 'hearing Prayer: Fifthly,* That I will set up *God,* more 'in my *Family,* more in *my self, Wife, Children* and '*Servants;* conversing with them in a more serious and 'constant manner; for *This,* God aimed at, in sending his 'Hand into my Family at this time.

Memento Mori.

'In Meipso Nihil; in Christo Omne.'

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10 **Song of Moses.** See Exodus 15:1 • 15 **Mr. Richard Mather** (1596-1669), Cotton Mather's grandfather • 17 **a Misunderstanding.** Burr had been suspected of entertaining a belief in divine revelation directly to the individual. The Synod of 1657 had condemned eighty-two heresies of this nature • 36 **Barnabas,** a contemporary of St. Paul, famous as a missionary (see I Corinthians 9:6) • 43 **De Duplici Martyrio,** "Twofold Martyrdom," a treatise attributed to Cyprian (200?-258), Church Father, martyr, and saint. It was probably composed by Erasmus • 44 **Si deest Tyrannus, etc.** If there be no tyrant, no torturer, no robber, there will still be evil passions, punishing daily occasions for martyrdom • 79 **Memento Mori.** Keep death in mind, a common inscription on tombstones • 80 **In . . . Omne.** In myself, I am nothing; in Christ, I am all things

Nor was his *Heavenly Conversation* afterwards disagreeable to these Grateful Resolutions of his Devout Soul. By the same Token, that the famous Mr. *Thomas Hooker,* being one of his Auditors, when he preached in a great Audience at *Charlestown,* had this Expression about him. *Surely, this Man wont be long out of Heaven, for he preaches as if he were there already.* And the most experienced Christians in the Country, found still in his *Ministry,* as well as in his whole *Behaviour,* the Breathing of such a *Spirit,* as was very greatly to their Satisfaction. They could not but call him, as *Dionysius* was once called, Πετεινὸν τοὺς οὐρανοῦς, *The Bird of Heaven.* Had it not been *Old Adam's World,* so Innocent, so Excellent, so Heavenly a Person, could not have met with such *Exercises* as he and others like him, then sometimes did, even from their *Truest Brethren,*

13. Having just been preaching about the *Redemption of Time,* he fell into a Sickness of *Ten Days* Continuance; during which Time, he expressed a wonderful Patience, and Submission, upon all Occasions. His Wife perceiving his *Willingness to Die,* asked him, *Whether he were desirous to leave her and his Children?* Whereto his Anwer was, *Do not mistake me, I am not desirous of that; but I bless God, that now my Will is the Lord's Will: If he will have me to live yet with my dear Wife and Children, I am willing. I will say to you my dear Wife and Children, as the Apostle says, It is better for you, that I abide with you; but it is better for me to be dissolved and to be with Christ.* And perceiving his Wife's Disconsolation, he asked her, *If she could not be willing to part with him;* whereupon, when she intimated how hard it was, he exhorted her to acquiesce in that God, who would be *Better than Ten Husbands:* Adding, *Our Parting is but for a Time, I am sure we shall one Day meet again.* Being discouraged by finding himself unable to put on his Clothes, one of his Friends told him, *his Work was now to lie still:* At which he complained, *I lie slugging a Bed, when others are at work!* But being minded of *God's Will,* That it should be so, *that* quieted him. Observing how diligently his Wife tended him, he said unto her, *Don't spend so much Time with me, but go thy way and spend some time in Prayer; thou knowest not what thou mayst obtain from God; I fear lest thou look too much upon this Affliction.* A Day or two before his Death, he blessed his Children; and the Night before he died, he was overheard sometimes to say, *I will wait until my Change come;* and *Why art thou so loath to die?* A few Hours before his Death, it was observed, that he had a sore Conflict with the *Angel of Death,* who was now shooting his last *Arrows* at him; and when one of the Standers-by said, *The Sting of Death is taken away; the Lord Jesus Christ has overcome Death for you; this is one of Satan's last Assaults; his Work is now almost at an end; though he be a subtil Enemy, and would if it were possible, deceive the very Elect;* he presently laid hold on that last Expression, *If it were possible;* said he, *Blessed be God there is no Possibility!* After this, he requested the Company might withdraw, that so he might have an Opportunity to pray for a while by himself; but seeing the Company loth to leave the Room, he pray'd in Latin as long as he had Strength to do it. When he was to Appearance just expiring, he called for his *Wife;* and stedfastly fixing his Eyes upon her, he said, *Cast thy Care upon God, for he careth for thee.* About half an Hour after this, when Death had been for some while drawing the Curtains about him, his last Words were those unto his Wife. *Hold Fast, Hold Fast!* So he finished his Pilgrimage, on *Aug.* 9. 1641.

14. Unto that Vertuous Gentlewoman his Wife, he expressed himself with great Confidence, *That God would certainly provide well for her;* and that Gentlewoman, shortly after being Honourably and Comfortably married unto another Gentleman of Good Estate, namely, *Richard Dummer,* Esq; once a Magistrate of the Colony, lived with him near Forty Years; and was more than Forty Years after alive to testify her Experience of the Accomplishment, which God had given unto that Faith of her *Dying Husband:* Who at his Death commended his Family to God, in Strains not unlike those of the Dying *Widerus;*

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3 Mr. **Thomas Hooker** (1586-1647), the founder and first minister of Hartford, Connecticut • 11 **Dionysius**, probably Dionysius the Areopagite, mentioned in Acts 17:34 • 75 **Richard Dummer.** Their son, Jeremiah Dummer, became a famous colonial silversmith • 81 **Widerus**, probably Count Herman van Weiden (1472-1552), archbishop of Cologne who was excommunicated by the Pope in 1546. The Latin reads:

To thee, O Christ, this tender flock I leave;
Be thou their father when I am no more,
Thou from the morn of life until its eve
Hast fed me with the riches of thy store.
These little ones so feed, protect, and love,
And then translate them to Thy rest above.

CHRISTE, tibi soli mea pignora Viva relinquo,
Quorum post Mortem Tu Pater esto meam.
Qui cunctis Vitœ miserum me jugiter Annis
Pavisti, Largam dans Mihi semper opem;
Tu quoq; Pasce meos defende, tuere, doceq;
Et tandem ad Coeli guadia transfer.
Amen.

EPITAPHIUM

Mortuus hic Jacet, qui in Omnium Cordibus Vivit.
Omnes Virtutes, quoe Vivunt post Funera,
In Unius BURRI *Funere invenerunt Sepulchrum.*

To make up his *Epitaph*, I will borrow a Line or two from the Tombstone of *Volkmarus.*

Hic Jacet Exutis nimium citò BURRIUS *Annis,*
Adjuga Suggestus, Magne MATHERE, *Tui*
Si magis Annosam licuisset condere Vitam,
Ac Scriptis Animum notificare Libris,
Tot Verbis non esset opus hoc Scalpere Saxum,
Sufficerent Quatuor, BURRIUS *hic situs est.*

1693-1698?·1702

EPITAPHIUM
Here he lies dead, but he lives in the hearts of all.
All those great virtues, which the tomb defy,
Now sleep within it, where our Burr doth lie.

12 **Volkmarus**, an allusion the editor has been unable to identify. Mather was evidently paraphrasing from some book of epitaphs. The Latin reads as follows:

Here lieth Burr, whose span too soon was sped:
Burr, whom in life our own great Mather led.
Alas! had he but reached a riper age,
And stamped his genius on some deathless page,
No sculpture need upon this stone appear,
Save one brief, meaning sentence: "Burr Lies Here."

From

Curiosa Americana

Cotton Mather's curiosity about science won him election as Fellow of the Royal Society of London in 1713. Between 1712 and 1724 he sent to that organization over eighty letters on more or less scientific subjects. Some of his comments were summarized in the **Philosophical Transactions.** The letter which follows was written to John Woodward (1655-1728), an English geologist who had undertaken a world-wide correspondence about fossil remains before publishing his **Essay Toward a Natural History of the Earth** (1695). Professor Murdock has shown that Mather's facts were drawn from an account sent him by John Winthrop (1681-1747), a descendant of the famous governor of that name, on September 12, 1717.

10 d. X m. 1717

Sr

Tho' we are gott so far onward at the Beginning of another Winter, yett we have not forgott the Last: which at the Latter End whereof, we were Entertained & overwhelmed with a *Snow*, which was attended with some Things that were uncommon enough, to afford matter for a letter from us. The *Winter* was not so bad as that wherein *Tacitus* tells us that *Corbulo* made his Expedition against the *Parthians.* Nor like that which proved so fatal to the Beasts & Birds, in the Days of the Emperour *Justinian* [nor?] that wherein the very Fishes were killed under the Freezing Sea, when *Phocas* did as

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Text: from **Selections from Cotton Mather**, ed. K. B. Murdock • 1 **10d. X m. 1717**, December 10. Prior to 1752, March rather than January was accounted the first month of the year • 9 **Tacitus** (55?-117?), Roman historian. Corbulo, a famous general under Claudius and Nero, was executed at the latter's orders in 67 A.D. In all probability, Mather's allusions in his first paragraph were derived from some dictionary or classical encyclopedia which listed the great snows of antiquity • 12 **Justinian** (483-565), Emperor of the eastern Roman empire • 13 **Phocas**, usurper of the empire of Constantinople, 602-610, and a notoriously cruel tyrant

much to the men whom Tyrants treat like the Fishes of the Sea. But the Conclusion of our *Winter* was hard enough, & was too formidable to be easily forgotten: and of a peece with what you had in *Europe,* a year before. The *Snow* was the Chief Thing that made it so. For tho' rarely does a *Winter* pass us, wherein we may not say with *Pliny, Ingens Hyeme Nivis apud nos copia;* yett the Last *Winter* brought with it a *Snow* that Excelled them all. A *Snow* tis true, not equal to that which once fell and Lay Twenty Cubits high, about the Beginning of *October,* in the parts about the *Euxine Sea.* Nor to that, which the French Annals tell us, kept falling for twenty Nine weeks together. Nor to several mentioned by *Boethius,* wherein vast Numbers of people, and of Cattel, perished; Not to those that *Strabo* finds upon *Caucasus* and *Rhodiginus* in *Armenia.* But yett such an one, and attended with such Circumstances, as may deserve to be Remembred.

On the Twentieth of the Last *February,* there came on a *Snow,* which being added unto what had covered the ground a few Days before, made a Thicker Mantle for our Mother than what was usual: And the Storm with it, was for the following Day so violent, as to make all communication between the Neighbours every where to cease. People for some Hours could not pass from one side of a Street unto another, and the poor Women, who happened at this critical time to fall into Travail, were putt into Hardships which anon produced many odd Stories for us. But on the Twenty-fourth Day of the Month comes *Pelion* upon *Ossa.* Another *Snow* came on, which almost buried the Memory of the former: With a Storm so furious, that Heaven laid an Interdict on the Religious Assemblies throughout the countrey on this Lords-day, the like whereunto had never been seen before. The Indians near an hundred years old, affirm, that their Fathers never told them of any thing that equall'd it. Vast Numbers of Cattel were destroy'd in this Calamity; Whereof some that were of the Stronger Sort, were found standing Dead on their Legs, as if they had been alive, many weeks after, when the Snow melted away. And others had their Eyes glazed over the Ice at such a rate, that being not far from the Sea, they went out of their way, and drowned them there.

One Gentleman, on whose Farms, there were now Lost above eleven hundred *Sheep,* which with other cattel were Interred (Shall I Say, or Inniv'd) in the Snow; writes me That there were Two *Sheep* very singularly circumstanced. For no Less than Eight & Twenty Days after the Storm, the people pulling out the Ruines of above an hundred Sheep, out of a Snow-bank, which Lay sixteen foot high drifted over them, there were Two found alive, which had been there all this time, & kept themselves alive by Eating the Wool of their Dead Companions. When they were taken out, they shed their own Fleeces, but soon gott into good Case again.

Sheep were not the only creatures that Lived unaccountably for whole weeks without their usual Sustenance, entirely buried in the *Snow-drifts.* The *Swine* had a share with the *Sheep* in Strange Survivals. A man had a couple of Young *Hogs,* which he gave over for Dead; But on the twenty-seventh day after their Burial, they made their way out of a *Snow-bank,* at the bottom of which they had found a Little Tansy to feed upon.

The *Poultry* as unaccountably survived as these. *Hens* were found alive, after *Seven Days; Turkeys* were found alive, after *five & Twenty Days;* Buried in the *Snow,* and at a Distance from the Ground; and altogether destitute of any thing to feed them.

The Number of Creatures, that kept a *Rigid Fast,* shutt up in *Snow,* for several weeks together, & were found alive after all, have yielded surprizing stories to us.

The Wild Creaturss of the Woods, (the *Outgoings of the Evening*) made their Descent as well as they could in this Time of Scarcity for them, towards the Sea-side. A vast multitude of Deer for the Same Cause taking the Same Couse, & the Deep Snow Spoiling them of their only Defence: which is, *To Run,* they became such a prey to those Devourers, that it is thought, not one in Twenty Escaped.

But here again occurr'd a Curiosity.

These carniverous Sharpers, and especially the *Foxes,* would make their *Nocturnal Visits,* to the Pens, where

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7 **Ingens . . . copia.** We have had uncommonly heavy snows this winter • 10 **Twenty Cubits,** thirty or more feet. The ancient cubit varied from eighteen to twenty-two inches • 11 **Euxine Sea,** Black Sea • 14 **Boethius** (475?-525?), Roman philosopher • 15 **Strabo** (60 B.C.?-24 A.D.?), Greek geographer • 16 **Rhodiginus** (1450?-1525), Italian philologist, author of **Antiquae Lectiones** (1516) • 30 **Pelion upon Ossa.** Both are mountains in Thessaly. The giants, at war with the gods, supposedly tried to pile one mountain upon the other, in order to reach the heavens. The expression, of course, means one great thing on top of another • 46 **Inniv'd.** Mather is playing with the Latin **terra** (earth) and nix (snow)

the people had their Sheep defended from them. The poor Ewes big with young were so terrified with the frequent Approaches of the *Foxes,* & the Terror had such Impression on them, that most of the *Lambs* brought forth in the Spring following, were of Monsieur *Reinard's* complexion, when the Dams were all either White or Black.

It was remarkable, that immediately after the Fall of the Snow, an infinite multitude of Sparrows, made their Appearance; but then after a short continuance all disappeared.

It is incredible, how much Damage was done to the *Orchards;* For the Snow freezing to a Crust, as high as the Boughs of the Trees, anon Splitt them to peeces. The Cattle also, walking on the Crusted Snow, a dozen foot from the Ground, so fed upon the Trees as very much to damnify them.

The Ocean was in a prodigious Ferment, and after it was over, Vast Heaps of Little Shells were driven ashore, where they were never seen before. Mighty Shoals of Porpoises, also kept a Playday in the Disturbed waves of our Harbours.

The odd Accidents befalling many poor people, whose Cottages were totally covered with the Snow, & the very tops of their Chimneys to be seen, would afford a Story; But there not being any Relacion to philosophy in them, I forbear them. And now, *I am* Satis Terris Nivis.—And here is enough of my Winter-tale. If it serve to no other purpose, yett it will give me an opportunity to tell you, That Nine months ago, I did a thousand times wish myself with you in *Gresham-Colledge,* which is never so horribly Snow'd upon. But instead of so great a satisfaction, all I can attain to, is the pleasure of talking with you in this Epistolary way, and subscribing myself,

Syr, Yours with an Affection that knows no Winter
[Cotton Mather]

D^r Woodward

1717·1926

27 **Satis Terris Nivis,** weary of the snow-covered ground • 31 **Gresham-College,** an institution founded with funds left by Sir Thomas Gresham (1519-1579). It was the meeting-place of the Royal Society of London

From

Manuductio ad Ministerium

The **Manuductio ad Ministerium,** or **Directions for a Candidate of the Ministry** (Boston, 1726), has been reprinted three times—in 1781, 1789, and by the Facsimile Text Society in 1938. It describes the proper studies for the prospective clergyman, evaluating all the arts and sciences. Professor Perry Miller has recently pointed out that it represents both a "mature tradition of Puritan scholarship in America" and certain striking departures from the seventeenth-century positions. Particularly forward-looking are Mather's emphasis on practical conduct, his minimizing of logic, his enthusiasm for science, and his failure to insist upon the traditional "doctrine-reasons-uses" pattern of the sermon. His comments on style, however, are a defense of the method and conviction of his own work, akin neither to the "plain style" of his predecessors nor to the fashions of the age of Addison and Steele. The passage is a digression in the course of Mather's comments on literature.

There has been a deal of a do about a STYLE; So much, that I must offer you my Sentiments upon it. There is a *Way of Writing,* wherein the Author endeavours, that the Reader may have *something to the Purpose* in every Paragraph. There is not only a *Vigour* sensible in

Text: the Boston edition of 1726 • 1 **a deal . . . do,** particularly by the enthusiasts for the New Science of Francis Bacon, Robert Boyle, and the Royal Society

every *Sentence,* but the Paragraph is embellished with *Profitable References,* even to something beyond what is *directly spoken.* Formal and Painful *Quotations* are not studied; yet all that could be learnt from them is insinuated. The Writer pretends not unto *Reading,* yet he could not have writ as he does if he had not *Read* very much in his Time; and his Composures are not only a *Cloth of Gold,* but also stuck with as many *Jewels,* as the Gown of a Russian Embassador. This *Way of Writing* has been decried by many, and is at this Day more than ever so, for the same Reason, that in the old Story, the *Grapes* were decried, *That they were not Ripe.* A Lazy, Ignorant, Conceited Sett of Authors, would perswade the whole Tribe, to lay aside that *Way of Writing,* for the same Reason that one would have perswaded his Brethren to part with the Encumbrance of their *Bushy Tails.* But. however *Fashion* and *Humour* may prevail, they must not think that the Club at their *Coffee-House* is, *All the World;* but there will always be those, who will in this Case be governed by *Indisputable Reason;* And who will think, that the real Excellency of a Book will never ly in *saying of little;* That the less one has for his Money in a Book, 'tis really the more Valuable for it; and that the less one is instructed in a Book, and the more of Superfluous *Margin,* and Superficial *Harangue,* and the less of *Substantial Matter* one has in it, the more tis to be accounted of. And if a more Massy *Way of Writing* be never so much disgusted at This Day, a *Better Gust* will come on, as will some other Thing, *quæ jam Cecidere.* In the mean time, Nothing appears to me more Impertinent and Ridiculous than the *Modern Way,* [I cannot say, *Rule;* For they have *None!*] of *Criticising.* The Blades that set up for *Criticks,* I know not who constituted or commission'd 'em!—they appear to me, for the most part as *Contemptible,* as they are a *Supercilious* Generation. For indeed no Two of them have the same *Style;* and they are as intollerably Cross-grain'd and severe in their Censures upon one another, as they are upon the rest of Mankind. But while each of them, conceitedly enough, sets up for the *Standard of Perfection,* we are entirely at a Loss which *Fire* to follow. Nor can you easily find any one thing wherein they agree for their *Style,* except perhaps a perpetual Care to give us Jejune and Empty Pages, without such *Touches of Erudition* (to speak in the *Style* of an Ingenious Traveller) as may make the Discourses less *Tedious,* and more *Enriching,* to the Mind of him that peruses them. There is much Talk of a *Florid Style,* obtaining among the Pens, that are most in Vogue; but how often would it puzzle one, even with the best Glasses to find the *Flowres!* And if they were to be Chastized for it, it would be with as much of Justice, as *Jerom* was, for being a *Ciceronian.* After all, Every Man will have his own *Style,* which will distinguish him as much as his *Gate:* And if you can attain to that which I have newly described, but always writing so as to give an *Easy Conveyance* unto your *Idea's,* I would not have you by any *Scourging* be driven out of your *Gate,* but if you must confess a *Fault* in it, make a Confession like that of the Lad, unto his Father while he was beating him for his *Versifying.*

However, since every Man will have his own Style, I would pray, that we may learn to treat one another with mutual *Civilities,* and *Condescensions,* and handsomely *indulge* one another in this, as *Gentlemen* do in other Matters.

I wonder what ails People, that they can't let *Cicero* write in the *Style* of *Cicero,* and *Seneca* write in the (much other!) *Style* of *Seneca;* and own that Both may please in their *several Ways.*—But I will freely tell you; what has made me consider the *Humourists* that set up for *Criticks upon Style,* as the most *Unregardable Set of Mortals* in the World, is This! Far more Illustrious *Criticks* than any of those to whom I am now bidding Defiance, and no less Men than your *Erasmus's,* and your *Grotius's,* have taxed the *Greek Style* of the *New Testament,* with I know not what *Solæcisms* and *Barbarisms;* And, how many *learned Folks* have Obsequiously run away with the Notion! Whereas 'tis an Ignorant and an Insolent *Whimsey;* which they have

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11 **the old Story,** of the fox and the grapes, in Aesop's **Fables,** a book which apparently was one of Mather's favorites. In 1692 he wrote and circulated in manuscript a number of "Political Fables" • 29 **Gust,** taste • 30 **quæ jam Cecidere,** which now to cut short; i.e., so much for that • 53 **Jerom,** St. Jerome (331?-420), famous as a stylist. The remark is attributed to Erasmus • 68 **Seneca,** Lucius Annaeus Seneca (4 B.C.?-65 A.D.), noted for his short, epigrammatic sentences and rhetorical ornament, in marked contrast to the long sentences of Cicero • 75 **Erasmus's . . . Grotius's,** Desiderius Erasmus (1467?-1536) and Hugo de Groot (1583-1645). Erasmus edited the New Testament in Greek, with a Latin translation; Grotius was the author of a commentary or "annotations" on the Bible

been guilty of. It may be (and particularly by an Ingenious *Blackwal,* it has been) Demonstrated, That the Gentlemen are mistaken in every one of their pretended Instances; All the Unquestionable *Classicks,* may be brought in, to convince them of their Mistakes. Those Glorious Oracles are as *pure Greek* as ever was written in the World; and so Correct; so Noble, so Sublime is their *Style,* that never any thing under the Cope of Heaven, but the Old Testament, has equall'd it.

1726

2 Blackwal, Anthony Blackwall (1674-1730), author of The Sacred Classicks Defended (1725)

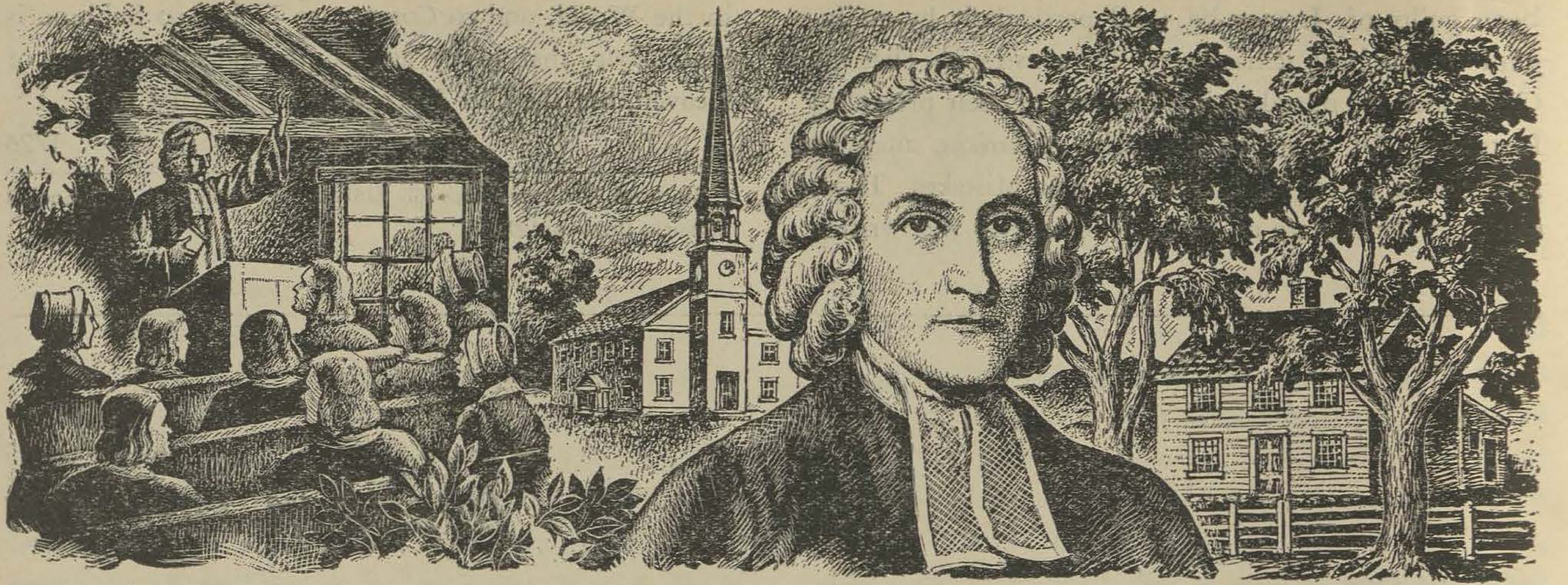
Jonathan Edwards

1703 · 1758

To most Americans Jonathan Edwards is either the founder of the family which has compared so favorably with the ill-fated Jukeses that it provides the stock argument for the importance of heredity and education or, and perhaps more commonly, the most sulphurous hellfire preacher of the colonial period. To the specialists, however, Edwards is the greatest theologian that America has yet produced, unquestionably one of the most original minds in our country's history. By uniting a passionate love for God and His authority with a genius for logic and system, he made himself the foremost reinterpreter of Calvinism in America; and he has remained, down to the present day, a great bulwark of religion through his powerful affirmation of faith in the reality and the primacy of spiritual experience. Something of his stature is suggested by the fact that he has been compared with such church fathers as Tertullian, St. Augustine, and Calvin; with the philosophers Spinoza, Leibnitz, Berkeley, and Kant; and, for his synthesis of the attitudes of an age, with such widely separated figures as Dante and Emerson.

Edwards was born in 1703 at East Windsor, Connecticut, where his father was minister. Surrounded by sisters (he was the fifth child and the only son in a family of eleven), he received his early education at home. He entered Yale College when that institution was wandering from one little Connecticut town to another, and was graduated before he was seventeen. He spent two additional years at Yale in the study of theology and, after an interval of eight months during which he preached in a Presbyterian church in New York City, three more years as a tutor. Early in 1727 he joined his grandfather, the Rev. Solomon Stoddard, in the church at Northampton, Massachusetts, married, and became full minister there upon Stoddard's death in 1729.

As a clergyman Edwards developed an absorbing interest in what we would now call the psychology of religion. He welcomed the "awakenings" which came periodically in his church, and eventually announced that he could not conscientiously admit to communion those persons who had made no public relation of religious experience. His congregation, influenced as much, perhaps, by personal as by doctrinal considerations, were unwilling to accept this return to the stricter ways of the first generation in New England, and in 1750 Edwards was dismissed. From 1751 until 1757 he was pastor at Stockbridge, Massachusetts, at that time an Indian mission village on the frontier. He then accepted a call to the presidency of the College of New



Jersey (now Princeton University), where he died of smallpox within three months of his installation.

The rise of Edwards to leadership as a preacher and theologian is to be traced chiefly in his writings. His precocity as a thinker is demonstrated by a considerable body of philosophical papers written during his residence at Yale and published piecemeal after his death. "Of Insects," "Of Being," "Colours," and "Notes on the Mind" have often been cited as evidence of his genius for logical analysis. They show that he developed, independently of George Berkeley, the English philosopher, that philosophical position known as "subjective idealism," which holds that matter has reality only in terms of the perceiving mind. Although this position was fundamental to Edwards' entire intellectual life, he did not publish his conclusions and therefore had no genuine influence upon the philosophical thought of his age.

Soon after his settlement at Northampton, however, he began to publish sermons and case histories which show his absorption in the phenomena of conversion. *A Divine and Supernatural Light* (1734) carefully expounds his belief that a mystical faith is likewise the most logical. *A Faithful Narrative* (1737) describes the first great revival in his church. *Some Thoughts Concerning the Present Revival of Religion in New England* (1742) supports the activities of George Whitefield, an English Methodist who had preached with great effect throughout the colonies, in the face of ridicule by the leading ministers of Boston (see Chauncy, pp. 184-188). These works merit comparison with a famous book of the twentieth century: William James' *The Varieties of Religious Experience* (1902). Despite occasional overseriousness, notably in the description of the emotional antics of very young children, Edwards must not be dismissed as a ranting revivalist, playing upon unstable individuals and reveling in the physical contortions of repenting sinners. He could be as skeptical of mass emotion as anyone, but he did believe thoroughly in the possibility and the supreme importance of true conversion. He had experienced it himself; he thought he could distinguish between the genuinely "awakened" and the momentarily excited. He lent his support, therefore, to those who sought to arouse men to the insufficiency of a comfortable Sunday pew unaccompanied by a deep-rooted, burning love of God. His justification of trust in religious experience and intuitive knowledge was enormously influential and helped to make evangelicalism and revivalism the prevailing pattern of American religion.

Finally, Edwards built for himself and his followers an impressively logical system of theology, powerfully reaffirming the principal heads of Calvinism but modifying their bases in accordance with the philosophy and

Panel (l. to r.): A colonial prayer meeting • Jonathan Edwards' church, the Third Meeting-House at Northampton, Massachusetts • Edwards at the age of 37 • His home at Northampton

psychology of his day. This system, which was largely responsible for his great posthumous reputation, was set forth in four treatises: *A Treatise Concerning Religious Affections* (1746); *A Careful and Strict Enquiry into the Modern Prevailing Notions of That Freedom of the Will Which Is Supposed To Be Essential to Moral Agency, Vertue and Vice, Reward and Punishment, Praise and Blame* (1754); *The Great Christian Doctrine of Original Sin Defended* (1758); and *Two Dissertations, I. Concerning the End for Which God Created the World. II. The Nature of True Virtue* (1765).

In the *Treatise Concerning Religious Affections* Edwards argued that the rational soul, or human mind, has two faculties: the Understanding, by which it discerns, views, or judges; and the Will or Inclination, by which it is turned toward or against the things perceived by the Understanding. Will, in other words, he regarded as closely akin to feeling or emotion; it is that aspect of mind which is described by the common phrase, to have a "heart" for this action or that one. The passions or affections of Will—love and hatred and their derivatives—were to Edwards the basis of religion; reason or judgment was not. Finally, he asserted that the religious affections, of which love was the most important, flowed from a "supernatural sense," communicated directly by God to the regenerate man. In this analysis, based partly upon traditional distinctions and partly upon his own experience, Edwards placed himself in opposition to those thinkers who laid most emphasis upon the element of reason in religion (the Deists and the Unitarians, for example), but he stopped short of the opinion of the Arminians (the followers of Jacobus Arminius, 1560-1609, a Dutch theologian) that the power of accepting or rejecting Divine grace rested in some measure in the Will itself.

The Arminians had long argued that unless the choice between good and evil is conceived of as lying with the individual there can be no real incentive to religion and virtue; they represented a growing opposition to the Calvinistic insistence upon predestination and the election of the few. Edwards' *Freedom of the Will* is a lengthy consideration of this crucial point, in which he proved to his own satisfaction that the Will was passive. Although a man may be able to do what he pleases and so is to some degree free, each volitional act has a cause or motive which is outside his control. Edwards sought to maintain the glory of the Puritan God and, at the same time, to place some responsibility for conduct upon the individual. How successful he was depends upon his reader's willingness to accept his definition of terms.

Original Sin Defended answered *The Scripture-Doctrine of Original Sin Proposed to a Free and Candid Examination* (1738) by an English clergyman, John Taylor, who had drawn Isaac Watts, John Wesley, and other well-known divines into a controversy. Edwards once more reinforced the Calvinist positions by logical analysis and careful demolition of his opponent's arguments. His chief contributions were an ingenious explanation of general responsibility for Adam's sin, on the ground that all men are to Adam as buds and shoots are to the root or stock of a tree, and a description of the Fall as the withdrawal from man of the inclination toward virtue. At no point in his system was Edwards to be sooner challenged, for his portrayal of man's depravity and complete selfishness was in sharp contrast with the humanitarian trend of his times.

The glory of God was urged once more in the *Two Dissertations*. God created the world because of a "disposition to communicate His own fulness." "The beams of glory come from God, are something of God, and are refunded back again to their original." Virtue is "disinterested benevolence," a kind of beauty, exceedingly rare in man and attainable only by the grace of God. The discussion, as Professor Faust has shown, is closely related to the thought of the period, especially to Francis Hutcheson's *Inquiry into the Original of Our Ideas of Beauty and Virtue* (1725).

Doctrinally, in short, Edwards was at one with Thomas Shepard, and the title of *The Sincere Convert* (see p. 128) can stand for Edwards' theology as readily as for Shepard's. There were modifications, to be sure, but the Edwards theology is primarily a powerful reaffirmation, the middle point in the drift from Puritanism to Transcendentalism.

The Works of President Edwards, ed. Samuel Austin, 8 vols., Worcester, 1808 • **Jonathan Edwards: Representative Selections**, ed. C. H. Faust and T. H. Johnson, Cincinnati, 1935 • T. H. Johnson, **The Printed Writings of Jonathan Edwards, 1703-1758, A Bibliography**, Princeton, 1940 • A. V. G. Allen, **Jonathan Edwards**, Boston, 1889 • Ola E. Winslow, **Jonathan Edwards**, New York, 1940

Personal Narrative

Edwards' account of his "new sense of things" was written sometime after 1739, and was first printed in Samuel Hopkins' Life and Character of the Late Reverend Mr. Jonathan Edwards (Boston, 1765). The manuscript has been lost. The "Personal Narrative" is much admired as one of the most glowing yet lucid descriptions of mystic experience in American literature. The invariable steps of conversion—a conviction of sin, a recognition of the justice and absolute sovereignty of God, and a surrender to Him—are followed by a description of results which most of us, whatever our faith, can find enviable. The exhilaration of the spirit which Edwards describes is what he lived for; his is one of the most vivid testimonies to the integrating power of religious ecstasy.

I had a variety of concerns and exercises about my soul from my childhood; but had two more remarkable seasons of awakening, before I met with that change by which I was brought to those new dispositions, and that new sense of things, that I have since had. The first time was when I was a boy, some years before I went to college, at a time of remarkable awakening in my father's congregation. I was then very much affected for many months, and concerned about the things of religion, and my soul's salvation; and was abundant in duties. I used to pray five times a day in secret, and to spend much time in religious talk with other boys; and used to meet with them to pray together. I experienced I know not what kind of delight in religion. My mind was much engaged in it, and had much selfrighteous pleasure; and it was my delight to abound in religious duties. I with some of my schoolmates joined together, and built a booth in a swamp, in a very retired spot, for a place of prayer. And besides, I had particular secret places of my own in the woods, where I used to retire by myself; and was from time to time much affected. My affections seemed to be lively and easily moved, and I seemed to be in my element when engaged in religious duties. And I am ready to think, many are deceived with such affections, and such a kind of delight as I then had in religion, and mistake it for grace.

But in process of time, my convictions and affections wore off; and I entirely lost all those affections and delights and left off secret prayer, at least as to any constant performance of it; and returned like a dog to his vomit, and went on in the ways of sin. Indeed I was at times very uneasy, especially towards the latter part of my time at college; when it pleased God, to seize me with a pleurisy; in which he brought me nigh to the grave, and shook me over the pit of hell. And yet, it was not long after my recovery, before I fell again into my old ways of sin. But God would not suffer me to go on with any quietness; I had great and violent inward struggles, till, after many conflicts with wicked inclinations, repeated resolutions, and bonds that I laid myself under by a kind of vows to God, I was brought wholly to break off all former wicked ways, and all ways of known outward sin; and to apply myself to seek salvation, and practise many religious duties; but without that kind of affection and delight which I had formerly experienced. My concern now wrought more by inward struggles and conflicts, and selfreflections. I made seeking my salvation the main business of my life. But yet, it seems to me, I sought after a miserable manner; which has made me sometimes since to question, whether ever it issued in that which was saving; being ready to doubt, whether such miserable seeking ever succeeded. I was indeed brought to seek salvation in a manner that I never was before; I felt a spirit to part with all things in the world, for an interest in Christ. My concern continued and prevailed, with many exercising thoughts and inward struggles; but yet it never seemed to be proper to express that concern by the name of terror.

From my childhood up, my mind had been full of objections against the doctrine of God's sovereignty, in choosing whom he would to eternal life, and rejecting whom he pleased; leaving them eternally to perish, and

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Text: the Austin edition of the Works, 1808 • 6 I . . . college. Edwards entered Yale in 1716

be everlastingly tormented in hell. It used to appear like a horrible doctrine to me. But I remember the time very well, when I seemed to be convinced, and fully satisfied, as to this sovereignty of God, and his justice in thus eternally disposing of men, according to his sovereign pleasure. But never could give an account, how, or by what means, I was thus convinced, not in the least imagining at the time, nor a long time after, that there was any extraordinary influence of God's Spirit in it; but only that now I saw further, and my reason apprehended the justice and reasonableness of it. However, my mind rested in it; and it put an end to all those cavils and objections. And there has been a wonderful alteration in my mind, with respect to the doctrine of God's sovereignty, from that day to this; so that I scarce ever have found so much as the rising of an objection against it, in the most absolute sense, in God's shewing mercy to whom he will shew mercy, and hardening whom he will. God's absolute sovereignty and justice, with respect to salvation and damnation, is what my mind seems to rest assured of, as much as of any thing that I see with my eyes; at least it is so at times. But I have often, since that first conviction, had quite another kind of sense of God's sovereignty than I had then. I have often since had not only a conviction, but a delightful conviction. The doctrine has very often appeared exceeding pleasant, bright, and sweet. Absolute sovereignty is what I love to ascribe to God. But my first conviction was not so.

The first instance that I remember of that sort of inward, sweet delight in God and divine things that I have lived much in since, was on reading those words, 1 Tim. i.17. *Now unto the King eternal, immortal, invisible, the only wise God, be honor and glory forever and ever, Amen.* As I read the words, there came into my soul, and was as it were diffused through it, a sense of the glory of the Divine Being; a new sense, quite different from any thing I ever experienced before. Never any words of scripture seemed to me as these words did. I thought with myself, how excellent a Being that was, and how happy I should be, if I might enjoy that God, and be rapt up to him in heaven, and be as it were swallowed up in him for ever! I kept saying, and as it were singing over these words of scripture to myself; and went to pray to God that I might enjoy him, and prayed in a manner quite different from what I used to do; with a new sort of affection. But it never came into my thought, that there was any thing spiritual, or of a saving nature in this.

From about that time, I began to have a new kind of apprehensions and ideas of Christ, and the work of redemption, and the glorious way of salvation by him. An inward, sweet sense of these things, at times, came into my heart; and my soul was led away in pleasant views and contemplations of them. And my mind was greatly engaged to spend my time in reading and meditating on Christ, on the beauty and excellency of his person, and the lovely way of salvation by free grace in him. I found no books so delightful to me, as those that treated of these subjects. Those words Cant. ii.1, used to be abundantly with me, *I am the Rose of Sharon, and the Lilly of the valleys.* The words seemed to me, sweetly to represent the loveliness and beauty of Jesus Christ. The whole book of Canticles used to be pleasant to me, and I used to be much in reading it, about that time; and found, from time to time, an inward sweetness, that would carry me away, in my contemplations. This I know not how to express otherwise, than by a calm, sweet abstraction of soul from all the concerns of this world; and sometimes a kind of vision, or fixed ideas and imaginations, of being alone in the mountains, or some solitary wilderness, far from all mankind, sweetly conversing with Christ, and wrapt and swallowed up in God. The sense I had of divine things, would often of a sudden kindle up, as it were, a sweet burning in my heart; an ardor of soul, that I know not how to express.

Not long after I first began to experience these things, I gave an account to my father of some things that had passed in my mind. I was pretty much affected by the discourse we had together; and when the discourse was ended, I walked abroad alone, in a solitary place in my father's pasture, for contemplation. And as I was walking there, and looking up on the sky and clouds, there came into my mind so sweet a sense of the glorious *majesty* and *grace* of God, that I know not how to express. I seemed to see them both in a sweet conjunction; majesty and meekness joined together; it was a sweet, and gentle, and holy majesty; and also a majestic meekness; an awful sweetness; a high, and great, and holy gentleness.

After this my sense of divine things gradually increased, and became more and more lively, and had

more of that inward sweetness. The appearance of every thing was altered; there seemed to be, as it were, a calm, sweet cast, or appearance of divine glory, in almost every thing. God's excellency, his wisdom, his purity and love, seemed to appear in every thing; in the sun, moon, and stars; in the clouds, and blue sky; in the grass, flowers, trees; in the water, and all nature; which used greatly to fix my mind. I often used to sit and view the moon for continuance; and in the day, spent much time in viewing the clouds and sky, to behold the sweet glory of God in these things; in the mean time, singing forth, with a low voice, my contemplations of the Creator and Redeemer. And scarce any thing, among all the works of nature, was so sweet to me as thunder and lightning; formerly, nothing had been so terrible to me. Before, I used to be uncommonly terrified with thunder, and to be struck with terror when I saw a thunder storm rising; but now, on the contrary, it rejoiced me. I felt God, so to speak, at the first appearance of a thunder storm; and used to take the opportunity, at such times, to fix myself in order to view the clouds, and see the lightnings play, and hear the majestic and awful voice of God's thunder, which oftentimes was exceedingly entertaining, leading me to sweet contemplations of my great and glorious God. While thus engaged, it always seemed natural to me to sing, or chant for my meditations; or, to speak my thoughts in soliloquies with a singing voice.

I felt then great satisfaction, as to my good state; but that did not content me. I had vehement longings of soul after God and Christ, and after more holiness, wherewith my heart seemed to be full, and ready to break; which often brought to my mind the words of the Psalmist, Psal. cxix. 28. *My soul breaketh for the longing it hath.* I often felt a mourning and lamenting in my heart, that I had not turned to God sooner, that I might have had more time to grow in grace. My mind was greatly fixed on divine things; almost perpetually in the contemplation of them. I spent most of my time in thinking of divine things, year after year; often walking alone in the woods, and solitary places, for meditation, soliloquy, and prayer, and converse with God; and it was always my manner, at such times, to sing forth my contemplations. I was almost constantly in ejaculatory prayer, wherever I was. Prayer seemed to be natural to me, as the breath by which the inward burnings of my heart had vent. The delights which I now felt in the things of religion, were of an exceeding different kind from those before mentioned, that I had when a boy; and what I then had no more notion of, than one born blind has of pleasant and beautiful colors. They were of a more inward, pure, soul-animating and refreshing nature. Those former delights never reached the heart; and did not arise from any sight of the divine excellency of the things of God; or any taste of the soulsatisfying and life-giving good there is in them.

My sense of divine things seemed gradually to increase, until I went to preach at Newyork, which was about a year and a half after they began; and while I was there, I felt them, very sensibly, in a much higher degree than I had done before. My longings after God and holiness, were much increased. Pure and humble, holy and heavenly Christianity, appeared exceeding amiable to me. I felt a burning desire to be in every thing a complete Christian; and conform to the blessed image of Christ; and that I might live, in all things, according to the pure, sweet and blessed rules of the gospel. I had an eager thirsting after progress in these things; which put me upon pursuing and pressing after them. It was my continual strife day and night, and constant inquiry, how I should *be* more holy, and *live* more holily, and more becoming a child of God, and a disciple of Christ. I now sought an increase of grace and holiness, and a holy life, with much more earnestness, than ever I sought grace before I had it. I used to be continually examining myself, and studying and contriving for likely ways and means, how I should live holily, with far greater diligence and earnestness, than ever I pursued any thing in my life; but yet with too great a dependance on my own strength; which afterwards proved a great damage to me. My experience had not then taught me, as it has done since, my extreme feebleness and impotence, every manner of way; and the bottomless depths of secret corruption and deceit there was in my heart. However, I went on with my eager pursuit after more holiness, and conformity to Christ.

The heaven I desired was a heaven of holiness; to be with God, and to spend my eternity in divine love, and

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58 I . . . Newyork. He was in New York from August 1722 until April 1723. Little is known about his ministry beyond what he says in this account

holy communion with Christ. My mind was very much taken up with contemplations on heaven, and the enjoyments there; and living there in perfect holiness, humility and love: And it used at that time to appear a great part of the happiness of heaven, that there the saints could express their love to Christ. It appeared to me a great clog and burden, that what I felt within, I could not express as I desired. The inward ardor of my soul, seemed to be hindered and pent up, and could not freely flame out as it would. I used often to think, how in heaven this principle should freely and fully vent and express itself. Heaven appeared exceedingly delightful, as a world of love; and that all happiness consisted in living in pure, humble, heavenly, divine love.

I remember the thoughts I used then to have of holiness; and said sometimes to myself, "I do certainly know that I love holiness, such as the gospel prescribes." It appeared to me, that there was nothing in it but what was ravishingly lovely; the highest beauty and amiableness . . . . a *divine* beauty; far purer than any thing here upon earth; and that every thing else was like mire and defilement, in comparison of it.

Holiness, as I then wrote down some of my contemplations on it, appeared to me to be of a sweet, pleasant, charming, serene, calm nature; which brought an inexpressible purity, brightness, peacefulness and ravishment to the soul. In other words, that it made the soul like a field or garden of God, with all manner of pleasant flowers; all pleasant, delightful, and undisturbed; enjoying a sweet calm, and the gently vivifying beams of the sun. The soul of a true Christian, as I then wrote my meditations, appeared like such a little white flower as we see in the spring of the year; low and humble on the ground, opening its bosom to receive the pleasant beams of the sun's glory; rejoicing as it were in a calm rapture; diffusing around a sweet fragrancy; standing peacefully and lovingly, in the midst of other flowers round about; all in like manner opening their bosoms, to drink in the light of the sun. There was no part of creature holiness, that I had so great a sense of its loveliness, as humility, brokenness of heart and poverty of spirit; and there was nothing that I so earnestly longed for. My heart panted after this, to lie low before God, as in the dust; that I might be nothing, and that God might be ALL, that I might become as a little child.

While at Newyork, I was sometimes much affected with reflections on my past life, considering how late it was before I began to be truly religious; and how wickedly I had lived till then; and once so as to weep abundantly, and for a considerable time together.

On *January* 12, 1723. I made a solemn dedication of myself to God, and wrote it down; giving up myself, and all that I had to God; to be for the future in no respect my own; to act as one that had no right to himself, in any respect. And solemnly vowed to take God for my whole portion and felicity; looking on nothing else as any part of my happiness, nor acting as if it were; and his law for the constant rule of my obedience; engaging to fight with all my might, against the world, the flesh and the devil, to the end of my life. But I have reason to be infinitely humbled, when I consider how much I have failed of answering my obligation.

I had then abundance of sweet religious conversation in the family where I lived, with Mr. John Smith and his pious mother. My heart was knit in affection to those in whom were appearances of true piety; and I could bear the thoughts of no other companions, but such as were holy, and the disciples of the blessed Jesus. I had great longings for the advancement of Christ's kingdom in the world; and my secret prayer used to be, in great part, taken up in praying for it. If I heard the least hint of any thing that happened, in any part of the world, that appeared, in some respect or other, to have a favorable aspect on the interest of Christ's kingdom, my soul eagerly catched at it; and it would much animate and refresh me. I used to be eager to read public news letters, mainly for that end; to see if I could not find some news favorable to the interest of religion in the world.

I very frequently used to retire into a solitary place, on the banks of Hudson's river, at some distance from the city, for contemplation on divine things, and secret converse with God; and had many sweet hours there. Sometimes Mr. Smith and I walked there together, to converse on the things of God; and our conversation used to turn much on the advancement of Christ's kingdom in the world, and the glorious things that God would accomplish for his church in the latter days. I had then, and at other times the greatest delight in the holy scriptures, of any book whatsoever. Oftentimes in reading it, every word seemed to touch my heart. I felt a harmony between something in my heart, and those

sweet and powerful words. I seemed often to see so much light exhibited by every sentence, and such a refreshing food communicated, that I could not get along in reading; often dwelling long on one sentence, to see the wonders contained in it; and yet almost every sentence seemed to be full of wonders.

I came away from Newyork in the month of April, 1723, and had a most bitter parting with Madam Smith and her son. My heart seemed to sink within me at leaving the family and city, where I had enjoyed so many sweet and pleasant days. I went from Newyork to Weathersfield, by water, and as I sailed away, I kept sight of the city as long as I could. However, that night, after this sorrowful parting, I was greatly comforted in God at Westchester, where we went ashore to lodge; and had a pleasant time of it all the voyage to Saybrook. It was sweet to me to think of meeting dear Christians in heaven, where we should never part more. At Saybrook we went ashore to lodge, on Saturday, and there kept the Sabbath; where I had a sweet and refreshing season, walking alone in the fields.

After I came home to Windsor, I remained much in a like frame of mind, as when at Newyork; only sometimes I felt my heart ready to sink with the thoughts of my friends at Newyork. My support was in contemplations on the heavenly state; as I find in my Diary of May 1, 1723. It was a comfort to think of that state, where there is fulness of joy; where reigns heavenly, calm, and delightful love, without alloy; where there are continually the dearest expressions of this love; where is the enjoyment of the persons loved, without ever parting; where those persons who appear so lovely in this world, will really be inexpressibly more lovely and full of love to us. And how sweetly will the mutual lovers join together to sing the praises of God and the Lamb! How will it fill us with joy to think, that this enjoyment, these sweet exercises will never cease, but will last to all eternity! . . . . I continued much in the same frame, in the general, as when at Newyork, till I went to Newhaven as tutor to the college; particularly once at Bolton, on a journey from Boston, while walking out alone in the fields. After I went to Newhaven I sunk in religion; my mind being diverted from my eager pursuits after holiness, by some affairs that greatly perplexed and distracted my thoughts.

In September, 1725, I was taken ill at Newhaven, and while endeavoring to go home to Windsor, was so ill at the North Village, that I could go no further; where I lay sick for about a quarter of a year. In this sickness God was pleased to visit me again with the sweet influences of his Spirit. My mind was greatly engaged there in divine, pleasant contemplations, and longings of soul. I observed that those who watched with me, would often be looking out wishfully for the morning; which brought to my mind those words of the psalmist, and which my soul with delight made its own language, *My soul waiteth for the Lord, more than they that watch for the morning, I say, more than they that watch for the morning;* and when the light of day came in at the windows, it refreshed my soul from one morning to another. It seemed to be some image of the light of God's glory.

I remember, about that time, I used greatly to long for the conversion of some that I was concerned with; I could gladly honor them, and with delight be a servant to them, and lie at their feet, if they were but truly holy. But, some time after this, I was again greatly diverted in my mind with some temporal concerns that exceedingly took up my thoughts, greatly to the wounding of my soul; and went on through various exercises, that it would be tedious to relate, which gave me much more experience of my own heart, than ever I had before.

Since I came to this town, I have often had sweet complacency in God, in views of his glorious perfections and the excellency of Jesus Christ. God has appeared to me a glorious and lovely Being, chiefly on the account of his holiness. The holiness of God has always appeared to me the most lovely of all his attributes. The doctrines of God's absolute sovereignty, and free grace, in shewing mercy to whom he would shew mercy; and man's absolute dependance on the operations of God's Holy Spirit, have very often appeared to me as sweet and glorious doctrines. These doctrines have been much my delight. God's sovereignty has ever appeared to me, great part of his glory. It has often been my delight to approach God, and adore him as a sovereign God, and ask sovereign mercy of him.

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73 this town, Northampton

I have loved the doctrines of the gospel; they have been to my soul like green pastures. The gospel has seemed to me the richest treasure; the treasure that I have most desired, and longed that it might dwell richly in me. The way of salvation by Christ has appeared, in a general way, glorious and excellent, most pleasant and most beautiful. It has often seemed to me, that it would in a great measure spoil heaven, to receive it in any other way. That text has often been affecting and delightful to me, Isa. xxxii. 2. *A man shall be an hiding place from the wind, and a covert from the tempest,* &c.

It has often appeared to me delightful, to be united to Christ; to have him for my head, and to be a member of his body; also to have Christ for my teacher and prophet. I very often think with sweetness, and longings, and pantings of soul, of being a little child, taking hold of Christ, to be led by him through the wilderness of this world. That text, Matth. xviii. 3, has often been sweet to me, *except ye be converted and become as little children,* &c. I love to think of coming to Christ, to receive salvation of him, poor in spirit, and quite empty of self, humbly exalting him alone; cut off entirely from my own root, in order to grow into, and out of Christ; to have God in Christ to be all in all; and to live by faith on the son of God, a life of humble, unfeigned confidence in him. That scripture has often been sweet to me, Psal. cxv. 1. *Not unto us, O Lord, not unto us, but unto thy name give glory, for thy mercy, and for thy truth's sake.* And those words of Christ, Luke x. 21. *In that hour Jesus rejoiced in spirit, and said, I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes: Even so, Father, for so it seemed good in thy sight.* That sovereignty of God which Christ rejoiced in, seemed to me worthy of such joy; and that rejoicing seemed to shew the excellency of Christ, and of what spirit he was.

Sometimes, only mentioning a single word caused my heart to burn within me; or only seeing the name of Christ, or the name of some attribute of God. And God has appeared glorious to me, on account of the Trinity. It has made me have exalting thoughts of God, that he subsists in three persons; Father, Son and Holy Ghost. The sweetest joys and delights I have experienced, have not been those that have arisen from a hope of my own good estate; but in a direct view of the glorious things of the gospel. When I enjoy this sweetness, it seems to carry me above the thoughts of my own estate; it seems at such times a loss that I cannot bear, to take off my eye from the glorious, pleasant object I behold without me, to turn my eye in upon myself, and my own good estate.

My heart has been much on the advancement of Christ's kingdom in the world. The histories of the past advancement of Christ's kingdom have been sweet to me. When I have read histories of past ages, the pleasantest thing in all my reading has been, to read of the kingdom of Christ being promoted. And when I have expected, in my reading, to come to any such thing, I have rejoiced in the prospect, all the way as I read. And my mind has been much entertained and delighted with the scripture promises and prophecies, which relate to the future glorious advancement of Christ's kingdom upon earth.

I have sometimes had a sense of the excellent fulness of Christ, and his meetness and suitableness as a Saviour; whereby he has appeared to me, far above all, the chief of ten thousands. His blood and atonement have appeared sweet, and his righteousness sweet; which was always accompanied with ardency of spirit; and inward strugglings and breathings, and groanings that cannot be uttered, to be emptied of myself, and swallowed up in Christ.

Once, as I rode out into the woods for my health, in 1737, having alighted from my horse in a retired place, as my manner commonly has been, to walk for divine contemplation and prayer, I had a view that for me was extraordinary, of the glory of the Son of God, as Mediator between God and man, and his wonderful, great, full, pure and sweet grace and love, and meek and gentle condescension. This grace that appeared so calm and sweet, appeared also great above the heavens. The person of Christ appeared ineffably excellent with an excellency great enough to swallow up all thought and conception . . . . which continued as near as I can judge, about an hour; which kept me the greater part of the time in a flood of tears, and weeping aloud. I felt an ardency of soul to be, what I know not otherwise how to express, emptied and annihilated; to lie in the dust, and to be full of Christ alone; to love him with a holy

and pure love; to trust in him; to live upon him; to serve and follow him; and to be perfectly sanctified and made pure, with a divine and heavenly purity. I have, several other times, had views very much of the same nature, and which have had the same effects.

I have many times had a sense of the glory of the third person in the Trinity, in his office of Sanctifier; in his holy operations, communicating divine light and life to the soul. God, in the communications of his Holy Spirit, has appeared as an infinite fountain of divine glory and sweetness; being full, and sufficient to fill and satisfy the soul; pouring forth itself in sweet communications; like the sun in its glory, sweetly and pleasantly diffusing light and life. And I have sometimes had an affecting sense of the excellency of the word of God, as a word of life; as the light of life; a sweet, excellent, life-giving word; accompanied with a thirsting after that word, that it might dwell richly in my heart.

Often, since I lived in this town, I have had very affecting views of my own sinfulness and vileness; very frequently to such a degree as to hold me in a kind of loud weeping, sometimes for a considerable time together; so that I have often been forced to shut myself up. I have had a vastly greater sense of my own wickedness, and the badness of my heart, than ever I had before my conversion. It has often appeared to me, that if God should mark iniquity against me, I should appear the very worst of all mankind; of all that have been, since the beginning of the world to this time; and that I should have by far the lowest place in hell. When others, that have come to talk with me about their soul concerns, have expressed the sense they have had of their own wickedness, by saying that it seemed to them, that they were as bad as the devil himself; I thought their expression seemed exceeding faint and feeble, to represent my wickedness.

My wickedness, as I am in myself, has long appeared to me perfectly ineffable, and swallowing up all thought and imagination; like an infinite deluge, or mountains over my head. I know not how to express better what my sins appear to me to be, than by heaping infinite upon infinite, and multiplying infinite by infinite. Very often, for these many years, these expressions are in my mind, and in my mouth, "Infinite upon infinite . . . . Infinite upon infinite!" When I look into my heart, and take a view of my wickedness, it looks like an abyss infinitely deeper than hell. And it appears to me, that were it not for free grace, exalted and raised up to the infinite height of all the fulness and glory of the great Jehovah, and the arm of his power and grace stretched forth in all the majesty of his power, and in all the glory of his sovereignty, I should appear sunk down in my sins below hell itself; far beyond the sight of every thing, but the eye of sovereign grace, that can pierce even down to such a depth. And yet it seems to me, that my conviction of sin is exceeding small, and faint; it is enough to amaze me, that I have no more sense of my sin. I know certainly, that I have very little sense of my sinfulness. When I have had turns of weeping and crying for my sins I thought I knew at the time, that my repentance was nothing to my sin.

I have greatly longed of late, for a broken heart, and to lie low before God; and, when I ask for humility, I cannot bear the thoughts of being no more humble than other Christians. It seems to me, that though their degrees of humility may be suitable for them, yet it would be a vile selfexaltation in me, not to be the lowest in humility of all mankind. Others speak of their longing to be "humbled to the dust;" that may be a proper expression for them, but I always think of myself, that I ought, and it is an expression that has long been natural for me to use in prayer, "to lie infinitely low before God." And it is affecting to think, how ignorant I was, when a young Christian, of the bottomless, infinite depths of wickedness, pride, hypocrisy and deceit, left in my heart.

I have a much greater sense of my universal, exceeding dependence on God's grace and strength, and mere good pleasure, of late, than I used formerly to have; and have experienced more of an abhorrence of my own righteousness. The very thought of any joy arising in me, on any consideration of my own amiableness, performances, or experiences, or any goodness of heart or life, is nauseous and detestable to me. And yet I am greatly afflicted with a proud and selfrighteous spirit, much more sensibly than I used to be formerly. I see that serpent rising and putting forth its head continually, every where, all around me.

Though it seems to me, that, in some respects, I was a far better Christian, for two or three years after my first conversion, than I am now; and lived in a more constant delight and pleasure; yet, of late years, I have

had a more full and constant sense of the absolute sovereignty of God, and a delight in that sovereignty; and have had more of a sense of the glory of Christ, as a Mediator revealed in the gospel. On one Saturday night, in particular, I had such a discovery of the excellency of the gospel above all other doctrines, that I could not but say to myself, "This is my chosen light, my chosen doctrine;" and of Christ, "This is my chosen Prophet." It appeared sweet, beyond all expression, to follow Christ, and to be taught, and enlightened, and instructed by him; to learn of him, and live to him. Another Saturday night, (*January*, 1739) I had such a sense, how sweet and blessed a thing it was to walk in the way of duty; to do that which was right and meet to be done, and agreeable to the holy mind of God; that it caused me to break forth into a kind of loud weeping, which held me some time, so that I was forced to shut myself up, and fasten the doors. I could not but, as it were, cry out, "How happy are they which do that which is right in the sight of God! They are blessed indeed, they are the happy ones!" I had, at the same time, a very affecting sense, how meet and suitable it was that God should govern the world, and order all things according to his own pleasure; and I rejoiced in it, that God reigned, and that his will was done.

1739?-1808

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12 January, 1739, the only clue to the date of composition

Of Being

"Of Being" was written sometime between 1717 and 1720, shortly after Edwards had read for the first time John Locke's **Essay Concerning Human Understanding.** Locke (Book II, Chapter 8) had said that "the ideas of primary qualities of bodies [i.e., solidity, extension, figure, motion or rest, and number] are resemblances of them, and their patterns do really exist in the bodies themselves; but the ideas produced in us by . . . secondary qualities [i.e., colors, sounds, tastes, etc.] have no resemblance of them at all. There is nothing like our ideas existing in the bodies themselves." Primary qualities, he continued (Chapter 23), are the chief basis of our ideas of corporeal substance, which can be no more and no less clear than our ideas of immaterial substance. Edwards, taking up the discussion at this point, concludes that what Locke called primary qualities depend, no less than those he called secondary, upon the perceiving mind. In other words, like George Berkeley, Edwards makes consciousness the only reality, transfers all "being" to the mind, and arrives at the basic principle of the philosophical system known as subjective idealism.

That there should absolutely be nothing at all is utterly impossible, the Mind Can never Let it stretch its Conceptions ever so much bring it self to Concieve of a state of Perfect nothing, it put's the mind into mere Convulsion and Confusion to endeavour to think of such a state, and it Contradicts the very nature of the soul to think that it should be, and it is the Greatest Contradiction and the Aggregate of all Contradictions to say that there should not be, tis true we Cant so Distinctly show the Contradiction by words because we Cannot talk about it without Speaking horrid Nonsense and Contradicting our selve at every word, and because nothing is that whereby we Distinctly show other particular Contradictions, but here we are Run up to Our first principle and have no other to explain the Nothingness or not being of nothing by, indeed we Can mean nothing else by nothing but a state of Absolute Contradiction; and If any man thinks that he Can think well Enough how there should be nothing I'll Engage that what he means by nothing is as much something as any thing that ever He thought of in his Life, and I believe that if he knew what nothing was it would be intuitively Evident to him that it Could not be. So that we see it is necessary some being should Eternally be and tis a more palpable Contradiction still to say that there must be

being somewhere and not otherwhere for the words absolute nothing, and where, Contradict each other; and besides it Gives as great a shock to the mind to thin[k] of pure nothing being in any one place, as it Does to think of it in all and it is self evident that there Can be nothing in one place as well as in another and so if there Can be in one there Can be in all. So that we see this necessary eternall being must be infinite and Omnipresent. This Infinite And omnipresent being Cannot be solid. Let us see how Contradictory it is to say that an infinite being is solid, for Solidity surely is nothing but Resistance to other solidities.

Space is this Necessary eternal infinite and Omnipresent being, we find that we can with ease Concieve how all other beings should not be, we Can remove them out of our Minds and Place some Other in the Room of them, but Space is the very thing that we Can never Remove, and Concieve of its not being, If a man would imagine space any where to be Divided So as there should be Nothing between the Divided parts, there Remains Space between notwithstanding and so the man Contradicts himself, and it is self evident I believe to every man that space is necessary, eternal, infinite, & Omnipresent. but I had as Good speak Plain, I have already said as much as that Space is God, and it is indeed Clear to me, that all the Space there is not proper to body, all the space there is without y[e] Bounds of the Creation, all the space there was before the Creation, is God himself, and no body would in the Least stick at it if it were not because of the Gross Conceptions that we have of space.

A state of Absolute nothing is a state of Absolute Contradiction absolute nothing is the Aggregate of all the Absurd [?] contradictions in the World, a state wherin there is neither body nor spirit, nor space neither empty space nor full space neither little nor Great, narrow nor broad neither infinitely Great space, nor finite space, nor a mathematical point neither Up nor Down neither north nor south (I dont mean as it is with Respect to the body of the earth or some other Great body but no Contrary Point, nor Positions or Directions [)] no such thing as either here Or there this way or that way or only one way; When we Go About to form an idea of Perfect nothing we must shut Out all these things we must shut out of our minds both space that has something in it and space that has nothing in it we must not allow our selves to think of the least part of space never so small, nor must we suffer our thoughts to take sanctuary in a mathematical point, when we Go to Expell body out of Our thoughts we must Cease not to leave empty space in the Room of it and when we Go to Expell emptiness from Our thoughts we must not think to squeese it out by any thing Close hard and solid but we must think of the same that the sleeping Rocks Dream of and not till then shall we Get a Compleat idea of nothing

a state of nothing is a state wherin every Proposition in Euclid is not true, nor any of those self evident maxims by which they are Demonstrated & all other Eternal truths are neither true nor false

when we Go to Enquire whether or no there Can be absolutely nothing we speak nonsense in Enquiring the stating of the Question is Nonsense because we make a disjunction where there is none either being or absolute nothing is no Disjunction no more than whether a t[r]iangle is a tiangle or not a tiangle there is no other way but Only for there to be existence there is no such thing as absolute nothing. There is such a thing as nothing with Respect to this Ink & paper there is such a thing as nothing with Respect to you & me there is such a thing as nothing with Respect to this Globe of Earth & with Respect to this Created universe there is another way besides these things having existence but there is no such thing as nothing with Respect to Entity or being absolutely Considered we don't know what we say if we say we think it Possible in it self that there should not be Entity

and how Doth it Grate upon the mind to thin[k] that something should be from all Eternity, and nothing all the while be Conscious of it let us suppose to illustrate it that the world had a being from all Eternity, and had many Great Changes and Wonderfull Revolutions, and all the while nothing knew, there was no knowledge in the Universe of any such thing, how is it possible to bring the mind to imagine, yea it is Really impossible it should be that Any thing should be and nothing know it then you'll say if it be so it is because nothing has

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Text: follows the transcription of the manuscript by Professor E. C. Smyth, printed in **Proceedings of the American Antiquarian Society,** New Series, X 1895 • 8 **Omnipresent.** Interpolations and marginal notes in the manuscript suggest that Edwards regarded what he had said so far as a preliminary proposition to be demonstrated more fully

Any existence any where else but in Consciousness no certainly no where else but either in Created or uncreated Consciousness Supposing there were Another Universe only of bodies Created at a Great Distance from this Created in excellent Order and harmonious motions, and a beautifull variety, and there was no Created intelligence in it nothing but senseless bodies, nothing but God knew anything of it I Demand in what Respect this world has a being but only in the Divine Consciousness Certainly in no Respect there would be figures and magnitudes, and motions and Proportions but where where Else but in the almightie's knowledge how is it possible there should, then you'll say for the same Reason in a Room Close Shut Up that no body sees nor hears nothing in it there is nothing any otherway than in Gods knowledge I answer Created beings are Conscious of the Effects of what is in the Room, for Perhaps there is not one leaf of a tree nor Spire of Grass but what has effects All over the universe and will have to the End of Eternity but any otherwise there is nothing in a Room shut up but only in Gods Consciousness how Can Any thing be there Any other way this will appear to be truly so to Any one that thinks of it with the whole united strength of his mind. Let us suppose for illustration this impossibility that all the Spirits in the Universe to be for a time to be Deprived of their Consciousness, and Gods Consciousness at the same time to be intermitted. I say the Universe for that time would cease to be of it self and not only as we speak because the almighty Could not attend to Uphold the world but because God knew nothing of it tis our foolish imagination that will not suffer us to see we fancy there may be figures and magnitudes Relations and properties without any ones knowing of it, but it is our imagination hurts us we Dont know what figures and Properties Are.

Our imagination makes us fancy we see Shapes an Colours and magnitudes tho no body is there to behold it but to help our imagination Let us thus State the Case, Let us suppose the world Deprived of Every Ray of light so that there should not be the least Glimering of light in the Universe Now all will own that in such Case the Universe would be immediately Really Deprived of all its Colours, one part of the Universe is no More Red or blue, or Green or Yellow or black or white or light or dark or transparent or opake there would be no visible Distinction between the world and the Rest of the incomprehensible Void yea there would be no Difference in these Respect between the world and the infinite void, that is any Part of that void would really be as light and as Dark, as white and as black as Red and Green as blue and as brown as transparent and as opake as Any Part of the universe, or as there would be in such Case no Difference between the world and nothing in these Respects so there would be no Difference between one part of the world and another all in these Respects is alike confounded with and undistinguishable from infinite emptiness

At the same time also Let us suppose the Universe to be altogether Deprived of motion, and all parts of it to be at perfec Rest (the same supposition is indeed included in this but we Distinguish them for better Clearness) then the Universe would not Differ from the void in this Respect, there will be no more motion in one than the other then also solidity would cease, all that we mean or Can be meant by solidity is Resistance Resistance to touch, the Resistance of some parts of Space, this is all the knowledge we Get of solidity by our senses and I am sure all that we Can Get any other way, but solidity shall be shown to be nothing Else more fully hereafter. but there Can be no Resistance if there is no motion, one body Can [not] Resist another when there is perfect Rest Amongst them, but you'll say tho there is not actuall Resistance yet there is potential existence, that is such and such Parts of space would Resist upon occasion, but this Is all I would have that there is no solidity now not but that God would Cause there to be on occasion and if there is no solidity there is no extension for extension is the extenddness of the solidity, then all figure, and magnitude and proportion immediately Ceases. put both these suppositions together that is Deprive the world of light and motion and the Case would stand thus with the world, there would [be] neither white nor black neither blew nor brown, bright nor shaded pellucid nor opake, no noise or sound neither heat nor Cold, neither fluid nor Wet nor Drie hard nor soft nor solidity nor Extension, nor figure, nor magnitude nor Proportion nor body nor spirit, what then [is] to become of the Universe Certainly it exists no where but in the Divine mind this will be Abundantly Clearer to one after having Read what I have further to say of solidity &c.

So that we see that a world without motion Can Exist no where Else but in the mind either infinite or finite Corollary, it follows from hence that those beings which have knowledge and Consciousness are the Only Proper and Real And substantial beings, inasmuch as the being of other things is Only by these. from hence we may see the Gross mistake of those who think material things the most substantial beings and spirits more like a shadow, whereas spirits Only Are Properly Substance.

1720?-1895

A Divine and Supernatural Light

Immediately Imparted to the Soul by the Spirit of God, Shown to Be Both a Scriptural, and Rational Doctrine; in a Sermon Preached at Northampton

This sermon was preached in August 1733 and published in Boston the following year. In form it follows the well-established "doctrine-reasons-uses" pattern, but it is remarkable for its ease and clarity and for its exposition of what was the central feature of Edwards' thought: the reality of supernatural principles communicated by God to the redeemed soul. The confidence in intuitive knowledge looks forward to that of Emerson and the other Transcendentalists two generations later (see pp. 715-720), and lends weight to the argument that much of the philosophy of the nineteenth century had its roots in Puritanism.

MATTHEW xvi. 17. *And* JESUS *answered and said unto him, blessed art thou Simon Barjona; for Flesh and Blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in Heaven.*

CHRIST says these Words to *Peter,* upon Occasion of his professing his Faith in him as the Son of GOD. Our Lord was enquiring of his Disciples, who Men said he was; not that he needed to be informed, but only to introduce and give Occasion to what follows. They answer, that some said he was *John* the *Baptist,* and some *Elias,* and others *Jeremias* or one of the Prophets. When they had thus given an Account who others said he was, CHRIST asks them, who they said he was. *Simon Peter,* whom we find always zealous and forward, was the first to answer; he readily replied to the Question, *Thou art* CHRIST *the Son of the living* GOD.

UPON this Occasion CHRIST says as he does *to* him and *of* him in the Text: In which we may observe,

1. THAT *Peter* is pronounced blessed on this Account. *Blessed art thou*—"Thou art an happy man, that thou art "not ignorant of this, that I am CHRIST *the son of the* "*living God.* Thou art distinguishingly happy. Others "are blinded, and have dark and deluded Apprehen-"sions, as you have now given an Account, some think-"ing that I am *Elias,* and some that I am *Jeremias,* and "some one thing, and some another; but none of them "thinking right, all of them misled. Happy art thou, "that art so distinguished as to know the Truth in this "Matter.

2. THE Evidence of this his Happiness declared; *viz.* That GOD and he *only* had *revealed it* to him. This is an Evidence of his being *blessed.*

First, As it shows how peculiarly favoured he was of GOD, above others. *q.d.* "How highly favored art thou, "that others that are wise and great Men, the Scribes, "Pharisees, and Rulers, and the Nation in general, are "left in Darkness, to follow their own misguided Appre-"hensions, and that thou should'st be singled out, as it "were by Name, that my heavenly Father should thus "set his Love on *thee Simon Bar-jona.* This argues "thee *blessed,* that thou should'st thus be the Object of "GOD'S distinguishing Love.

Text: the first edition, Boston, 1734 • **6 John the Baptist . . . Elias . . . Jeremias.** Herod had said that Jesus was John the Baptist risen from the dead (Matthew 14:2; Luke 9:7); it was also supposed by some that Elijah or Jeremiah or some other Old Testament prophet was risen (Luke 9:8)

Secondly, IT evidences his Blessedness also, as it intimates that this Knowlege is above any that *Flesh and Blood* can *reveal.* "This is such Knowlege as my *Father* "*which is in heaven* only can give: It is too high and "excellent to be communicated by such Means as other "Knowlege is. Thou art *blessed,* that thou knowest "that which GOD alone can teach thee.

THE Original of this Knowlege is here declared; both negatively and positively. *Positively,* as GOD is here declared the Author of it. *Negatively,* as 'tis declared that *Flesh and Blood* had *not revealed it.* GOD is the Author of all Knowlege and Understanding whatsoever: He is the Author of the Knowlege, that is obtained by human Learning: He is the Author of all moral Prudence, and of the Knowlege and Skill that Men have in their secular Business. Thus it is said of all in *Israel* that were *wise-hearted,* and skill'd in Embroidering, that GOD had *fill'd* them *with the spirit of Wisdom.* Exod. 28. 3.

GOD is the Author of such Knowlege; but yet not so but that *Flesh and Blood reveals it.* Mortal Men are capable of imparting the Knowlege of human Arts and Sciences, and Skill in temporal Affairs. GOD is the Author of such Knowlege by those Means: *Flesh and Blood* is made use of by GOD as the *mediate* or *second* Cause of it; He conveys it by the Power and Influence of natural Means. But this spiritual Knowlege, spoken of in the Text, is what *God* is the Author of, and none else: He *reveals it* and *Flesh and Blood reveals it not.* He imparts this Knowlege immediately, not making use of any intermediate natural Causes, as he does in other Knowlege.

What had passed in the preceding Discourse naturally occasioned CHRIST to observe this; because the Disciples had been telling, how others did not know him, but were generally mistaken about him, and divided and confounded in their Opinions of him; but *Peter* had declared his assured Faith that he was the *Son of GOD.* Now it was natural to observe, how it was not *Flesh and Blood* that had *revealed it to* him, but GOD; for if this knowlege were dependent on natural Causes or Means, how came it to pass that they, a Company of poor Fishermen, illiterate Men, and Persons of low Education, attain'd to the knowlege of the Truth; while the Scribes and Pharisees, Men of vastly higher advantages, and greater knowlege and sagacity in other matters, remain'd in Ignorance? This could be owing only to the gracious distinguishing Influence and Revelation of the SPIRIT of GOD. Hence, what I would make the Subject of my present Discourse from these Words, is this

DOCTRINE, VIZ.

That there is such a thing, as A SPIRITUAL *and* DIVINE LIGHT, *immediately imparted to the Soul by* GOD, *of a different Nature from any that is obtain'd by natural Means.*

IN what I say on this Subject at this Time, I would

I. SHOW what this *divine Light* is.

II. HOW it is given *Immediately by* GOD, and not *obtain'd by natural Means.*

III. SHOW the Truth of the Doctrine.

AND then conclude with a brief Improvement.

I. I would show *what this* spiritual and divine Light *is.* And in order to it would show,

First, IN a few things *what it is not.* And here,

1. THOSE *Convictions that natural Men may have of their Sin and Misery* is not *this* spiritual and divine Light. Men in a natural Condition may have Convictions of the Guilt that lies upon them, and of the anger of GOD, and their Danger of divine Vengeance. Such Convictions are from *Light* or Sensibleness of Truth: That some Sinners have a greater Conviction of their Guilt and Misery than others, is because some have more *Light,* or more of an Apprehension of Truth than others. And this *Light* and Conviction may be from the Spirit of GOD; *the* SPIRIT *convinces* Men *of Sin:* but yet nature is much more concern'd in it than in the Communication of that *spiritual and divine Light* that is spoken of in the *Doctrine;* 'tis from the Spirit of GOD only as assisting *natural Principles,* and not as infusing any new *Principles. Common Grace* differs from *special,* in that it influences only by assisting of *Nature;* and not by imparting *Grace,* or bestowing any thing *above* Nature. The *Light* that is obtain'd, is wholly *natural,* or of no superiour *Kind* to what meer *Nature* attains to; tho' more of *that kind* be obtained, than would be obtained if Men were left wholly to themselves. Or *in other Words, Common Grace* only assists the Faculties of the Soul to do that more fully, which they do by *Nature;* as *natural* Conscience, or Reason, will by meer *Nature* make a Man sensible of Guilt, and will accuse and condemn him when he has done amiss. Conscience is a

Principle natural to Men; and the Work that it doth *naturally,* or of itself, is to give an Apprehension of *right* and *wrong;* and to suggest to the Mind the Relation that there is between right and wrong, and a Retribution. The Spirit of GOD, in those Convictions which unregenerate Men sometimes have, assists Conscience to do this Work in a further Degree, than it would do if they were left to themselves: He helps it against those Things that tend to stupify it, and obstruct its Exercise. But in the *renewing* and *sanctifying* work of the HOLY GHOST, those things are wrought in the Soul that are *above* Nature; and of which there is nothing of the like kind in the Soul *by* Nature; and they are caused to exist in the Soul habitually, & according to such a stated Constitution or Law, that lays such a Foundation for Exercises in a continued Course, as is called a *Principle* of nature. Not only are remaining *Principles* assisted to do their work more freely and fully, but those *Principles* are restored that were utterly destroyed by the Fall; and the mind thence-forward habitually exerts those acts that the Dominion of Sin had made it as wholly destitute of, as a dead Body is of vital Acts.

THE Spirit of GOD acts in a very different manner in the one Case, from what he doth in the other. He may indeed act *upon* the Mind of a natural Man; but he acts *in* the Mind of a Saint as an *indwelling vital Principle.* He acts upon the Mind of an unregenerate Person as an *extrinsick occasional Agent;* for in acting upon them he doth not unite himself to them; for notwithstanding all his Influences that they may be the Subjects of, they are still *sensual having not the Spirit. Jude* 19. But he unites himself with the Mind of a Saint, takes him for his Temple, actuates and influences him as a new, *supernatural Principle* of Life and Action. There is this Difference; that the Spirit of GOD in acting in the Soul of a Godly Man, exerts and communicates himself there in his own proper Nature. Holiness is the proper Nature of the Spirit of GOD. The HOLY SPIRIT operates in the Minds of the Godly, by uniting himself to them, and living in them, and exerting his own Nature in the Exercise of their Faculties. The Spirit of GOD may act upon a Creature, and yet not, in acting communicate himself. The Spirit of GOD may act upon inanimate Creatures; as the *Spirit moved upon the Face of the Waters,* in the Beginning of the Creation: So the Spirit of GOD may act upon the minds of Men, many ways, and communicate himself no more than when he acts upon an inanimate Creature. *For Instance.* He may excite Thoughts in them, may assist their natural Reason and Understanding, or may assist other natural Principles, and this without any Union with the Soul, but may act, as it were, as upon an external Object. But as he acts in his holy Influences, and spiritual Operations, he acts in a way of peculiar Communication of himself; so that the Subject is thence denominated *Spiritual.*

2. THIS spiritual and divine Light *don't consist in any Impression made upon the Imagination.* 'Tis no *Impression* upon the Mind, as tho' one saw any thing with the bodily Eyes: 'Tis no *Imagination* or *Idea* of an outward *Light* or Glory, or any Beauty of Form or Countenance, or a visible Lustre or Brightness of any Object. The *Imagination* may be strongly impress'd with such things; but this is not *spiritual Light.* Indeed when the Mind has a lively Discovery of spiritual things, and is greatly affected by the Power of divine Light, it may, and probably very commonly doth, much affect the *Imagination:* So that *Impressions* of an outward Beauty or Brightness, may accompany those spiritual Discoveries. But *spiritual Light* is not that *Impression upon the Imagination,* but an exceeding different thing from it. Natural Men may have lively *Impressions* on their *Imaginations;* and we cant determine but that the Devil, *who transforms himself into an Angel of Light,* may cause *Imaginations* of an outward Beauty, or visible Glory, and of Sounds and Speeches, and other such Things; but these are Things of a vastly inferiour Nature to *Spiritual Light.*

3. THIS spiritual Light *is not the suggesting of any new Truths, or Propositions not contain'd in the Word of* GOD. This suggesting of new Truths or Doctrines to the Mind, independent of any antecedent Revelation of those Propositions, either in Word or Writing, is Inspiration; such as the Prophets and Apostles had, and such as some Enthusiasts pretend to. But this *spiritual Light* that I am speaking of, is quite a different thing from Inspiration: It reveals no new Doctrine, it suggests no new Proposition to the Mind, it teaches no new thing of GOD, or CHRIST, or another World, not taught in the Bible; but only gives a due Apprehension of those things that are taught in the word of GOD.

4. *'Tis not every affecting View that Men have of the Things of Religion, that is this* spiritual and divine

Light. Men by meer Principles of Nature are capable of being *affected* with Things that have a special Relation to Religion, as well as other Things. A Person by meer Nature, for Instance, may be liable to be *affected* with the Story of JESUS CHRIST, and the sufferings he underwent, as well as by any other tragical Story: He may be the more *affected* with it from the Interest he conceives Mankind to have in it: Yea he may be *affected* with it without believing it; as well as a Man may be *affected* with what he reads in a Romance, or see's acted in a Stage Play. He may be *affected* with a lively and eloquent description of many pleasant things that attend the state of the Blessed in Heaven; as well as his Imagination be entertain'd by a romantick description of the pleasantness of Fairy Land, or the like. And that common belief of the truth of *the things of Religion,* that Persons may have from Education, or otherwise, may help forward their *affection.* We read in Scripture of many that were greatly *affected* with things of a religious nature, who yet are there represented as wholly graceless, and many of them very ill Men. A Person therefore may have *affecting views of the things of Religion,* and yet be very destitute of *spiritual Light. Flesh* and *Blood* may be the Author of this: One Man may give another an *affecting view* of divine things with but common assistance; but GOD alone can give a *spiritual* Discovery of them.

BUT I proceed to show,

Secondly, Positively, WHAT *this* spiritual and divine Light *is.*

AND it may be thus described, *A true sense of the divine Excellency of the things revealed in the Word of* GOD, *and a conviction of the truth and reality of them, thence arising.*

THIS *spiritual Light* primarily consists in the former of these, *viz.* a real sense and apprehension of the divine Excellency of things revealed in the Word of GOD. A spiritual and saving Conviction of the truth and reality of these things, arises from such a sight of their divine Excellency and Glory; so that this Conviction of their truth is an effect and natural consequence of this sight of their divine Glory. There is therefore in this *spiritual Light,*

1. *A true sense of the divine and superlative excellency of the things of Religion;* a real sense of the excellency of GOD and JESUS CHRIST, and of the work of Redemption, and the ways and works of GOD revealed in the Gospel. There is a *divine* and *superlative* Glory in these things; an Excellency that is of a vastly higher Kind, and more sublime Nature, than in other things; a Glory greatly distinguishing them from all that is earthly and temporal. He that is spiritually *enlightened* truly apprehends and sees it, or has a sense of it. He don't meerly rationally believe that GOD is Glorious, but he has a sense of the Gloriousness of GOD in his Heart. There is not only a rational belief that GOD is holy, and that Holiness is a good thing; but there is a sense of the Loveliness of GOD'S Holiness. There is not only a speculatively judging that GOD is gracious, but a sense how amiable GOD is upon that Account; or a sense of the Beauty of this divine Attribute.

THERE is a twofold Understanding or Knowledge of Good that GOD has made the Mind of Man capable of. The *First,* that which is meerly *speculative* and *notional:* As when a Person only speculatively judges, that any thing is, which by the Agreement of Mankind, is called Good or Excellent, *viz.* that which is most to general Advantage, and between which and a Reward there is a suitableness; and the like. And the *other* is that which consists in the sense of the Heart: As when there is a sense of the Beauty, Amiableness, or Sweetness of a thing; so that the Heart is sensible of Pleasure and Delight in the presence of the *Idea* of it. In the *former* is exercised meerly the speculative Faculty, or the Understanding strictly so called, or as spoken of in Distinction from the Will or Disposition of the Soul. In the *latter* the Will, or Inclination, or Heart, are mainly concern'd.

THUS there is a Difference between *having an Opinion* that GOD is holy and gracious, and *having a sense* of the Loveliness and Beauty of that Holiness and Grace. There is a Difference between *having a rational Judgment* that Honey is sweet, and *having a sense* of its sweetness. A Man may have the *Former,* that knows not how honey tasts; but a Man can't have the Latter unless he has an *Idea* of the tast of Honey in his Mind. So there is a difference between *believing* that a Person is Beautiful, and *having a* sense of his Beauty. The *Former* may be obtain'd by hear-say, but the *Latter* only by seeing the Countenance. There is a wide difference between meer *speculative, rational Judging* any thing to be excellent, and *having* a sense of its Sweetness, and Beauty. The *Former* rests only in the Head, Speculation only is concern'd in it; but the Heart is concern'd in

the *Latter.* When the Heart is sensible of the Beauty and Amiableness of a Thing, it necessarily feels Pleasure in the Apprehension. It is implied in a Persons being heartily sensible of the Loveliness of a thing, that the *Idea* of it is sweet and pleasant to his Soul; which is a far different thing from having a rational Opinion that it is excellent.

2. THERE *arises from this* sense of divine Excellency of Things contain'd in the Word of GOD, *a Conviction of the Truth and Reality of them: and that either* directly, *or* indirectly.

First, *Indirectly,* and that two ways.

1. AS *the Prejudices that are in the Heart, against* the truth of divine things, *are hereby removed; so that the Mind becomes susceptive of the due Force of rational Arguments for their Truth.* The Mind of Man is naturally full of *Prejudices against the Truth of divine Things:* It is full of Enmity against the Doctrines of the Gospel; which is a disadvantage to those *Arguments* that prove their *Truth,* and causes them to lose their Force upon the Mind. But when a Person has discovered to him the divine excellency of Christian Doctrines, this destroys the Enmity, removes those *Prejudices,* and sanctifys the Reason, and causes it to lie open to the *Force of Arguments for their Truth.*

HENCE was the different Effect that CHRIST'S Miracles had to convince the Disciples, from what they had to convince the Scribes and Pharisees. Not that they had a stronger Reason, or had their Reason more improved; but their Reason was sanctified, and those blinding *Prejudices,* that the Scribes and Pharisees were under, were removed by the sense they had of the Excellency of CHRIST, and his Doctrine.

2. IT *not only removes the Hinderances of Reason, but positively helps Reason.* It makes even the speculative Notions the more lively. It engages the attention of the Mind, with the more Fixedness and Intenseness to that Kind of Objects; which causes it to have a clearer View of them, and enables it more clearly to see their mutual Relations, and occasions it to take more Notice of them. The *Ideas* themselves that otherwise are dim, and obscure, are by this Means impress'd with the greater Strength, and have a Light cast upon them; so that the Mind can better judge of them. As he that beholds the Objects on the Face of the Earth, when the Light of the Sun is cast upon them, is under greater Advantage to discern them in their true Forms, and mutual Relations, than he that sees them in a dim Star-light or Twilight.

The Mind having a sensibleness of the Excellency of divine Objects, dwells upon them with Delight; and the Powers of the Soul are more awaken'd and enliven'd to employ themselves in the Contemplation of them, and exert themselves more fully and much more to the Purpose. The Beauty and Sweetness of the Objects draws on the Faculties, and draws forth their Exercises: So that Reason it self is under far greater Advantages for its proper and free Exercises, and to attain its proper End, free of Darkness and Delusion. But,

SECONDLY, A true sense of the divine Excellency of the Things of GOD'S Word doth more *directly* and *immediately* convince of the Truth of them; And that because the Excellency of these things is so superlative. There is a Beauty in them that is so divine and Godlike, that is greatly and evidently distinguishing of them from things meerly human, or that Men are the Inventors and Authors of; a Glory that is so high and great, that when clearly seen, commands Assent to their Divinity and Reality. When there is an actual and lively Discovery of this Beauty and Excellency, it won't allow of any such Thought as that it is an Human work, or the Fruit of Mens Invention. This Evidence that they, that are spiritually *enlightned,* have of the Truth of the things of Religion, is a Kind of *intuitive* and *immediate* Evidence. They believe the Doctrines of GOD'S Word to be divine, because they see Divinity in them, i.e. They see a divine, and transcendent, and most evidently distinguishing Glory in them; such a Glory as, if clearly seen, don't leave Room to doubt of their being of GOD, and not of Men.

SUCH a Conviction of the Truth of Religion as this, arising, these Ways, from a sense of the divine Excellency of them, is that true spiritual Conviction, that there is in saving Faith. And this Original of it, is that by which it is most essentially distinguished from that common assent, which unregenerate Men are capable of.

II. I Proceed now to the second Thing proposed, *viz.* To show *how this Light is Immediately given by* GOD, *and not obtain'd by natural Means.* And here,

1. *'Tis not intended that the natural Faculties are not made Use of in it.* The *natural Faculties* are the Subject of this Light: And they are the Subject in such a Manner, that they are not meerly pasive, but active in it; the Acts and Exercises of Man's Understanding are con-

cern'd and made use of in it. GOD in letting in this *Light* into the Soul, deals with Man according to his Nature, or as a rational Creature; and makes Use of his human *Faculties.* But yet this *Light* is not the less *immediately* from GOD for that; tho' the *Faculties are made Use of,* 'tis as the Subject and not as the Cause; and that acting of the *Faculties* in it, is not the Cause, but is either implied in the Thing it self, (in the *Light* that is imparted) or is the Consequence of it. As the Use that we make of our Eyes in beholding various Objects, when the Sun arises, is not the Cause of the Light that discovers those Objects to us.

2. *'Tis not intended that outward Means have no Concern in this Affair.* As I have observed already, 'tis not in this Affair, as it is in Inspiration, where new Truths are suggested: for here is by this *Light* only given a due Apprehension of the same Truths that are revealed in the Word of GOD; and therefore it is not given without the Word. The Gospel is made Use of in this Affair: This *Light* is the *Light of the Glorious Gospel of* CHRIST 2. *Cor.* iv. 4. The Gospel is as a Glass, by which this *Light* is conveyed to us. 1 *Cor.* xiii. 12. *Now we see through a Glass*—But,

3. WHEN it is said that this *Light* is given immediately by GOD, and not obtained by natural Means, *hereby is intended, that 'tis given by* GOD *without making Use of any Means that operate by their own Power, or a natural Force.* GOD makes Use of Means; but 'tis not as mediate Causes to produce this Effect. There are not truly any second Causes of it; but it is produced by GOD *immediately*. The Word of GOD is no proper Cause of this Effect: It don't operate by any *natural Force* in it. The Word of GOD is only made Use of to convey to the Mind the Subject matter of this saving Instruction: And this indeed it doth convey to us by *natural Force* or Influence. It conveys to our Minds these and those Doctrines; it is the Cause of the Notion of them in our Heads, but not of the sense of the divine Excellency of them in our Hearts. Indeed a Person can't have *spiritual Light* without the Word. But that don't argue, that the Word properly causes that *Light.* The Mind can't see the Excellency of any Doctrine, unless that Doctrine be first in the Mind; but the seeing the Excellency of the Doctrine may be immediately from the Spirit of GOD; tho' the conveying of the Doctrine or Proposition it self may be by the Word. So that the Notions that are the Subject matter of this *Light,* are conveyed to the Mind by the Word of GOD; but that due sense of the Heart, wherein this *Light* formally consists, is immediately by the Spirit of GOD. *As for Instance,* that Notion that there is a CHRIST and that CHRIST is holy and gracious, is conveyed to the Mind by the Word of GOD: But the sense of the Excellency of CHRIST by reason of that Holiness and Grace, is nevertheless immediately the Work of the HOLY SPIRIT. I come now,

III. To show *the Truth of the Doctrine;* that is to show *that there is such a Thing as that spiritual Light that has been described, thus immediately let into the Mind by* GOD. And here I would shew briefly, that this Doctrine is both *scriptural,* and *rational.*

First, 'TIS SCRIPTURAL. My Text is not only full to the Purpose, but 'tis a Doctrine that the Scripture abounds in. We are there abundantly taught, that the Saints differ from the Ungodly in this, that they have the Knowlege of GOD, and a sight of GOD, and of JESUS CHRIST. I shall mention but few Texts of many; 1 John 3. 6. *Whosoever sinneth hath not seen him, nor known him.* 3 John 11. *He that doth Good,* is of God; *but he that doth Evil, hath not seen* GOD. John 14. 19. *The world seeth me no more; but ye see me.* John 17. 3. *And this is Eternal Life, that they might know thee, the only true* GOD, *and* JESUS CHRIST *whom thou hast sent.* This Knowlege, or sight of GOD and CHRIST, can't be a meer speculative Knowlege; because it is spoken of as a seeing and knowing, wherein they differ from the Ungodly. And by these Scriptures it must not only be a different Knowlege in Degree and Circumstances, and different in its Effects; but it must be entirely different in Nature and Kind.

AND this Light and Knowlege is always spoken of as immediately given of GOD Mat. 11. 25, 26, 27. *At that time* JESUS *answered and said, I thank thee O Father Lord of Heaven and Earth, because thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto Babes; even so Father, for so it seemed good in thy sight. All things are delivered unto me of my Father; and no Man knoweth the Son but the Father; neither knoweth any Man the Father, save the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son will reveal him.* Here this Effect is ascribed alone to the arbitrary Operation, and Gift of GOD, bestowing this Knowlege on whom he will, and distinguishing those with it, that have the least natural Advantage or Means for Knowlege, even

Babes, when it is denied to the *Wise* and *Prudent.* And the imparting of the Knowlege of GOD is here appropriated to the Son of GOD, as his sole Prerogative. And again, 2 Cor. 4. 6. *For* GOD *who commanded the Light to shine out of Darkness, hath shined in our Hearts, to give the Light of the Knowlege of the Glory of* GOD *in the Face of* JESUS CHRIST. This plainly shows, that there is such a thing as a discovery of the divine superlative Glory and Excellency of GOD and CHRIST; and that peculiar to the Saints: and also that 'tis as immediately from GOD, as Light from the Sun: and that 'tis the immediate Effect of his Power and Will; for 'tis compared to GOD'S creating the Light by his powerful Word in the beginning of the Creation; and is said to be by the Spirit of the LORD, in the 18th verse of the preceding Chapter. GOD is spoken of as giving the Knowlege of CHRIST in Conversion, as of what before was hidden and unseen in that Gal. 1. 15, 16. *But when it pleased* GOD, *who separated me from my Mothers Womb, and called me by his Grace, to reveal his Son in me*—. This Scripture also speaks plainly of such a Knowlege of the Word of GOD, as has been described, as the immediate gift of GOD. Psal. 119. 18. *Open thou mine Eyes, that I may behold wondrous things out of thy Law.* What could the Psalmist mean, when he begged of GOD to *open* his *Eyes?* Was he ever blind? Might he not have Resort to the Law and see every Word and Sentence in it when he pleased? And what could he mean by those *wondrous Things?* Was it the wonderful Stories of the Creation, and Deluge, and Israel's passing thro' the red Sea, and the like? were not his Eyes open to read these strange things when he would? Doubtless by *wondrous Things in* GOD'S *Law,* he had Respect to those distinguishing and wonderful Excellencies, and marvellous Manifestations of the divine Perfections, and Glory, that there was in the Commands and Doctrines of the Word, and those Works and Counsels of GOD that were there revealed. So the Scripture speaks of a Knowlege of GOD'S Dispensation, and Covenant of Mercy, and Way of Grace towards his People, as peculiar to the Saints, and given only by GOD, Psal. 25. 14. *The Secret of the* LORD *is with them that fear him; and he will shew them his Covenant.*

AND that a true and saving Belief of the Truth of Religion is that which arises from such a Discovery, is also what the Scripture teaches. As John 6, 40. *And this is the will of him that sent me, that every one which* SEETH *the Son, and* BELIEVETH *on him, may have everlasting Life.* Where it is plain that a true Faith is what arises from a spiritual sight of CHRIST. And John 17. 6, 7, 8. *I have manifested thy Name unto the Men which thou gavest me out of the World*——. *Now they have known that all things whatsoever thou hast given me, are of thee; for I have given unto them the words which thou gavest me, and they have received them, and have known surely that I came out from thee, and they have believed that thou didst send me.* Where CHRIST'S *manifesting* GOD'S *Name* to the Disciples, or giving them the Knowlege of God, was that whereby they knew that CHRIST'S Doctrine was *of* GOD, and that CHRIST himself was *of* him, proceeded *from* him, and was *sent* by him. Again John 12. 44, 45, 46. JESUS *cried and said, He that* believeth *on me,* believeth *not on me, but on him that sent me; And he that* seeth *me* seeth *him that sent me. I am come a* Light *into the World, that whosoever* Believeth *on me should not abide in* Darkness. Their Believing in CHRIST, and spiritually Seeing him, are spoken of as running parallel.

CHRIST condemns the Jews, that they did not know that he was the MESSIAH, and that his Doctrine was true, from an inward distinguishing Tast and Relish of what was divine, in *Luke* 12. 56, 57. He having there blamed the Jews, that though they could *discern the Face of the Sky and of the Earth,* and Signs of the Weather, that yet they could not *discern* those *Times;* or as tis expressed in *Matthew, the Signs of* those *Times;* He adds, *yea and why even of your own selves, judge ye not what is right?* i. e. without extrinsick *Signs.* "Why have ye not that sense of true Excellency, "whereby ye may distinguish that which is holy and "divine? Why have ye not that savour of the things of "GOD, by which you may see the distinguishing Glory, "and evident Divinity of me and my Doctrine?

THE Apostle *Peter* mentions it as what gave them (the Apostles) good and well grounded Assurance of the Truth of the Gospel, that they had seen the divine Glory of CHRIST. 2. *Pet.* 1. 16. *For we have not followed cunningly devised Fables, when we made known unto you, the Power and Coming of our Lord* JESUS CHRIST, *but were Eye-witnesses of his Majesty.* The Apostle has Respect to that visible Glory of CHRIST which they saw in his Transfiguration: That Glory was

so divine having such an ineffable Appearance and semblance of divine Holiness, Majesty, and Grace, that it evidently denoted him to be a divine Person. But if a sight of CHRIST'S outward Glory might give a rational Assurance of his Divinity, why may not an Apprehension of his spiritual Glory do so too. Doubtless CHRIST'S spiritual Glory is in itself as distinguishing, and as plainly shewing his Divinity, as his outward Glory; and a great deal more: for his spiritual Glory is that wherein his Divinity consists; and the outward Glory of his Transfiguration shew'd him to be divine, only as it was a Remarkable Image or Representation of that spiritual Glory. Doubtless therefore he that has had a clear sight of the spiritual Glory of CHRIST, may say, *I have not followed cunningly devised Fables, but* have been an *Eye-witness of his Majesty,* upon as good Grounds as the Apostle, when he had Respect to the outward Glory of Christ, that he had seen.

But this brings me to what was proposed next *viz.* to show that,

Secondly, THIS Doctrine is RATIONAL.

1. 'TIS rational *to suppose that there is really such an Excellency in divine things, that is so transcendent and exceedingly different from what is in other things, that if it were seen would most evidently distinguish them.* We can't *rationally* doubt but that Things that are *divine,* that appertain to the supreme Being, are vastly different from Things that are *human;* that there is that God-like, high, and glorious Excellency in them, that does most remarkably difference them from the things that are of Men; insomuch that if the difference were but seen, it would have a convincing, satisfying influence upon any one, that they are what they are, viz. *divine.* What Reason can be offered against it? Unless we would argue that GOD is not remarkably distinguished in Glory from Men.

IF CHRIST should now appear to any One as he did on the Mount at his Transfiguration; or if he should appear to the World in the Glory that he now appears in Heaven, as he will do at the Day of Judgment; without doubt, the Glory and Majesty that he would appear in, would be such as would satisfy every One, that he was a divine Person, and that Religion was true: And it would be a most reasonable, and well grounded Conviction too. And why may there not be that Stamp of Divinity, or divine Glory on the word of GOD, on the Scheme and Doctrine of the Gospel, that may be in like manner distinguishing and as *rationally* convincing, provided it be but seen? 'Tis rational to suppose, that when GOD speaks to the World, there should be something in his Word or Speech vastly different from MEN'S Word. Supposing that GOD never had spoken to the World, but we had Noticed that He was about to do it; that he was about to Reveal himself from Heaven, and speak to us immediately himself, in divine Speeches or Discourses, as it were from his own Mouth; or that he should give us a Book of his own inditing; after what manner should we expect that he would speak? Would it not be *rational* to suppose, that his Speech would be exceeding different from Men's Speech, that he should speak like a GOD; that is, that there should be such an Excellency and sublimity in his Speech or Word, such a Stamp of Wisdom, Holiness, Majesty, and other divine Perfections, that the word of Men, yea of the wisest of Men, should appear mean and base in Comparison of it? Doubtless it would be thought *rational* to expect this, and *unreasonable* to think otherwise. When a wise Man speaks in the Exercise of his Wisdom, there is something in every thing he says, that is very distinguishable from the Talk of a little Child. So, without doubt, and much more, is the Speech of GOD, (if there be any such Thing as the Speech of GOD,) to be distinguished from that of the wisest of Men; agreably to *Jer.* 23. 28, 29. GOD having there been reproving the false Prophets that prophesied in his Name, and pretended that what they spake was his Word, when indeed it was their own Word, says, *The Prophet that hath a Dream, let him tell a Dream; and he that hath my Word, let him speak my Word faithfully:* WHAT IS THE CHAFF TO THE WHEAT? *Saith the* LORD. *Is not my Word like as a Fire, saith the* LORD, *and like a Hammer that breaketh the Rock in Pieces?*

2. *IF there be such a distinguishing Excellency in divine things;* '*tis* rational *to suppose that there may be such a thing as seeing it.* What should hinder but that it may be seen? 'Tis no Argument that there is no such Thing as such a distinguishing Excellency, or that, if there be, that it can't be seen, that some don't see it, tho' they may be discerning Men in temporal Matters. It is not *rational* to suppose, if there be any such Excellency in divine Things, that wicked Men should see it. 'Tis not *rational* to suppose, that those whose Minds are full of spiritual Pollution, and under the Power of filthy Lusts, should have any Relish or Sense of divine Beauty,

or Excellency; or that their Minds should be susceptive of that *Light* that is in its own Nature so pure and heavenly. It need not seem at all strange, that Sin should so blind the Mind, seeing that Mens particular natural Tempers and Dispositions will so much blind them in secular Matters; as when Mens natural Temper is melancholly, jealous, fearful, proud, or the like.

3. 'TIS rational *to suppose that this Knowlege should be given immediately by* GOD, *and not be obtain'd by natural means.* Upon what account should it seem *unreasonable,* that there should be any *immediate* Communication between GOD and the Creature? 'Tis strange that Men should make any matter of difficulty of it. Why should not He that made all things, still have something *immediately* to do with the Things that he has made? Where lies the great difficulty, if we own the Being of a GOD, and that he created all things out of Nothing, of allowing some immediate Influence of GOD on the Creation still. And if it be *reasonable* to suppose it with Respect to any Part of the Creation, 'tis Especially so with Respect to reasonable intelligent Creatures; who are next to GOD in the Gradation of the different Orders of Beings, and whose Business is most *immediately* with GOD; who were made on Purpose for those Exercises that do respect God, and wherein they have *nextly* to do with God: for *Reason* teaches that Man was made to serve and glorify his Creator. And if it be *rational* to suppose that GOD immediately communicates himself to Man in any Affair, it is in this. 'Tis *rational* to suppose that GOD would reserve that Knowlege and Wisdom, that is of such a divine and excellent Nature, to be bestowed *immediately* by himself, and that it should not be left in the Power of second Causes. Spiritual Wisdom and Grace is the highest and most *excellent* Gift that ever GOD bestows on any Creature: In this the highest Excellency and Perfection of a rational Creature consists. 'Tis also immensely the most *important* of all divine Gifts: 'Tis that wherein Mans Happiness consists, and on which his everlasting Welfare depends. How *rational* is it to suppose that GOD, however he has left meaner Goods and lower Gifts to second Causes, and in some sort in their Power, yet should reserve this most excellent, divine, and important of all divine Communications, in his own Hands, to be bestowed *immediately* by himself, as a thing too great for second Causes to be concern'd in? 'Tis *rational* to suppose that this Blessing should be *immediately* from GOD; for there is no Gift or Benefit that is in it self so nearly related to the divine Nature, there is nothing the Creature receives that is so much *of* GOD, *of* his Nature, so much a Participation of the Deity: 'Tis a Kind of Emanation of GOD's Beauty, and is related to GOD as the Light is to the Sun. 'Tis therefore congruous and fit, that when it is given of GOD, it should be nextly from himself, and by himself, according to his own Sovereign Will.

'TIS *rational* to suppose, that it should be beyond a Man's Power to obtain this Knowlege, and *Light,* by the meer Strength of natural Reason; for 'tis not a Thing that belongs to Reason, to see the Beauty and Loveliness of spiritual things; it is not a speculative thing, but depends on the Sense of the Heart. Reason indeed is necessary in order to it, as 'tis by Reason only that we are become the Subjects of the means of it; which means I have already shown to be necessary in order to it, though they have no proper causal Influence in the Affair. 'Tis by Reason that we become possessed of a notion of those Doctrines that are the Subject Matter of this *divine Light;* and Reason may many ways be indirectly, and remotely an Advantage to it. And Reason has also to do in the Acts that are immediately consequent on this Discovery: A seeing the Truth of Religion from hence, is by Reason; though it be but by one step, and the Inference be immediate. So Reason has to do in that accepting of, and trusting in CHRIST, that is consequent on it. But if we take Reason strictly, not for the Faculty of mental Perception in general, but for Ratiocination, or a Power of Inferring by Arguments; I say if we take Reason thus, the perceiving of spiritual Beauty and Excellency no more belongs to Reason, than it belongs to the Sense of feeling to perceive Colors, or to the Power of seeing to perceive the Sweetness of Food. It is out of Reason's province to perceive the Beauty or Loveliness of any thing: Such a Perception don't belong to that Faculty. Reason's Work is to perceive Truth and not Excellency. 'Tis not Ratiocination that gives Men the Perception of the Beauty and Amiableness of a Countenance; tho' it may be many ways indirectly an advantage to it; yet 'tis no more Reason that immediately perceives it, than it is Reason that perceives the Sweetness of Honey: It depends on the Sense of the Heart. Reason may determine that a

Countenance is Beautiful to others, it may determine that Honey is sweet to others; but it will never give me a Perception of its Sweetness.

I will conclude with a very brief *Improvement* of what has been said.

FIRST. THIS Doctrine may lead us *to reflect* on the Goodness of GOD, that has so ordered it, that a saving Evidence of the Truth of the Gospel is such, as is attainable by Persons of mean Capacities, and Advantages, as well as those that are of the greatest Parts and Learning. If the Evidence of the Gospel depended only on History, and such Reasonings as learned Men only are capable of, it would be above the Reach of far the greatest part of Mankind. But Persons, with but an ordinary Degree of Knowlege, are capable without a long and subtil Train of Reasoning, to see the divine Excellency of the things of Religion: They are capable of being taught by the Spirit of GOD, as well as learned Men. The Evidence that is this Way obtained, is vastly better and more satisfying, than all that can be obtain'd by the Arguings of those that are most Learned, and greatest Masters of Reason. And Babes are as capable of knowing these things, as [are] the wise and prudent; and they are often hid from these, when they are revealed to those. 1 Cor. 1. 26, 27. *For ye see your Calling Brethren, how that not many wise Men, after the Flesh, not many mighty, not many noble are called. But* GOD *hath chosen the foolish things of the World—.*

Secondly. THIS Doctrine may well put us upon *examining* ourselves, whether we have ever had his *divine Light,* that has been described, let into our Souls. If there be such a thing indeed, and it ben't only a Notion or Whimsy of Persons of weak and distempered Brains, then doubtless 'tis a thing of great Importance, whether we have thus been taught by the Spirit of GOD; whether *the Light of the Glorious Gospel of* CHRIST, *who is the Image of* GOD *hath shined into us, giving us the Light of the Knowlege of the Glory of* GOD *in the Face of* JESUS CHRIST, whether we have *seen the Son, and believed on him,* or have that Faith of Gospel Doctrines that arises from a spiritual Sight of CHRIST.

Thirdly. ALL may hence be *exhorted,* earnestly *to seek* this *spiritual Light.* To influence and move to it, the following things may be consider'd.

1. THIS is the most *excellent and divine* Wisdom, that any Creature is capable of. 'Tis more excellent than any human Learning; 'Tis far more excellent than all the Knowlege of the greatest Philosophers or Statesmen. Yea the least Glimpse of *the Glory of* GOD *in the Face of* CHRIST doth more exalt and enoble the Soul, than all the Knowlege of those that have the greatest speculative Understanding in Divinity, without grace. This Knowlege has the most noble Object that is, or can be, *viz.* the divine Glory and Excellency of GOD, and CHRIST. The Knowlege of these Objects is that wherein consists the most excellent Knowlege of the Angels, yea, of GOD himself,

2. THIS Knowlege is that which is above all others *Sweet and Joyful.* Men have a great deal of Pleasure in human Knowlege, in Studies of natural things; but this is nothing to that Joy which arises from this *divine Light* shining into the Soul. This *Light* gives a View of those things that are immensely the most exquisitely Beautiful, and capable of delighting the Eye of the Understanding. This *spiritual Light* is the dawning of the Light of Glory in the Heart. There is nothing so powerful as this to support Persons in Affliction, and to give the Mind Peace and Brightness, in this stormy and dark World.

3. THIS Light is such as *effectually influences the Inclination, and Changes the Nature of the Soul.* It assimilates the Nature to the divine Nature, and changes the Soul into an Image of the same Glory that is beheld. 2 Cor. 3. 18. *But we all with open Face beholding as in a Glass the Glory of the Lord, are changed into the same Image, from Glory to Glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord.* This Knowlege will wean from the World, and raise the Inclination to heavenly things. It will turn the Heart to GOD as the Fountain of Good, and to choose him for the only Portion. This *Light,* and this only, will bring the Soul to a saving Close with CHRIST. It conforms the Heart to the Gospel, mortifies its Enmity and Opposition against the Scheme of Salvation therein revealed: It causes the Heart to embrace the joyful Tidings, and entirely to adhere to, and acquiesce in the Revelation of CHRIST as our Saviour: It causes the whole Soul to accord and Symphonize with it, admitting it with entire Credit and Respect, cleaving to it with full Inclination and Affection. And it effectually disposes the Soul to give up it self entirely to CHRIST.

4. THIS Light and this only *has its Fruit in a uni-*

versal Holiness of Life. No meerly notional or speculative Understanding of the Doctrines of Religion, will ever bring to this. But this *Light* as it reaches the bottom of the Heart, and changes the Nature, so it will effectually dispose to an universal Obedience. It shews GOD'S worthiness to be obeyed and served. It draws forth the Heart in a sincere Love to GOD, which is the only Principle of a true, gracious and universal Obedience. And it convinces of the Reality of those glorious Rewards that GOD has promised to them that obey him.

1733·1734

From

Freedom of the Will

The following selection (Part I, Section 5) from the **Freedom of the Will** displays Edwards' skill in definition and logical distinctions. For his general position, see page 161.

CONCERNING THE NOTION OF LIBERTY, AND OF MORAL AGENCY

The plain and obvious Meaning of the Words *Freedom* and *Liberty,* in common Speech, is *Power, Opportunity or Advantage, that any one has, to do as he pleases.* Or in other Words, his being free from Hindrance or Impediment in the Way of doing, or conducting in any Respect, as he wills. And the contrary to Liberty, whatever Name we call that by, is a Person's being hinder'd or unable to conduct as he will, or being necessitated to do otherwise.

If this which I have mentioned be the Meaning of the Word Liberty, in the ordinary Use of language; as I trust that none that has ever learn'd to talk, and is unprejudiced, will deny; then it will follow, that in Propriety of Speech, neither Liberty, nor it's contrary, can properly be ascribed to any Being or Thing, but that which has such a Faculty, Power or Property, as is called will. For that which is possessed of no such Thing as *Will,* can't have any *Power* or *Opportunity* of doing *according to it's Will,* nor be necessitated to act *contrary to its Will,* nor be restrained from acting agreeably to it. And therefore to talk of Liberty, or the contrary, as belonging to the *very Will it self,* is not to speak good Sense; if we judge of Sense, and Nonsense, by the original & proper Signification of Words. For the *Will it self* is not an Agent that *has a Will:* The Power of choosing, it self, has not a Power of chusing. That which has the Power of Volition or Choice is the Man or the Soul, and not the Power of Volition it self. And he that has the Liberty of doing according to his Will, is the Agent or Doer who is possessed of the Will; and not the Will which he is possessed of. We say with Propriety, that a Bird let loose has Power & Liberty to fly; but not that the Bird's Power of flying has a Power & Liberty of flying. To be free is the Property of an Agent, who is possessed of Powers & Faculties, as much as to be cunning, valiant, bountiful, or zealous. But these Qualities are the Properties of Men or Persons; and not the Properties of Properties.

There are two Things that are contrary to this which is called Liberty in common Speech. One is *Constraint;* the same is otherwise called *Force, Compulsion, & Coaction;* which is a Person's being necessitated to do a Thing *contrary* to his Will. The other is *Restraint;* which is his being hindred, and not having Power to do *according* to his Will. But that which has no Will, can't be the Subject of these Things.—I need say the less on this Head, Mr. *Locke* having set the same Thing forth, with so great clearness, in his *Essay on the human Understanding.*

But one Thing more I would observe concerning what is vulgarly called *Liberty;* namely, that Power &

Text: the first edition, Boston, 1754 • 6 **wills.** "I say not only **doing,** but **conducting;** because a voluntary forbearing to do, sitting still, keeping Silence, &c. are Instances of Persons' Conduct, about which Liberty is exercised; tho' they are not so properly called **doing.**"—Edwards • 48 **Mr. Locke,** in Bk. II, Chap. 21

Opportunity for one to do and conduct as he will, or according to his Choice, is all that is meant by it; without taking into the Meaning of the Word, any Thing of the Cause or Original of that Choice; or at all considering how the Person came to have such a Volition; whether it was caused by some external Motive or internal habitual Bias; whether it was determin'd by some internal antecedent Volition, or whether it happen'd without a Cause; whether it was necessarily connected with something foregoing, or not connected. Let the Person come by his Volition or Choice how he will, yet, if he is able, and there is Nothing in the Way to hinder his pursuing and executing his Will, the man is fully & perfectly free, according to the primary and common Notion of Freedom.

What has been said may be sufficient to show what is meant by *Liberty,* according to the common Notions of Mankind, and in the usual & primary Acceptation of the Word: but the Word, as used by *Arminians, Pelagians* & others, who oppose the *Calvinists,* has an entirely different Signification. These several Things belong to their Notion of Liberty. 1. That it consists in a *Self-determining Power* in the Will, or a certain Sovereignty the Will has over it self, and it's own Acts, whereby it determines it's own Volitions; so as not to be dependent in it's Determinations, on any Cause without it self, nor determined by any Thing prior to it's own Acts. 2. *Indifference* belongs to Liberty in their Notion of it, or that the Mind, previous to the Act of Volition be, *in iquilibrio.* 3. *Contingence* is another Thing that belongs and is essential to it; not in the common Acceptation of the Word, as that has been already explain'd, but as opposed to all *Necessity,* or any fixed & certain Connection with some previous Ground or Reason of it's existence. They suppose the Essence of Liberty so much to consist in these Things, that unless the Will of Man be free in this Sense, he has no real Freedom, how much soever he may be at Liberty to act according to his will.

A *moral Agent* is a Being that is capable of those Actions that have a moral Quality, and which can properly be denominated good or evil in a moral Sense, vertuous or vicious, commendable or faulty. To moral Agency belongs a *moral Faculty,* or Sense of moral Good and Evil, or of such a Thing as Desert or Worthiness, of Praise or Blame, Reward or Punishment; and a Capacity which an Agent has of being influenced in his Actions by moral Inducements or Motives, exhibited to the View of Understanding & Reason, to engage to a Conduct agreeable to the moral Faculty.

The Sun is very excellent & beneficial in it's Action and Influence on the Earth, in warming it, and causing it to bring forth it's Fruits; but it is not a moral Agent: It's Action, tho' good, is not vertuous or meritorious. Fire that breaks out in a City, and consumes great Part of it, is very mischievous in its Operation; but is not a moral Agent: what it does is not faulty or sinful, or deserving of any Punishment. The brute Creatures are not moral Agents: the actions of some of 'em are very profitable & pleasant; others are very hurtful: yet, seeing they have no moral Faculty, or Sense of Desert, and don't act from Choice guided by Understanding, or with a Capacity of reasoning and reflecting, but only from Instinct, and are not capable of being influenced by moral Inducements, their Actions are not properly sinful or vertuous; nor are they properly the Subjects of any such moral Treatment for what they do, as moral Agents are for their Faults or good Deeds.

Here it may be noted, that there is a circumstantial Difference between the moral Agency of a *Ruler* and a *Subject.* I call it *circumstantial,* because it lies only in the Difference of moral Inducements they are capable of being influenced by, arising from the Difference of *Circumstances.* A Ruler, acting, in that Capacity only, is not capable of being influenced by a moral Law, and it's Sanctions of Threatnings and Promises, Rewards and Punishments, as the *Subject* is; tho' both may be influenced by a Knowledge of moral Good and Evil. And therefore the moral Agency of the Supreme Being, who acts only in the Capacity of a *Ruler* towards his Creatures, and never as a *Subject,* differs in that Respect from the moral Agency of created intelligent Beings. God's Actions, and particularly those which he exerts as a moral Governour, have moral Qualifications, are morally good in the highest Degree. They are most perfectly holy & righteous; and we must conceive of Him as influenced in the highest Degree, by that which, above all others, is properly a moral Inducement, *viz.* the moral Good which He sees in such and such Things: And therefore He is, in the most proper Sense, a moral

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19 Pelagians, followers of Pelagius (fl. 400), a British monk who maintained the freedom of the human will and opposed the doctrine of original sin

Agent, the Source of all moral Ability & Agency, the Fountain and Rule of all Vertue and moral Good; tho' by Reason of his being Supreme over all, 'tis not possible He should be under the Influence of Law or Command, Promises or Threatnings, Rewards or Punishments, Counsels or Warnings. The essential Qualities of a moral Agent are in God, in the greatest possible Perfection; such as Understanding, to perceive the Difference between moral Good & Evil; a Capacity of discerning that moral Worthiness and Demerit, by which some Things are Praise-worthy, others deserving of Blame and Punishment; and also a Capacity of Choice, and Choice guided by Understanding, and a Power of acting according to his Choice or Pleasure, and being capable of doing those Things which are in the highest Sense Praise-worthy. And herein does very much consist that Image of God wherein he made Man, (which we read of *Gen.* I. 26, 27, & Chap. IX. 6.) by which God distinguished Man from the Beasts, *viz.* in those Faculties & Principles of Nature, whereby He is capable of moral Agency. Herein very much consists the *natural* Image of God; as his *spiritual* and *moral* Image, wherein Man was made at first, consisted in that moral Excellency, that he was endowed with.

1751-1754?·1754

Charles Chauncy

1705 · 1787

"A more shocking idea can scarce be given of the Deity than that which represents him as arbitrarily dooming the greater part of the race of men to eternal misery," wrote Charles Chauncy. To Thomas Shepard, to Cotton Mather, to Jonathan Edwards that statement would have seemed almost the ultimate in heresy, and it is not surprising that for most of his life Chauncy kept some of his theological opinions to himself or published them anonymously. Yet everything in Chauncy's life and times tended to minimize the sterner Calvinistic doctrines of depravity and election—everything except the powerful reaffirmations of his great rival, Edwards.

For sixty years Chauncy was one of the ministers of the First Church in Boston. A poor preacher, if "exhorting" is the measure of pulpit success, he proved in his fifty-odd published books that no one in New England was his superior in knowledge of the church fathers, in staunch defense of Congregational church government, or in the exercise of a clear and functional style. He made worship dignified and intellectual; he expressed the social and political convictions of the dominantly Whig society in which he lived; he was outstanding among the controversialists of his day for unimpassioned detachment. Rational and somewhat cold, he is an excellent illustration of why Boston and eastern Massachusetts turned away from some of the most conspicuous aspects of Calvinism to the more comfortable but less emotional ways of Unitarianism and Universalism.

Although Chauncy is worth study both for his doctrine and for his part in the fight against the establishment of an Anglican episcopate (a fearful prospect to most of the New England clergy, and the issue which

aligned them almost solidly with the Revolutionary party), he is perhaps at his best when he writes about religious experience. Without denying the part which emotion plays in regeneration and without deserting the authority of the Bible, he distrusted unbridled religious excitement and was convinced that the effects of semi-hysterical revival periods were seldom permanent. Lacking the passionate piety of Edwards, he had little use for "enthusiasm," and he stated his case against it in many places. Revivalism became, despite Chauncy, a characteristic feature of the religious life of America, but there have always been men like him, sure that the good life has most to do with rational conviction and the moral tone of daily living.

Williston Walker, **Ten New England Leaders**, New York and Chicago, 1901

From

Seasonable Thoughts on the State of Religion in New-England

Between 1740 and 1745 over 150 New England towns felt the excitement of the "Great Awakening," a religious revival usually attributed to the influence of Jonathan Edwards and George Whitefield. Chauncy represents the urbane reaction to its remarkable physical manifestations and obvious dangers. His **Seasonable Thoughts** (Boston, 1743), a treatise in five parts, presented (1) the "Things of a bad and dangerous Tendency" in the revival, i.e., such results as hysteria; (2) the obligations of pastors to help "suppress prevailing Disorders"; (3) instances of ill treatment of "Discouragers of Irregularities," i.e., persons who raised objections to uninhibited behavior; (4) what "ought to be corrected, or avoided," in testifying against the disorders; and (5) "what may be judged the best Expedients, to promote pure and undefiled Religion." The selection which follows is from the latter portion of Part I.

I doubt not, but the *divine SPIRIT* often accompanies the *preached Word,* so as that, by *his Influence,* Sinners are awakened to a Sense *of Sin,* and filled with *deep Distress* of Soul: But the *blessed SPIRIT* must not, at Random, be made the Author of all those *Surprises,* operating in *strange Effects* upon the *Body,* which may be seen among People. They may be produced other Ways; yea, I trust, that has been already said, which makes it evident, they have actually been produced, even by the *wild and extravagant Conduct* of some *over-heated* Preachers.

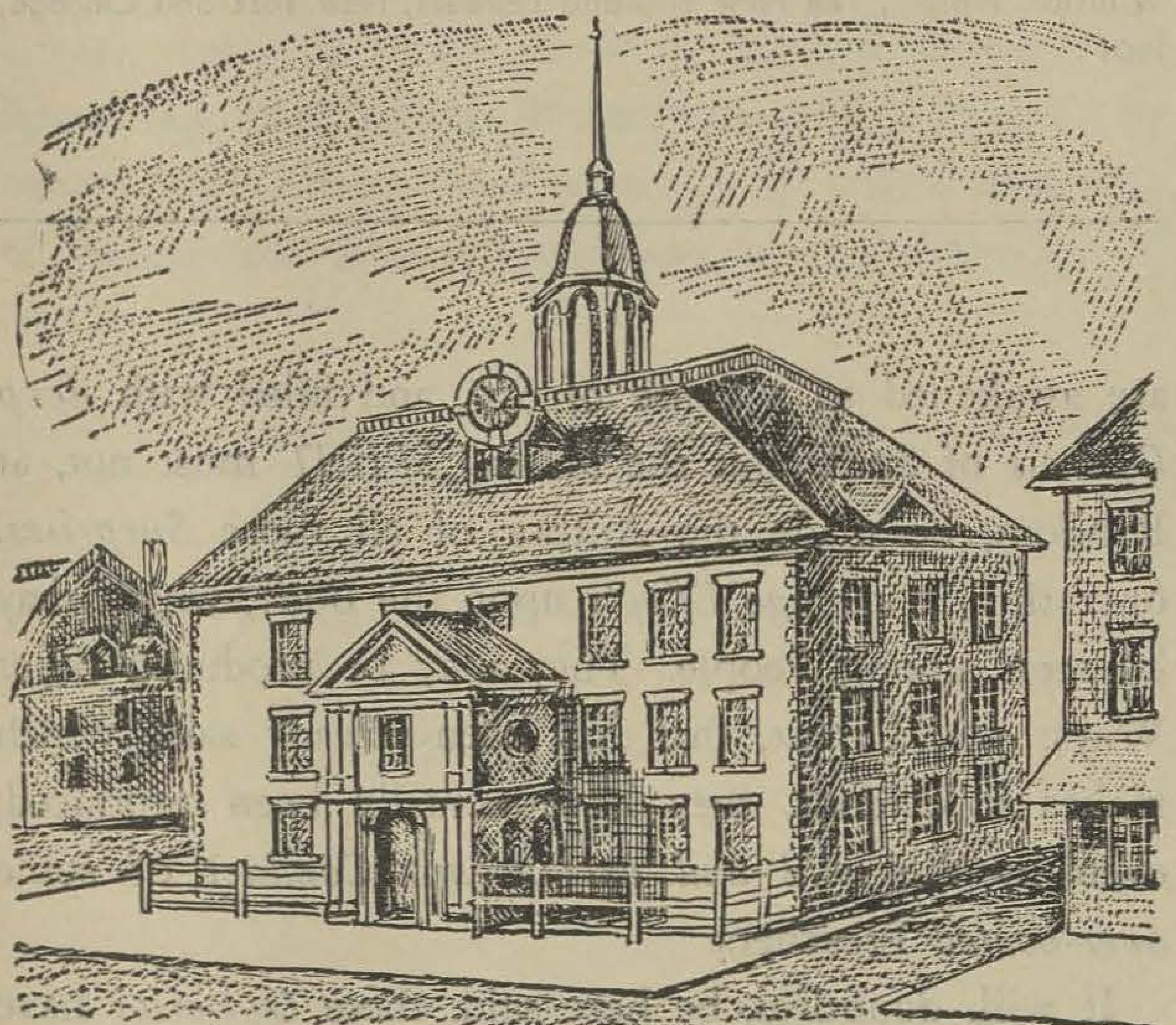
It will, doubtless, be here said, these *Out-cries* have sometimes arisen, when no other than the great Truths of the Gospel have been urg'd upon the Consciences of Sinners; and this, in a *becoming Manner,* and by Preachers who have not been noted, either for the *Loudness of their Voice,* or the *Boisterousness of their Action.*

In Reply whereto, I deny not but this may have been the Case: But, at the same Time, think it worthy of Notice, that these bodily *Effects* were, at FIRST, produced, so far as I can learn, ONLY by *such Preachers* as were *remarkable* for their *terrible speaking,* both as to *Matter,* and *Manner:* Nor do I remember an Instance, in the Country, of *Out-cries,* by *any other Sort of Preachers,* 'till the Noise of such *extraordinary* Effects, as *Arguments* of an *immediate divine Power,* in one Place and another, had alarmed the People, and made many of them think, it was necessary they also should be in like Circumstances.

Besides, when these *Out-cries* have been effected by your more *moderate Preachers,* (which, by the Way, comparatively speaking, has been a rare Thing) have they not begun with one or two only, and from them

Text: the first edition, 1743.

been propagated to others? Nay, have not *these,* from whom they took Rise, *usually,* been such as were *before accustomed* to the Way of *screaming out?* And were they not, *at first,* brought to it, under a more terrible Kind of Preaching? I believe, upon Examination, this will be found to be *nearly* the Truth of the Case.



Rev. Charles Chauncy's Church, Boston

I shall only add further, that however distinguished the Minister who has preached has been, for his *exemplary Piety,* and *shining Gifts;* however agreeable to the Mind of CHRIST he has delivered the Truths of the Gospel; and however warmly he may have addrest himself to the *People's Passions,* if he wan't before known to have been a *Favourer* of these *Outcries,* he has not produced them: Nor do I believe, an Instance can be given in the Country, of their being brought forward by any Minister, of whom the People had a Suspicion, that he did not like them: Which to me, is not the best Argument of their being so wholly owing to the *divine Power,* as some may be too ready to imagine. But to proceed,

Another Thing that very much lessens my Opinion of these *religious Fears,* with the *strange Effects* of them is, that they are produced by the *Exhorters;* and this, in all Parts of the Land; and it may be, in more numerous Instances, than by the *Ministers* themselves. And if these *bodily Agitations* arise from the Influence of the SPIRIT, when produc'd by the *Ministers,* they are so when produced by the *Exhorters.* The Appearance is the same in both Cases; the like *inward Distress* is effected, and discovers it self in like *Cryings* and *Swoonings:* Nor is there any Reason to think well, in the general, of the one, and not of the other. And yet, some of the best Friends of *this Work,* both among the *Clergy* and *Laity,* think ill of these Things, as brought forward by the *Exhorters:* Nay, one of the greatest Friends to the *good Work,* among the Ministers in Town, freely declar'd concerning one of these *Exhorters,* who came into this Place, and began the *Outcries* we were before Strangers to, that he feared the Hand of Satan was in his coming here to throw Disgrace on the Work of GOD; suggesting, that the Wonders wrought by the *Magicians* in *Egypt* were, to all Appearance, like the *Miracles* wrought by MOSES. I see no Reason for such a Remark. The visible Effects of this young Man's exhorting here, and in the neighbouring Town of *Dorchester,* were just the same that are wrought by the most famous Preachers in the *new Way:* And where there is no discernable Difference, there is no Ground, in *Reason* or *Scripture,* to speak well of the one, and ill of the other. Such are certainly inconsistent with themselves, who attribute these *Extraordinaries,* as bro't forward by the *Exhorters,* to a *Spirit of Delusion,* or *Enthusiasm,* or any other *inferior Cause;* while they can't bear to hear a Word said against them, when they are the Produce of those who are called *Ministers.* For my self, I put them both on the same Foot, as supposing they both arise from the same Cause: Only, the Appearance of these Things, in the same Kind and Degree, when the *Exhorters* are the Carriers on, administers just Ground of Fear, whether they are, in *general,* so much owing to the *extraordinary Influence* of the *divine SPIRIT,* as some may be too ready to imagine. If they are not owing to the *wonderful Operation* of the HOLY GHOST, when the *Exhorters* are the Occasion of them, they may easily be accounted for, when produced by others: And it can't well be supposed,

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37 one . . . Exhorters, probably James Davenport (1716-1757), who visited Boston in 1742. Interviewed by the ministers, and then excluded from the churches, he preached in the streets with such violence that he was arrested and judged insane.

there should be the extraordinary Concurrence of the blessed SPIRIT with these *Exhorters.* For who are they but such, concerning whom the *inspir'd Apostle* has said, *Not a Novice lest he be lifted up with Pride, and fall into the Condemnation of the Devil?* Who are they but such, of whom the same *Apostle* says, *they walk disorderly, working not at all, but are Busie-Bodies?* With Respect to whom, he gives *Commandment by the LORD JESUS CHRIST, that with Quietness they work and eat their own Bread.* Who are they but such, as set themselves up in Opposition to their *Pastors,* though *sound in the Faith* and of a *good Conversation,* contrary to the *Order of the Gospel,* and to the *Disturbance* of the *Churches?* And can it be thought, that GOD would countenance the Conduct of this Kind of Persons, by *extraordinary* Testimonies of his *Presence* from Heaven; and this, while they are in a Method of acting that directly contradicts his own Appointments? Besides, may it not be said of these *Exhorters,* in the *general,* that they are very *Babes in Understanding,* needing themselves to be *taught which be the first Principles of the Oracles of GOD?* That they are over-forward and conceited; taking that upon them, they have neither a *Call* to, nor *Qualifications* for? Yea, is it not too true of some of them, that they have acted under the Influence of an *over-heated Imagination:* or what is worse, from *low* and *base Views?* This is now so evident, that there is no Room for Debate upon the Matter. And of all Men, these, I should think, are the most unlikely to be distinguish'd with the *extraordinary Presence* of the HOLY GHOST.

There is yet another Thing that makes it look as though these *Terrors might* arise from a *lower Cause,* than that which is *Divine;* and that is, their happening in the *Night.* I don't mean, that there han't been *Outcries* in the *Day Time;* but the *Night* is more commonly the *Season,* when these Things are to be seen, and in their greatest Perfection. They are more *frequent,* and more *general,* and rais'd to a higher *Degree,* at the *Night Meetings,* when there are but *two* or *three* Candles in the Place of Worship, or they are wholly in the dark. I have often, in Conversation, heard this Remark made by those, who have been in the Way of these Things; and the same Observations I find in the *Letters* that have been sent me. Says one, speaking of these *Extraordinaries,* "They are more in the *Night* than in the Day;" Another, "They operate most strongly in their *Night Meetings;*" Another still, "They never happen'd [this must be understood of the particular Place, he is giving an Account of] [Chauncy's brackets] to any considerable Degree, 'till the *Darkness* of the Night came on." And why should these *strange Effects* be more *frequent,* and *general,* in the *Gloominess* of the *Night,* if they were produc'd by the Agency of the *Divine SPIRIT?* Does he need the Advantage of the *dark* to fill Men's Hearts with Terror? This is certainly a shrew'd Sign, that there is more of the *Humane* in these Things, than some are willing to own. We know every Thing appears more dismal in the Night: Persons are more apt to be struck with Surprise and Consternation: And as this is a good Reason, it may be the true one, why a *doleful Voice,* and frightful *Managements* may take Effect more in the *Night* than at other Times.

The *Subjects* also of these *Terrors* may lead us to make the like Judgment about them; and these are *Children, Women,* and *youngerly* Persons. Not that others han't been wrought upon. Instances there have been of *Men;* and these, both *middle-aged,* and *advanced in Years,* who have both *cried out,* and *fallen down.* But 'tis among *Children, young People* and *Women,* whose Passions are soft and tender, and more easily thrown into a Commotion, that these Things *chiefly* prevail. I know, 'tis thus in those Places, where I have had Opportunity to make Inquiry. And from the Accounts transmitted to me from Friends, in other Places, it appears to have been so among them also. The Account I have from one Part of the Country is, "The Operation is principally among *Women* and *Girls;*" From another, "The Persons wrought upon were generally *Women* and *Children;*" From another, "These Effects have been most frequent in *Women* and *young* Persons." And are not these the very Persons, whose Passions according to *Nature,* it might be expected, would be alarmed? If *young* People are, in a moral Sense, more likely to be wrought upon by *Divine Grace,* than *old,* I see not that this is the Case with respect to *Women* in Distinction from *Men. Men* may as easily be overcome by the *Power* of the HOLY GHOST, as *Women;* and are as likely, in a *moral* View of the Matter, to be so: And what should then be the Reason that they should be, as it were, overlook'd, and

Women generally the Persons thrown into these *Agitations* and *Terrors?* It certainly looks, as tho' the Weakness of their Nerves, and from hence their greater Liableness to be surpris'd, and overcome with Fear, was the true Account to be given of this Matter.

Moreover, the *Way* in which these *Terrors* spread themselves is a Circumstance, that does not much favour their *divine Origin.* They seem to be suddenly propagated, from one to another, as in a great Fright or Consternation. They often begin with a single Person, a *Child,* or *Woman,* or *Lad,* whose *Shrieks* set others a *Shrieking;* and so the Shrieks catch from one to another, 'till the whole Congregation is alarmed, and such an awful Scene, many Times, open'd, as no Imagination can paint to the Life. To this Purpose is that in the BOSTON-*Post-Boy* [Numb. 391.], when after an Account of the *terrible Language* made Use of by the Itinerants, 'tis added, "This frequently frights the *little Children,* and sets them a Screaming; and that frights their *tender Mothers,* and sets them to Screaming, and by Degrees spreads over a great Part of the Congregation: And 40, 50, or an 100, of them screaming all together, makes such an awful and hideous Noise as will make a Man's Hair stand on End. Some will faint away, fall down upon the Floor, wallow and foam. Some Women will rend off their Caps, Handkerchiefs, and other Clothes, tear their Hair down about their Ears, and seem perfectly bereft of their Reason."

Appearances in this Kind, I have often had an Account of from those who have been present at them; and as begun by one or two Persons at first: And where this has been the Case, there is no great Difficulty in finding out the Cause: 'Tis far more reasonable to look for it in *Nature,* than in *Grace.*

It may not be amiss to observe still further, that these *Terrors,* with their *Effects,* are *uniform all over the Country;* operating upon all in whom they take Place, much in the *same Way* and *Manner,* be their *moral* Character what it will. Whether the Subjects of them be *great* or *small* Sinners, whether the Sins they have committed be *more* or *less,* whether they have continued in Sin a *longer* or *shorter* Time, there is no Difference as to their *Fears,* and the *Operation* of them; but they are all indiscriminately thrown into the like *horrible* Circumstances; which it is not reasonable to think would be the Case, if they were put into this Condition by a *divine Influence:* Whereas, its the very Thing that might be expected, where *Nature* is suddenly surpris'd, and over-come, as in a Fright.

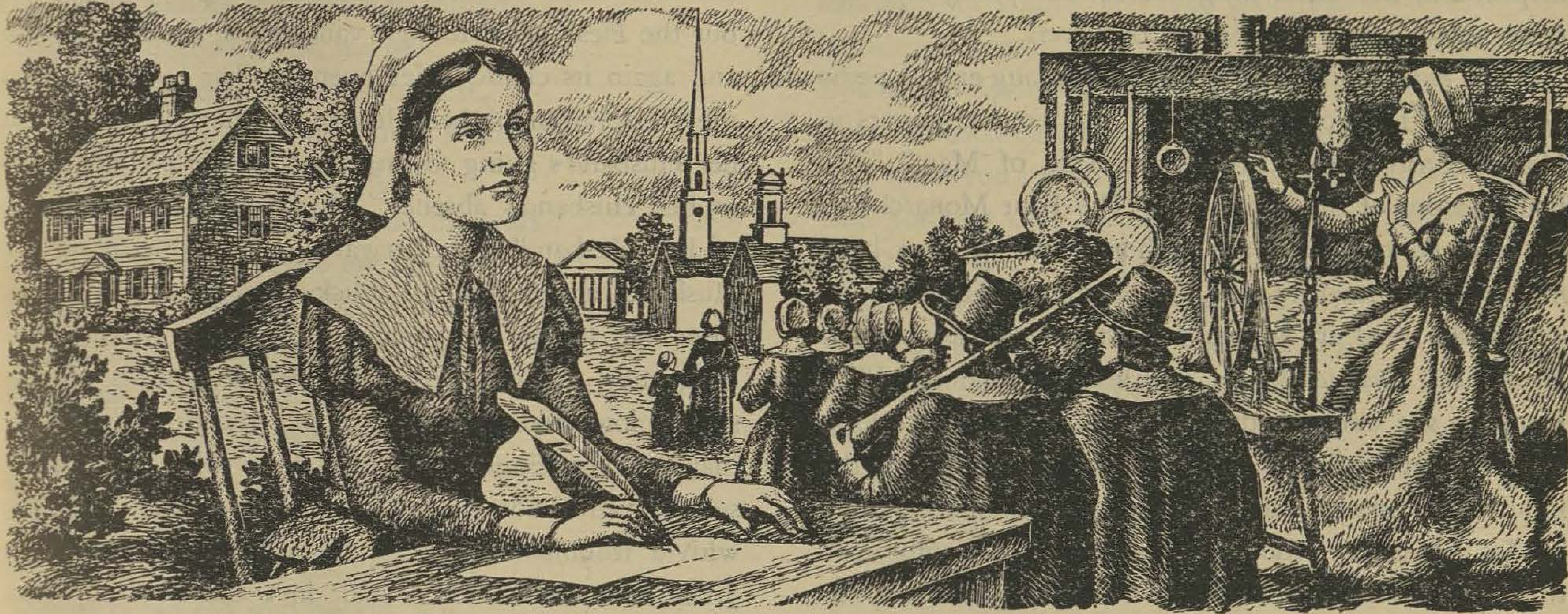
In fine, it's a Circumstance no Ways favouring the *divine Rise* of these *Out-cries,* that many People now commonly make them, not as urg'd hereto from an *over-pouring* Sense of their *own* Sins, but the Sins of *others.* Having been *converted* themselves, their *Distress,* under the *Preaching of the Word,* is now raised to such a Height for the *unconverted Sinners in the Congregation,* that they can't help *screaming out;* and so *many of them,* sometimes at once, as that the *Worship* is *interrupted,* or greatly *disturb'd.* A *Concern* for others, whom we have Reason to fear, are in a State of Sin, is, no Doubt, reasonable; and there will be more or less of it, in the Heart of every sincere Christian. But are *Shriekings* a suitable Expression of this Concern; especially, in the House of GOD? And can it be suppos'd, the *GOD of Order,* would, by the Exertment of his Power, raise this Concern to such a Height, as that his *own Worship* should be broke up upon the Account of it? 'Tis impossible. I never heard one *sober, solid* Person speak a Word, in Favour of *these Out-cries;* and am heartily sorry, any Thing has been *printed,* encouraging so gross an Extravagance. I hope none, from the *meer Sound* of some Texts, will justify *this same Distress for others,* as it begins now to discover it self, among some Persons, in *another* Form, in *Travail-Pains and Throws.* Of this, I have now an Account by me, in a *Letter* from a Friend, upon the Evidence of his *own Eyes and Ears;* which yet, I should not have mentioned, but that I have since *personally* conversed with a *Minister* in the Country, who informed me of one, who had been in *Travail* two or three Times successively for him. i. e. Under all the *Signs of Distress,* that appear in *Women* upon such Occasions.

These are the Reasons, why I can't entertain so high an Opinion as some others do, of the *Terrors* appearing in strange *bodily* Effects, which have been so common of late in this Land.

1743?·1743

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18 Itinerants, ministers not settled in a particular church; revivalists; clergymen of the Wesleyan or Methodist persuasion • 28 bereft . . . Reason. "I should not have inserted this Account, it looks so extravagant, but that I have now by me two Letters, from Gentlemen of known Worth and Integrity, in the Ministry, who particularly refer to it, and say, 'tis a just one."—Chauncy



Anne Bradstreet

1612 · 1672

Anne Bradstreet was born at Northampton, England. Since her father, Thomas Dudley, was steward of the estate of the Earl of Lincoln, it is reasonable to suppose that Anne, as a young girl, enjoyed special advantages, including perhaps the use of books from the Earl's library. At the age of sixteen she was married to Simon Bradstreet, a graduate of Emmanuel College, Cambridge, and steward of the Countess of Warwick. Two years later the Dudleys and the Bradstreets came to Massachusetts with John Winthrop and other prominent first settlers of the Massachusetts Bay Colony on the good ship *Arbella.* In Anne's own words, "I changed my condition and was marryed, and came into this Country, where I found a new world and new manners, at which my heart rose. But after I was convinced it was the way of God, I submitted to it." Like Ruth, she was sick for home amid the alien corn.

After brief residences at Cambridge and Ipswich, the Bradstreets resided permanently at Andover. Both Thomas Dudley and Simon Bradstreet were prominent leaders in the affairs of the Massachusetts Bay Colony. Anne Bradstreet had eight children; hers was the busy, heroic life of a wife and mother in a pioneer community. She found time, nevertheless, for the writing of verse, a considerable quantity of which was published in London in 1650 with the title, *The Tenth Muse Lately Sprung up in America.* In the Preface of this book the

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Panel (l. to r.): The Bradstreet home • Anne Bradstreet • Westfield, Massachusetts, where Edward Taylor preached • Household chores

author is described as "a Woman, honoured, and esteemed where she lives, for her gracious demeanour, her eminent parts, her pious conversation, her courteous disposition, her exact diligence in her place, and discreet managing of her Family occasions."

The Tenth Muse consisted largely of long encyclopedic poems on "The Four Elements," "The Four Humours in Man's Constitution," "The Four Ages of Man," "The Four Seasons of the Year," and "The Four Monarchies." In these compositions the author seems to have been misled by her favorite poet, Guillaume du Bartas, whose works she read in Joshua Sylvester's translation (*Du Bartas, His Divine Weeks and Works,* London, 1605). Happily, she outgrew this influence in her later work. "Contemplations," her most finished poem, shows the influence of two Elizabethan poets, Sidney and Spenser.

Mrs. Bradstreet's most original poems, and some may think her best, are her private domestic pieces, unpublished until after her death, in which she reveals her religious difficulties and her wifely and maternal devotion. She was disturbed by religious doubt. "Many times," she confessed, "hath Satan troubled me concerning the verity of the scriptures, many times by Atheisme how I could know whether there was a God." She feared that her love of the pleasant things of this life was unchristian. The conflict is incisively presented in "The Flesh and the Spirit." The Spirit was victor; but the Flesh, even though vanquished, reasserted again and again its claims. Her poems to her husband—"On the Restoration of her Husband from an Ague," "On her Husband's going to England," "In her solitary hours in her Husband's absence," "In thankful remembrance of her Husband's safe arrival home," "A letter to her Husband, absent upon Publick employment," "To my Dear and loving Husband"—attest to her warm devotion; they contain surprisingly frank avowals of passionate love, and refute the notion, sometimes met with, that the New England Puritans were cold. Anne Bradstreet loved Simon Bradstreet and her children and God with a troubled realization that she fell short of the divine command, "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with *all* thy heart."

The Works of Anne Bradstreet, ed. J. H. Ellis, Charlestown, 1867 (reprinted, 1932) • S. E. Morison, "Mistress Anne Bradstreet," **Builders of the Bay Colony,** Boston, 1930

In reference to her Children, June 23, 1656

I had eight birds hatcht in one nest,
Four Cocks there were, and Hens the rest,
I nurst them up with pain and care,
Nor cost, nor labour did I spare,
Till at the last they felt their wing.
Mounted the Trees, and learn'd to sing;
Chief of the Brood then took his flight,
To Regions far, and left me quite:
My mournful chirps I after send,
Till he return, or I do end,
Leave not thy nest, thy Dam and Sire,
Fly back and sing amidst this Quire.
My second bird did take her flight,
And with her mate flew out of sight;
Southward they both their course did bend,
And Seasons twain they there did spend:
Till after blown by Southern gales,
They Northward steer'd with filled sayles.
A prettier bird was no where seen,
Along the Beach among the treen.
I have a third of colour white,
On whom I plac'd no small delight;
Coupled with mate loving and true,
Hath also bid her Dam adieu:
And where Aurora first appears,
She now hath percht, to spend her years;
One to the Academy flew
To chat among that learned crew:
Ambition moves still in his breast
That he might chant above the rest,
Striving for more than to do well,

7 Chief . . . Brood, Samuel, who spent four years in England • **13 second bird.** Dorothy married the Rev. Seaborn Cotton, who preached for a while in Connecticut • **21 third.** Sarah married Richard Hubbard of Ipswich, Massachusetts • **27 One.** Simon was admitted to Harvard College

That nightingales he might excell.
My fifth, whose down is yet scarce gone
Is 'mongst the shrubs and bushes flown,
And as his wings increase in strength,
On higher boughs he'l pearch at length.
My other three, still with me nest,
Untill they'r grown, then as the rest,
Or here or there, they'l take their flight,
As is ordain'd, so shall they light.
If birds could weep, then would my tears
Let others know what are my fears
Lest this my brood some harm should catch,
And be surpriz'd for want of watch,
Whilst pecking corn, and void of care
They fall un'wares in Fowlers snare:
Or whilst on trees they sit and sing,
Some untoward boy at them do fling:
Or whilst allur'd with bell and glass,
The net be spread, and caught, alas.
Or least by Lime-twigs they be foyl'd,
Or by some greedy hawks be spoyl'd.
O would my young, ye saw my breast,
And knew what thoughts there sadly rest,
Great was my pain when I you bred,
Great was my care, when I you fed,
Long did I keep you soft and warm,
And with my wings kept off all harm,
My cares are more, and fears than ever,
My throbs such now, as 'fore were never:
Alas my birds, you wisdome want,
Of perils you are ignorant,
Oft times in grass, on trees, in flight,
Sore accidents on you may light.
O to your safety have an eye,
So happy may you live and die:
Mean while my dayes in tunes Ile spend,
Till my weak layes with me shall end.
In shady woods I'le sit and sing,
And things that past, to mind I'le bring
Once young and pleasant, as are you,
But former toyes (no joyes) adieu.
My age I will not once lament,
But sing, my time so near is spent.
And from the top bough take my flight,
Into a country beyond sight,
Where old ones, instantly grow young,
And there with Seraphims set song:
No seasons cold, nor storms they see;
But spring lasts to eternity,
When each of you shall in your nest
Among your young ones take your rest,
In chirping language, oft them tell,
You had a Dam that lov'd you well,
That did what could be done for young,
And nurst you up till you were strong,
And 'fore she once would let you fly,
She shew'd you joy and misery;
Taught what was good, and what was ill,
What would save life, and what would kill.
Thus gone, amongst you I may live,
And dead, yet speak, and counsel give:
Farewell my birds, farewell adieu,
I happy am, if well with you.

1678

To my Dear and loving Husband

If ever two were one, then surely we.
If ever man were lov'd by wife, then thee;
If ever wife was happy in a man,
Compare with me ye women if you can.
I prize thy love more than whole Mines of gold,
Or all the riches that the East doth hold.
My love is such that Rivers cannot quench,
Nor ought but love from thee, give recompence.
Thy love is such I can no way repay,
The heavens reward thee manifold I pray.
Then while we live, in love lets so persever,
That when we live no more, we may live ever.

1678

Verses upon the burning of her house, July 10, 1666

In silent night when rest I took,
For sorrow neer I did not look,

I waken'd was with thundring nois
And Piteous shrieks of dreadfull voice.
That fearfull sound of fire and fire,
Let no man know is my Desire.

I, starting up, the light did spye,
And to my God my heart did cry
To strengthen me in my Distresse
And not to leave me succourlesse.
Then coming out beheld a space,
The flame consume my dwelling place.

And, when I could no longer look,
I blest his Name that gave and took,
That layd my goods now in the dust:
Yea so it was, and so 'twas just.
It was his own: it was not mine;
Far be it that I should repine.

He might of All justly bereft,
But yet sufficient for us left.
When by the Ruines oft I past,
My sorrowing eyes aside did cast,
And here and there the places spye
Where oft I sate, and long did lye.

Here stood that Trunk, and there that chest;
There lay that store I counted best:
My pleasant things in ashes lye,
And them behold no more shall I.
Under thy roof no guest shall sitt,
Nor at thy Table eat a bitt.

No pleasant tale shall 'ere be told,
Nor things recounted done of old.
No Candle 'ere shall shine in Thee,
Nor bridegroom's voice ere heard shall bee.
In silence ever shalt thou lye;
Adieu, Adieu; All's vanity.

Then streight I gin my heart to chide,
And did thy wealth on earth abide?
Didst fix thy hope on mouldring dust,
The arm of flesh didst make thy trust?
Raise up thy thoughts above the skye
That dunghill mists away may flie.

Thou hast an house on high erect,
Fram'd by that mighty Architect,
With glory richly furnished,
Stands permanent tho' this bee fled.
Its purchased, and paid for too
By him who hath enough to doe.

A Prise so vast as is unknown,
Yet, by his Gift, is made thine own.
Ther's wealth enough, I need no more;
Farewell my Pelf, farewell my Store.
The world no longer let me Love,
My hope and Treasure lyes Above.

1678

The Flesh and the Spirit

Samuel Eliot Morison, in what is perhaps the best essay on Mrs. Bradstreet ("Mistress Anne Bradstreet," Builders of the Bay Colony), said about the following poem: "Her mature poem on 'The Flesh and the Spirit' is one of the best expressions in English literature of the conflict described by Saint Paul in the eighth chapter of his Epistle to the Romans. It has a dramatic quality which can only have come of personal experience."

In secret place where once I stood
Close by the Banks of Lacrim flood
I heard two sisters reason on
Things that are past, and things to come;
One flesh was call'd, who had her eye
On worldly wealth and vanity;
The other Spirit, who did rear
Her thoughts unto a higher sphere:
Sister, quoth Flesh, what liv'st thou on
Nothing but Meditation?
Doth Contemplation feed thee so
Regardlessly to let earth goe?

Verses upon . . . house • 14 I . . . took. Job 1:21: "The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord"

The Flesh . . . Spirit • 2 Lacrim, from "lacrimae," tears

Can Speculation satisfy
Notion without Reality?
Dost dream of things beyond the Moon
And dost thou hope to dwell there soon?
Hast treasures there laid up in store
That all in th' world thou count'st but poor?
Art fancy sick, or turn'd a Sot
To catch at shadowes which are not?
Come, come, Ile shew unto thy sence,
Industry hath its recompence.
What canst desire, but thou maist see
True substance in variety?
Dost honour like? acquire the same,
As some to their immortal fame:
And trophyes to thy name erect
Which wearing time shall ne're deject.
For riches dost thou long full sore?
Behold enough of precious store.
Earth hath more silver, pearls and gold,
Than eyes can see, or hands can hold.
Affect's thou pleasure? take thy fill,
Earth hath enough of what you will.
Then let not goe, what thou maist find,
For things unknown, only in mind.
Spir. Be still thou unregenerate part,
Disturb no more my setled heart,
For I have vow'd, (and so will doe)
Thee as a foe, still to pursue.
And combate with thee will and must,
Untill I see thee laid in th' dust.
Sisters we are, ye[a] twins we be,
Yet deadly feud 'twixt thee and me;
For from one father are we not,
Thou by old Adam wast begot,
But my arise is from above,
Whence my dear father I do love.
Thou speakst me fair, but hatst me sore,
Thy flatt'ring shews Ile trust no more.
How oft thy slave, hast thou me made,
When I believ'd, what thou hast said,
And never had more cause of woe
Then when I did what thou bad'st doe.
Ile stop mine ears at these thy charms,
And count them for my deadly harms.
Thy sinfull pleasures I doe hate,
Thy riches are to me no bait,
Thine honours doe, nor will I love;
For my ambition lyes above.
My greatest honour it shall be
When I am victor over thee,
And triumph shall, with laurel head,
When thou my Captive shalt be led,
How I do live, thou need'st not scoff,
For I have meat thou know'st not off;
The hidden Manna I doe eat,
The word of life it is my meat.
My thoughts do yield me more content
Then can thy hours in pleasure spent.
Nor are they shadows which I catch,
Nor fancies vain at which I snatch,
But reach at things that are so high,
Beyond thy dull Capacity;
Eternal substance I do see,
With which inriched I would be:
Mine Eye doth pierce the heavens, and see
What is Invisible to thee.
My garments are not silk nor gold,
Nor such like trash which Earth doth hold,
But Royal Robes I shall have on,
More glorious than the glistring Sun;
My Crown not Diamonds, Pearls, and gold,
But such as Angels heads infold.
The City where I hope to dwell,
There's none on Earth can parallel;
The stately Walls both high and strong,
Are made of pretious Jasper stone;
The Gates of Pearl, both rich and clear,
And Angels are for Porters there;
The Streets thereof transparent gold,
Such as no Eye did e're behold,
A Chrystal River there doth run,
Which doth proceed from the Lambs Throne:
Of Life, there are the waters sure,
Which shall remain for ever pure,
Nor Sun, nor Moon, they have no need,
For glory doth from God proceed:
No Candle there, nor yet Torch light,
For there shall be no darksome night.

---

85 The City. The remainder of the poem is based on Revelation 21:2: "And I John saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned by her husband"

From sickness and infirmity,
For evermore they shall be free,
Nor withering age shall e're come there,
But beauty shall be bright and clear;

This City pure is not for thee,
For things unclean there shall not be:
If I of Heaven may have my fill,
Take thou the world, and all that will.

1678

Edward Taylor

c. 1645 · 1729

Very few biographical facts concerning Edward Taylor are known. He was born in Coventry, England. In 1668, at the age of twenty-two or twenty-three, he left England, presumably for liberty of conscience, and came to Boston, where he was cordially received by Increase Mather. He was admitted to Harvard College and was graduated in the Class of 1671. A lifelong friendship with Samuel Sewall, of the same class, dates from his college years. "He and I," Sewall wrote, "were Chamber fellows and Bed fellows in Harvard-College Two years: He being admitted into the College, drew me thither [i.e., to himself]." Following his graduation, Taylor became pastor of the church at Westfield, Massachusetts. He lived quietly at Westfield during the remaining fifty-eight years of his life, serving the community for that long period both as minister and as physician. Twice married, he had seven children by his first wife and six by his second. Ezra Stiles, his grandson (President of Yale, 1778-1795), described him as "a man of small stature but firm: of quick Passions—yet serious and grave."

Taylor did not write his poems for publication. They must have been read by very few during the poet's lifetime, and for more than two centuries after his death their existence was almost completely forgotten. The recent publication of a small portion of Taylor's manuscripts has greatly enriched our poetical heritage from colonial times. Indeed, Taylor's poetry takes rank not only as the best poetry written in America before the nineteenth century but as one of the classics of New England literature.

Taylor wrote in the "metaphysical" tradition, the tradition of Donne, Crashaw, and Herbert, and he must have been influenced by their poetry, particularly by Herbert's. His structure follows the "metaphysical" pattern; that is, to borrow T. S. Eliot's description, "the elaboration of a figure of speech to the farthest stage to which ingenuity can carry it" and "a development by rapid association of thought." His poetry, nevertheless, is in no real sense imitative, for the stuff of Taylor's poetry is indisputably his own. The thought and emotion are elaborated in homely metaphors drawn straight from the poet's own experience. The weaving of cloth affords the metaphorical vehicle in one poem; the making of bread, in another; the cultivation of flowers, in a third. Music and musical instruments are a rich source of figurative language—the many musical references help to refute the popular notion that the early Puritans were hostile to music.

Taylor's poems help to refute also the notion that Puritans were, without exception, grim and strenuously unhappy. Taylor celebrates the joys of the Christian

life; to him the Christian experience was something quite delightful. His saints, unlike Bunyan's plodding pilgrim, are "encoached for Heaven," and they sing as they ride. The Christian life is a rich banquet with music. The water of life is "beer"; the bread of life, "Heaven's Sugar Cake." He experiences a mystical union with the divine. He describes in brilliant, ardent verses Christ's ascent into Heaven and longs for wings to follow after.

The Poetical Works of Edward Taylor, ed. T. H. Johnson, New York, 1939 • Austin Warren, "Edward Taylor's Poetry: Colonial Baroque," **The Kenyon Review**, III, Summer 1941 • W. C. Brown, "Edward Taylor: An American 'Metaphysical'," **American Literature**, XVI, November 1944

From • God's Determinations

The Glory of and Grace in the Church Set Out

Come now behold
Within this Knot What Flowers do grow:
Spanglde like gold:
Whence Wreaths of all Perfumes do flow.
Most Curious Colours of all Sorts you shall
With all Sweet Spirits scent. Yet that's not all.

Oh! Look, and finde
These Choicest Flowers most richly Sweet
Are Disciplinde
With Artificiall Angells meet.
An heap of Pearls is precious: but they Shall
When Set by Art Excell. Yet that's not all.

Christ's Spirit showers
Down in his Word, and Sacraments
Upon these Flowers
The Clouds of Grace Divine Contents.
Such things of Wealthy Blessings on them fall
As make them sweetly thrive. Yet that's not all.

Yet Still behold!
All flourish not at once. We see
While Some Unfold
Their blushing Leaves, some buds there bee.
Here's Faith, Hope, Charity in flower, which call
On yonders in the Bud. Yet that's not all.

But as they stand
Like Beauties reeching in perfume
A Divine Hand
Doth hand them up to Glories room:
Where Each in sweet'ned Songs all Praises shall
Sing all ore Heaven for aye. And that's but all.

1939

The Joy of Church Fellowship Rightly Attended

In Heaven soaring up, I dropt an Eare
On Earth: and oh! sweet Melody:
And listening found it was the Saints who were
Encoacht for Heaven that sang for Joy.
For in Christs Coach they sweetly sing,
As they to Glory ride therein.

Oh! joyous hearts! Enfir'de with holy Flame!
Is Speech thus tassled with praise?
Will not your inward fire of Joy contain;
That it in open flames doth blaze?
For in Christs Coach Saints sweetly sing,
As they to Glory ride therein.

And if a string do slip, by Chance, they soon
Do screw it up again: whereby
They set it in a more melodious Tune
And a Diviner Harmony.
For in Christs Coach they sweetly sing
As they to Glory ride therein.

The Glory . . . Out • 26 reeching, reeking. Obviously, the word does not have the unpleasant connotation of modern usage

The Joy . . . Attended • 8 tassled, tasseled, adorned

In all their Acts, publick and private, nay,
And secret too, they praise impart.
But in their Acts Divine and Worship, they
With Hymns do offer up their Heart.
Thus in Christs Coach they sweetly sing
As they to Glory ride therein.

Some few not in; and some whose Time and Place
Block up this Coaches way do goe
As Travellers afoot: and so do trace
The Road that gives them right thereto;
While in this Coach these sweetly sing
As they to Glory ride therein.

1939

Huswifery

The poem is a good example of Taylor's ingenious elaboration of a single metaphor.

Make me, O Lord, thy Spinning Wheele compleat.
Thy Holy Worde my Distaff make for mee.
Make mine Affections thy Swift Flyers neate
And make my Soule thy holy Spoole to bee
My Conversation make to be thy Reele
And reele the yarn thereon Spun of thy Wheele.

Make me thy Loome then, knit therein this Twine:
And make thy Holy Spirit, Lord, winde quills:
Then weave the Web thyselfe. The yarn is fine.
Thine Ordinances make my Fulling Mills.
Then dy the Same in Heavenly Colours Choice,
All pinkt with Varnisht Flowers of Paradise.

Then cloath therewith mine Understanding, Will,
Affections, Judgment, Conscience, Memory;
My Words, and Actions, that their shine may fill
My wayes with glory and thee glorify.
Then mine apparell shall display before yee
That I am Cloathd in Holy robes for glory.

1939

From • Sacramental Meditations

The Experience

The poem seems to express an authentic mystical experience, the union of the soul with God, and should be compared with an even more notable account of such an experience in Jonathan Edwards' "Personal Narrative."

Oh! that I alwayes breath'd in such an aire,
As I suckt in, feeding on sweet Content!
Disht up unto my Soul ev'n in that pray're
Pour'de out to God over last Sacrament.
What Beam of Light wrapt up my Sight to finde
Me neerer God than ere Came in my minde?

Most Strange it was! But yet more Strange that shine
Which filld my Soul then to the brim to spy
My nature with thy Nature all Divine
Together joynd in Him thats Thou, and I.
Flesh of my Flesh, Bone of my Bone: there's run
Thy Godhead, and my Manhood in thy Son.

Oh! that that Flame which thou didst on me Cast
Might me enflame, and Lighten everywhere.
Then Heaven to me would be less at last,
So much of heaven I should have while here.
Oh! Sweet though Short! I'le not forget the same.
My neerness, Lord, to thee did me Enflame.

I'le Claim my Right: Give place, ye Angells Bright.
Ye further from the Godhead stande than I.
My Nature is your Lord; and doth Unite
Better than Yours unto the Deity.
Gods Throne is first and mine is next; to you
Onely the place of Waiting-men is due.

Huswifery, housewifery • 3 **Flyers**, the pair of arms in a spinning wheel which revolve around the bobbin to twist the yarn • 8 **quills**, spindles or spools • 10 **Fulling Mills**, a mill for cleaning, shrinking, and thickening cloth. This is an especially happy analogy, since the ordinances of the church may be supposed to have a similarly purifying and fortifying effect

Oh! that my Heart thy Golden Harp might bee
Well tun'd by Glorious Grace, that ev'ry string
Screw'd to the highest pitch, might unto thee
All Praises wrapt in sweetest Musick bring.
I praise thee, Lord, and better praise thee would
If what I had, my heart might ever hold.

1939

Meditation Eight

I kening through Astronomy Divine
The Worlds bright Battlement, wherein I spy
A Golden Path my Pensill cannot line
From that bright Throne unto my Threshold ly.
And while my puzzled thoughts about it pore
I finde the Bread of Life in't at my doore.

When that this Bird of Paradise put in
This Wicker Cage (my Corps) to tweedle praise
Had peckt the Fruite forbid: and so did fling
Away its Food: and lost its golden dayes,
It fell into Celestiall Famine sore:
And never could attain a morsell more.

Alas! alas! Poore Bird, what wilt thou doe?
This Creatures field no food for Souls e're gave.
And if thou knock at Angells dores they show
An Empty Barrell: they no Soul bread have.
Alas! Poore Bird, the Worlds White Loafe is done.
And cannot yield thee here the smallest Crumb.

In this sad state, Gods Tender Bowells run
Out Streams of Grace: And he to end all strife
The Purest Wheate in Heaven, his deare-dear Son
Grinds, and kneads up into this Bread of Life.
Which Bread of Life from Heaven down came and stands
Disht on thy Table up by Angells Hands.

Did God mould up this Bread in Heaven, and bake,
Which from his Table came, and to thine goeth?
Doth he bespeake thee thus, This Soule Bread take;
Come, Eate thy fill of this, thy Gods White Loafe?
Its Food too fine for Angells, yet come, take
And Eate thy fill. Its Heavens Sugar Cake.

What Grace is this knead in this Loafe? This thing
Souls are but petty things it to admire.
Yee Angells, help: This fill would to the brim
Heav'ns whelm'd-down Chrystall meele Bowle, yea and higher.
This Bread of Life dropt in thy mouth doth Cry:
Eate, Eate me, Soul, and thou shalt never dy.

1939

Meditation Twenty

The poem describes Christ's ascension to Heaven.

View, all ye eyes above, this sight which flings
Seraphick Phancies in Chill Raptures high:
A Turffe of Clay, and yet bright Glories King:
From dust to Glory Angell-like to fly.
A Mortall Clod immortaliz'de, behold,
Flyes through the skies swifter than Angells could.

Upon the Wings he of the Winde rode in
His Bright Sedan, through all the Silver Skies,
And made the Azure Cloud, his Charriot, bring
Him to the Mountain of Celestiall joyes.
The Prince o'th'Aire durst not an Arrow spend,
While through his Realm his Charriot did ascend.

He did not in a Fiery Charriot's shine,
And Whirlewinde, like Elias upward goe.

The Experience • **27 highest pitch.** The tightening of the strings of musical instruments is a favorite figure with Taylor • **30 ever,** always, constantly, thus repeating the thought of the first line

Meditation Eight • **6 Bread of Life.** John 6:35: "And Jesus said unto them, I am the bread of life . . ." • **7 Bird of Paradise,** the soul • **8 tweedle,** sing • **11 Celestiall Famine,** a lack of spiritual food • **14 Creatures field,** the world • **19 Bowells,** the seat of pity; hence, compassion • **34 whelm'd-down,** filled to overflowing

Meditation Twenty • **11 Prince . . . Aire,** Satan, who is described in Ephesians 2:2 as "the prince of the power of the air" • **14 Elias,** Elijah, whose ascent to heaven is described in II Kings 2:11

But th' golden Ladders Jasper rounds did climbe
Unto the Heavens high from Earth below.
Each step had on a Golden Stepping Stone
Of Deity unto his very Throne.

Methinks I see Heavens sparkling Courtiers fly,
In flakes of Glory down him to attend;
And heare Heart Cramping notes of Melody
Surround his Charriot as it did ascend:
Mixing their Musick, making e'ry string
More to inravish, as they this tune sing.

God is Gone up with a triumphant shout:
The Lord with sounding Trumpets melodies:
Sing Praise, sing Praise, sing Praise, sing Praises out,
Unto our King sing praise seraphick-wise!
Lift up your Heads, ye lasting Doors, they sing.
And let the King of Glory Enter in.

Art thou ascended up on high, my Lord,
And must I be without thee here below?
Art thou the sweetest joy the Heavens afford?
Oh! that I with thee was! what shall I do?
Should I pluck Feathers from an Angells Wing,
They could not waft me up to thee my King.

Lend me thy Wings, my Lord, I'st fly apace,
My Soules Arms stud with thy strong Quills, true Faith;
My Quills then Feather with thy Saving Grace,
My Wings will take the Winde thy Word displai'th.
Then I shall fly up to thy glorious Throne
With my strong Wings whose Feathers are thine own.

1939

Meditation Sixty, Second Series

This poem, whose theme is the "water of life," may be regarded as a companion piece to "Meditation Eight," whose theme is the "bread of life."

Ye Angells bright, pluck from your Wings a Quill;
Make me a pen thereof that best will write:
Lende me your fancy and Angellick skill
To treate this Theme, more rich than Rubies bright.
My muddy Inke and Cloudy fancy dark
Will dull its glory, lacking highest Art.

An Eye at Centre righter may describe
The Worlds Circumferentiall glory vast,
As in its nutshell bed it snugs fast ti'de,
Than any angells pen can glory Cast
Upon this Drink drawn from the Rock, tapt by
The Rod of God, in Horeb, typickly.

Sea water strain'd through Minerall, Rocks, and Sands,
Well Clarifi'de by Sunbeams, Dulcifi'de,
Insipid, Sordid, Swill, Dishwater stands.
But here's a Rock of Aqua-Vitae tri'de!
When once God broacht it, out a River came
To bath and bibble in, for Israels train.

Some rocks have sweat. Some Pillars bled out tears,
But here's a River in a Rock up tunn'd,
Not of Sea Water nor of Swill. It's beere!
No Nectar like it! Yet it once unbungd,
A River down out runs through ages all,
A Fountain opte, to wash off Sin and Fall.

Christ is this Horebs Rock, the streames that slide
A River is of Aqua Vitae Deare,
Yet costs us nothing, gushing from his side:
Celestiall Wine our sinsunk souls to cleare.
This Rock and Water, Sacramentall Cup
Are made, Lords Supper Wine for us to sup.

This Rock's the Grape that Zions Vineyard bore,
Which Moses Rod did smiting pound, and press,

Meditation Twenty • 29 **Lift . . . in**, based upon Psalms 24:7 • 37 **I'st**, I wouldst

Meditation Sixty • 11 **Rock . . . Horeb**, an allusion to the smiting of the rock by Moses, recorded in Numbers 20:11 • 12 **typickly.** The rock from which the water flowed typified, or prefigured, Christ. Compare I Corinthians 10:4: "And did all drink the same spiritual drink: for they drank of that spiritual Rock that followed them: and that Rock was Christ" • 16 **Aqua-Vitae**, brandy • 21 **beere.** Good Puritans had no aversion to alcoholic beverages, if moderately used. (Compare Sewall's Diary, August 25, 1709.) One is nevertheless astonished at the audacity of the poet in using beer as an emblem of the "spiritual drink" • 24 **opte**, opened

Untill its blood, the brooke of Life, run ore:
All Glorious Grace, and Gracious Righteousness.
We in this brook must bath: and with faiths quill
Suck Grace and Life out of this Rock our fill.

Lord, oynt me with this Petro oyle: I'm sick.
Make me drink Water of the Rock: I'm dry.
Me in this fountain wash: my filth is thick.
I'm faint: give Aqua Vitae or I dy.
If in this stream thou cleanse and Chearish mee,
My Heart thy Hallelujahs Pipe shall bee.

1939

Meditation One Hundred and Ten, Second Series

The Angells sung a Carole at thy Birth,
My Lord, and thou thyselfe didst sweetly sing
An Epinicioum at thy Death on Earth.
And order'st thine, in memory of this thing,
Thy Holy Supper, closing it at last
Up with an Hymn, and Choakst the foe thou hast.

This Feast thou madst in memory of thy death:
Which is disht up most graciously: and towers
Of reeching vapours from thy Grave (Sweet breath)
Aromatize the Skies: That sweetest Showers,
Richly perfumed by the Holy Ghost,
Are rained thence upon the Churches Coast.

Thy Grave beares flowers to dress thy Church withall,
In which thou dost thy Table dress for thine.
With Gospell Carpet, Chargers, Festivall
And Spirituall Venison, White Bread and Wine:
Being the Fruits thy Grave brings forth and hands
Upon thy Table where thou waiting standst.

Dainties most rich, all spiced o're with Grace,
That grow out of thy Grave do deck thy Table.
To entertain thy Guests, thou callst, and place
Allowst, with welcome: (and this is no Fable),
And with these Guests I am invited to't,
And this rich banquet makes me thus a Poet.

Thy Cross planted within thy Coffin beares
Sweet Blossoms and rich Fruits, whose steams do rise
Out of thy Sepulcher and purge the aire
Of all Sins damps and fogs that Choake the Skies.
This Fume perfumes Saints hearts as it out peeps,
Ascending up to bury thee in th'reechs.

Joy stands on tiptoes all the while thy Guests
Sit at thy Table, ready forth to sing
Its Hallilujahs in sweet musicks dress,
Waiting for Organs to imploy herein.
Here matter is allowd to all, rich, high,
My Lord, to tune thee Hymns melodiously.

Oh! make my heart thy Pipe: the Holy Ghost
The Breath that fills the same and Spiritually.
Then play on mee, thy pipe, that is almost
Worn out with piping tunes of Vanity.
Winde musick is the best, if thou delight
To play the same thyselfe, upon my pipe.

Hence make me, Lord, thy Golden Trumpet Choice,
And trumpet thou thyselfe upon the same
Thy heart enravishing Hymns with Sweetest Voice.
When thou thy Trumpet soundst, thy tunes will flame.
My heart shall then sing forth thy praises sweet,
When sounded thus with thy Sepulcher reech.

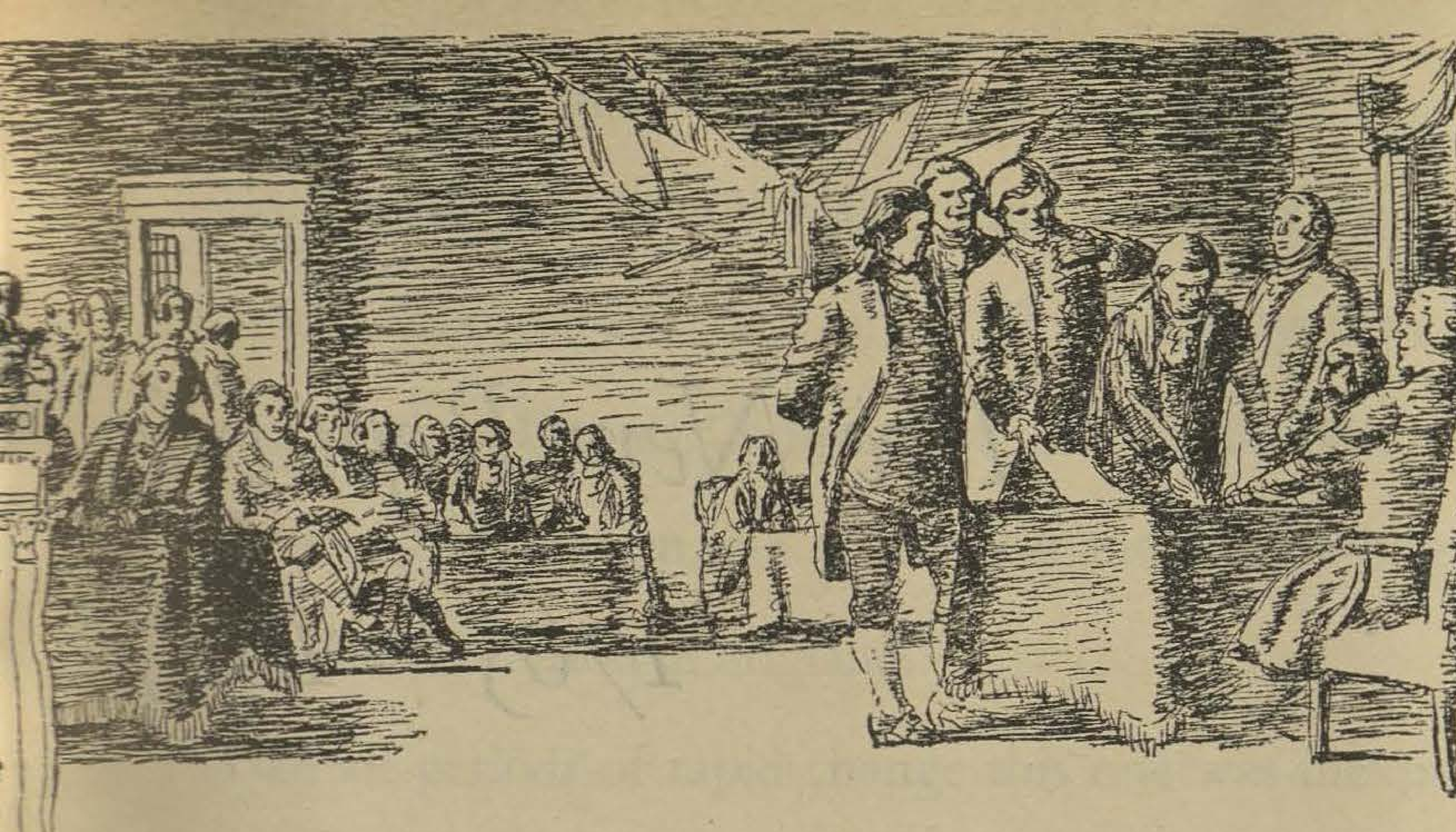
Make too my Soul thy Cittern, and its wyers
Make my affections: and rub off their rust
With thy bright Grace: and screw my Strings up higher,
And tune the same to tunes thy praise most Just.
Ile close thy Supper then with Hymns most sweet,
Burr'ing thy Grave in thy Sepulcher's reech.

1939

Meditation Sixty • 37 Petro, of the rock

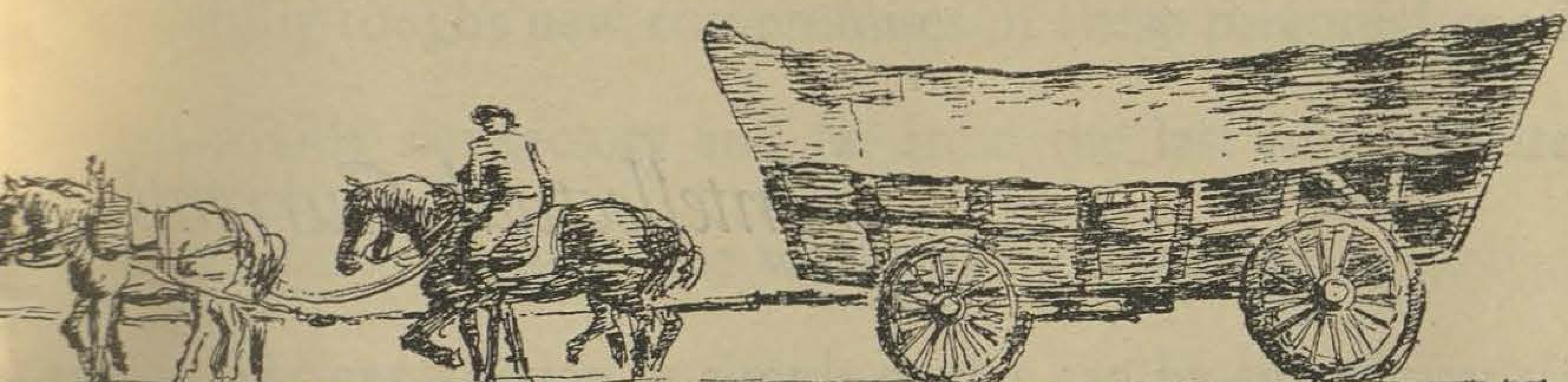
Meditation One Hundred and Ten • 3 Epinicioum, epinicion, a song of triumph • 9 reeching, the "reeking" atmosphere, a cloud of incense • 31 Joy . . . tiptoes. Taylor's editor suggests that the phrase owes something to George Herbert's "The Church Militant": "Religion stands on tip-toe in our land Readie to pass to the American strand" • 48 thy Sepulcher reech, the breath of thy Sepulcher • 49 Cittern, cithern, a lutelike instrument played with a plectrum • 54 Burr'ing, burying

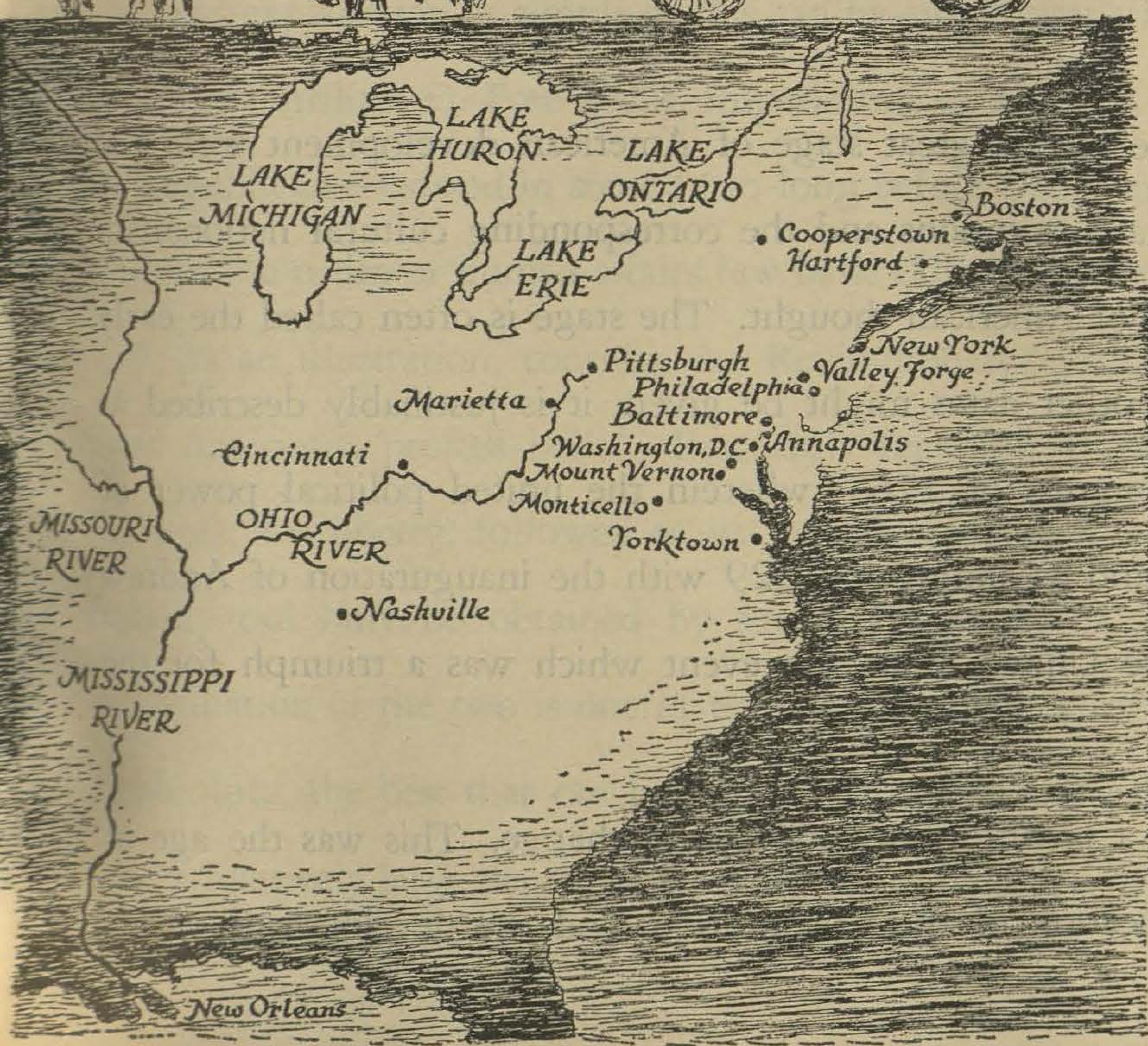


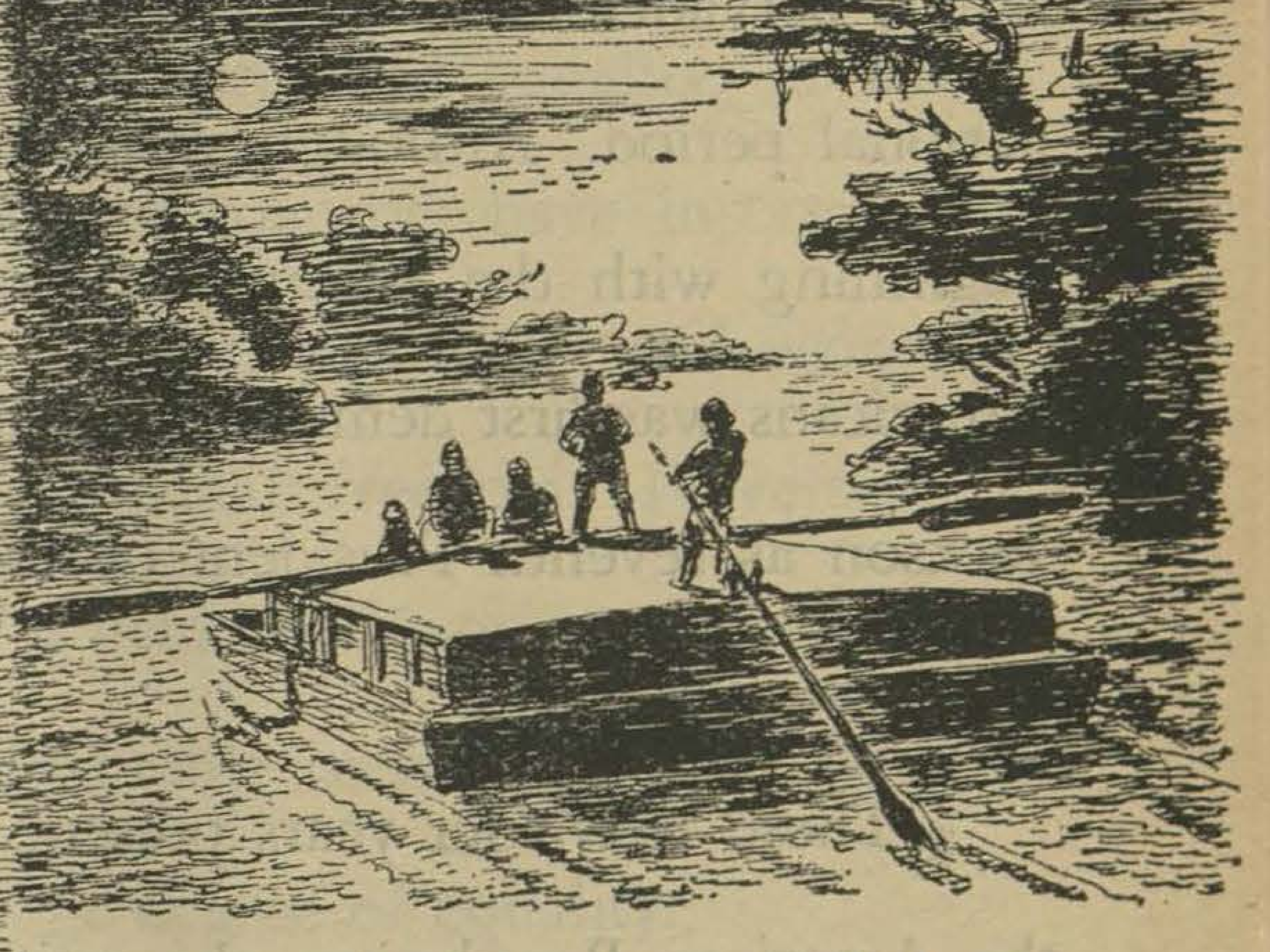


Chapter Two

The New Republic







Chapter 2

The New Republic 1765 · 1829

TO SECURE THE BLESSINGS OF LIBERTY. "We, the people of the United States, in order to form a more perfect union, establish justice, insure domestic tranquillity, provide for the common defense, promote the general welfare, and secure the blessings of liberty to ourselves and our posterity, do ordain and establish this constitution for the United States of America."
—U. S. Constitution

I. Intellectual Currents

A NEW and a PROUD NATION

The most distinctive aspects of the second great stage of American development were the stabilization of independent political institutions and the corresponding cultural nationalism which pervaded almost every phase of American thought. The stage is often called the early national period. Although various other dates might be given, it is justifiably described as beginning with the Stamp Act Congress of 1765, wherein the united political power of Americans was first demonstrated, and as ending in 1829 with the inauguration of Andrew Jackson as seventh President of the United States, an event which was a triumph for the common man.

These sixty-four years present a picture of world-shaking change. This was the age of the American Revolution, the ratification of the Constitution, and the development of the

two-party system of government. It was the age of George Washington and John Paul Jones, of Shays' Rebellion and the Whiskey Insurrection, of the Louisiana Purchase and the Lewis and Clark Expedition, of the War of 1812, of Henry Clay and Daniel Webster and John C. Calhoun, of the Missouri Compromise and the Monroe Doctrine. In Europe it was the age of the French Revolution and of the rise and fall of Napoleon, of the romantic revival and the industrial revolution in England.

Like all periods of rapid change this one was inexpressibly complex, but it was marked by the general collapse of anachronistic institutions and philosophies. The "haves" were ranged against the "have nots," aristocratic and landed classes against those less fortunate, proponents of centralized control against those who wished more local autonomy, absolutists and authoritarians against all colors of individualists and democrats. Western civilization painfully sought new compromises in these perennial conflicts, and those it arrived at, while not wholly satisfactory and far from the last full measure of democracy, were considerably more democratic than the world had known before.

No explanation as simple as this can be entirely satisfactory. The familiar clashes of the era—Mercantilism *vs.* Free Trade, Imperialism *vs.* Home Rule, Tory *vs.* Whig, and Federalist *vs.* Republican—existed in some form long before 1766 and, under other names, are with us still. In the realm of human affairs few basic differences are ever decisively and finally settled.

As an illustration, consider the Revolutionary ideals of liberty and equality, in which most Americans profess belief. Practically regarded, these two concepts have incompatible elements; for liberty, followed to its logical extreme, is antisocial, and social and economic equality can only be obtained by severe limitation of individual freedom. Nevertheless, reconciliation of the two is one of the central problems of a democratic society. Neither can be absolute; the best that can be hoped for is that under favorable conditions a people may have a relatively large degree of freedom and a relatively large degree of equality.

Because the most magnificent promise of the American way of life is the fullest possible development of the individual within a society providing equal and exact justice for all, the literature of the early national period has extraordinary interest. The problems faced by the generations who lived between 1765 and 1829 are essentially today's problems. No American, instructed by the last fifteen years in the painful complexity of political events—however remote they may at first seem, can afford to be ignorant of the ideas of George Washington, Alexander Hamilton, Thomas Jefferson, Thomas Paine, John Adams, Andrew Jackson, and their associates. The writings of these men, together with the Declaration of Independence and the Constitution, form a body of political literature which for richness, variety, and importance to the present day is second to none in the world. Even the belles-lettres of the period, slight in comparison to the work of the English romanticists, take on new meaning when read in terms of the political matrix in which they had their origin.

American nationalism was based upon both the geographical isolation of the English colonies and the political, economic, and social controversies which resulted in revolution. The debate over the Stamp Act divided the colonists into two parties: conservatives and radicals, or, to give them the names more common at the time, Tories and Whigs, Loyalists and Patriots. The lines of cleavage varied from colony to colony, but the radical leaders came mainly from the middle classes, whose distrust of British control was often mingled with antipathy to the ruling aristocracy. Anti-British feeling was combined from the first with a glorification of the common man and his place in the world. The victorious party consisted of those Americans least aware and least desirous of commercial, social, religious, and cultural ties with Great Britain. Aggressive and self-confident, men "on the make," to use a phrase of a later age, they had nevertheless a self-conscious anxiety to show themselves "just as good" as the Tories they had so effectually chased out. Crèvecoeur's "The American Belisarius" (p. 289) vividly suggests the emotional basis of their position.

Self-consciousness was indeed characteristic of the entire period. The idea of inferiority, and particularly of inferiority to Britain, was unendurable. Patriotism often silenced intelligent objectivity; the person who expressed much skepticism regarding American character, institutions, or destiny found himself exceedingly unpopular. The first generations of citizens of the United States were extraordinarily sensitive to criticism.

The train of events, moreover, was propitious for the growth of nationalism. Of the elements contributing to unity, such diverse factors as the Revolution itself, the conservative reaction to the upheaval in France, the Napoleonic wars, and Westward expansion deserve recalling.

Many democratic tendencies were accentuated or set in motion by the Revolution. Large estates were confiscated and divided; small business and manufacturing were stimulated; church establishments were attacked; slavery, imprisonment for debt, and humiliating punishments were regarded with growing disfavor; the idea of universal education at state expense was voiced. Americans were far from being of one mind about these matters, but they recognized that such tendencies differentiated the United States from the nations of the Old World. They agreed, moreover, in insisting that they were now ready to arrange their own affairs, and in being sublimely confident that they could arrange them better than the English had arranged theirs. The Americans were a "new" people, as Crèvecoeur put it. They were ready to teach the rest of the world; they were weary of being taught.

The assertion of the rights of man by the revolutionists in France seemed at first a gratifying justification of the American example. European convulsions soon brought, however, a strong conservative reaction among Americans, already doubtful that they had wholly solved their political problems. The Federalists, who under the leadership of Hamilton controlled the government from the adoption of the Constitution until 1801, were perhaps not lovers of the common man, but they were still fervent nationalists. They planned and worked to

create a strong federal union, able to withstand possible attack from abroad and to suppress internal disorder. Events proved that they were both wise and patriotic.

The Napoleonic wars, which disrupted commercial and diplomatic accord with Europe, made American isolation much more a reality than it had been before. The United States was finally drawn into a second war with England, largely through the determination of the "War Hawks" of the back country, and the War of 1812 is generally credited with giving the nation that economic self-sufficiency which had long been talked about but never quite achieved. Textile and iron industries grew up quickly, and Americans faced the occupation of the West with full assurance that they had the means to fulfill their dreams of greatness.

The West, despite its individualism, was even more nationalistic than the older seaboard states. It looked to the central government for its lands and the means of access to them, and its local ties were new and weak. It was the West which was least respectful of Europe, most certain that the United States, if necessary, could lick the entire Old World.

From the perspective of the twentieth century it is clear that the bonds of Europe were not cut sharply, that the old pattern of transplantation and adaptation continued as immigrants like Albert Gallatin and P. S. Dupont de Nemours brought their talents to the service of American life. Nationalism, however, was peculiarly significant to literature, for it led Americans to attempt the impossible—the creation, overnight, of a tradition of belles-lettres.

To the nationalist the possession of a first-rate literature of politics and a highly reputable literature of religion was not enough; if poetry, fiction, and the drama were the marks of a great culture, America must have them. If, as Aristotle had asserted, epic poetry was the height of literary art, the United States must have epic poems comparable in grandeur to the North American continent and the superior political institutions of the Republic.

Such was the attitude which lay behind the work of Philip Freneau, Royall Tyler, the Connecticut Wits, William Cullen Bryant, Washington Irving, and James Fenimore Cooper.

In Commencement and Fourth of July orations, in newly founded magazines with "United States" or "Columbian" or a state or city name conspicuous in their titles, in anthologies, and in books, Americans hammered at the theme of intellectual independence, the creation of a literary culture better than anything which had yet appeared or which was likely to appear in monarchical Europe. However, they did not succeed in creating such a culture before 1829.

National pride led to many pleas for more generous support of American writers and many elaborate defenses of America against the criticism of British editors and travelers. This material, most voluminous after the War of 1812, has been labeled the "Paper War" and is not of general interest, although both Cooper and Irving contributed to it. It had, however, one all-important effect—it focused the attention of American writers more sharply than ever before upon the native scene. What, they asked themselves, was unique in American life? In their attempt to answer that question they became deeply concerned with native types, dialects, manners, scenery, and institutions. Despite their frequent failure to solve the problem of finding fresh or appropriate forms in which to clothe their new literary materials, they left a body of writing notable both for its variety and for its interpretation of American life.

POLITICAL THOUGHT

The literature of politics is generously represented in the present chapter. It may best be summarized as it centers around four stages of American history: (1) the debate about self-government which extended from the Stamp Act to the Declaration of Independence; (2) the Revolution itself; (3) the struggle for stability and an acceptable balance of the opposing political philosophies of Hamilton and Jefferson; and (4) the continuing battle of the common man for his share of the responsibilities and rewards of political office.

(1) The philosophy and the events which lay behind the Revolution are readily gathered from John Dickinson's "Liberty Song," Benjamin Franklin's "Edict by the King of Prussia" (p. 275) and "Rules by Which a Great Empire May be Reduced to a Small One" (p. 271),

John Adams' *Novanglus* (p. 309), Jonathan Boucher's *View of the Causes and Consequences of the American Revolution* (p. 314), Thomas Paine's *Common Sense* (p. 328), and the Declaration of Independence itself (p. 359). Franklin provides a description of the economic and political irritations enumerated also in the Declaration; the others give an impression of the emotions of the period, deeply rooted as they were in social and religious differences. Boucher deserves particular study, because the Tory position is often ignored or neglected.

These writings are only a small part of the literary debate of 1765-1776. Pamphlets, speeches, sermons, and state papers appeared in profusion. Outstanding among the Whig pamphlets are those by Samuel Adams, James Otis, Daniel Dulany, John Dickinson, and the first works of Hamilton and Jefferson (see Chronological Table for titles and dates). The Tory position was maintained by such writers as Martin Howard, Daniel Leonard, and Samuel Seabury. Patrick Henry's "Give me liberty or give me death" speech of March 1775 is a part of the full picture, as is Francis Hopkinson's allegory, *A Pretty Story* (1774). In a little more than a decade a large body of polemical prose appeared, presenting arguments based both upon specific legal or constitutional positions and upon abstract philosophies of government. Both types of argument are observable in the Declaration.

The legal position of the Patriots—denial of the authority of Parliament to levy "internal taxes" on the colonies, assertion of the doctrine of "no taxation without representation," and demands that the colonial legislatures be recognized as the only just means of obtaining "consent of the governed"—proved in the end less defensible than direct appeal to the right of revolution. For that and other "natural rights" specifically named in the Declaration, the Patriots had the precedents of the revolutions which had driven Charles I and James II from the English throne. They knew their history and their political philosophy; their writings show close study of the theories of Thomas Hobbes, Sir Robert Filmer, John Locke, and many other English and European thinkers. They had behind them, moreover, a solid tradition of

theological disputation. It is impossible to read their presentations of the colonial case without increasing respect for the caliber of their minds and the clarity of their exposition.

(2) The "clash of resounding arms" at Lexington ended the constitutional debate and brought to the fore more emotional and persuasive writers—propagandists they would now be called. Their task was to unite and hold in line a Revolutionary party which was never perhaps more than a two-thirds majority of the population; their method was to appeal to the interests and the prejudices of as many different groups as they could. Master of them all was Paine, whose *Crisis* series (p. 348) ranks with the best propaganda ever written. Newspapers and magazines carried much similar material, including numerous poems such as Freneau's "Memorable Victory" (p. 441), Hopkinson's "Battle of the Kegs" (p. 323), and Dwight's "Columbia, Columbia, to Glory Arise" (p. 451). Popular songs, ballads, and hymns had their place in the literary war (see p. 320). There were also extensive verse satires, of which the most famous was John Trumbull's *M'Fingal* (Part I, 1775), an imitation of Samuel Butler's *Hudibras* (1663-1678), an English satire. The Loyalists, too, had their propagandists, of whom the best known were Joseph Stansbury and Jonathan Odell. They show clearly the social cleavage of the Revolution, for they almost invariably assumed a snobbish tone toward the "rabble." Few printing presses were available to the Loyalists, however, and their opinions must be sought in letters, diaries, parodies of Patriot songs, and such accounts of affairs as Boucher's *View,* published later in England. Neither party was averse to name-calling or scurrility, and it is perhaps no accident that the most good-natured of Revolutionary songs, "Yankee Doodle" (p. 321), is the only one which has remained on the lips of Americans. As Crèvecoeur's "The American Belisarius" reveals, it was not a time of tolerance or generosity toward one's enemies.

(3) A rational and deliberative tone is again uppermost (although undertones of emotion are not lacking) in the literature of the years between the end of the war and the

stabilization of the new government. Its great monument, outside of the Constitution itself, is *The Federalist,* in the main the work of Hamilton (p. 364). Washington's *Farewell Address* (p. 374), in which Hamilton had a part, the inaugurals of Jefferson (p. 389), and the political content of such pieces as Tyler's *The Contrast* (p. 509), H. H. Brackenridge's *Modern Chivalry* (p. 383), and Freneau's "Stanzas to an Alien" (p. 447) round out the picture of the political issues of the era. Fuller representation would include *The Anarchiad* (1786-1787) and numerous other works by the Connecticut Wits, most of whom were strongly Federalist in their convictions. Joel Barlow, author of *Advice to the Privileged Orders* (1791) and *The Conspiracy of Kings* (1792) was a notable exception (see p. 457).

Especially interesting here is the repetition, with variations, of the age-old conflicts. Centralized control and local autonomy, government by the few and government by the many—these were again among the alternatives. Woodrow Wilson and others have suggested that the Constitution was based upon a political philosophy derived ultimately from Newtonian physics, to the effect that opposing political forces can be balanced one against another, and the state, though constantly moving, preserved in equilibrium. John Adams was probably the chief American exponent of this philosophy, with his distrust of unlimited democracy and his theory that executive, aristocratic, and democratic elements must be preserved in any stable government by elaborate checks and balances. The French political philosopher Montesquieu, widely read in America, had much the same idea. Whatever its precise sources, the Constitution unquestionably reflects a conservative reaction to Revolutionary doctrines. It has proved flexible enough, however, to protect both majorities and minorities with reasonable success for over 150 years.

(4) The Federalists, however right they may have been, were not astute politicians. They did not disguise their belief that the masses counted for little, the *aristoi* for much, and they ignored local loyalties and conditions which they would have done well to study. The common people demanded respect throughout the period, and toward the end of it they

received from most successful politicians the flattery which has ever since been theirs. They wanted their leaders "folksy," and they did not care whether or not words were meticulously pronounced and diplomatic protocol rigorously observed. They did not, in short, accept Captain Farrago's notion that those who handle the affairs of state should be informed on fundamental principles and skilled in public speaking (see p. 383). In 1828, at length, the common people came into their own and elected Andrew Jackson. They did not, of course, find thereby an immediate solution to the unending problems of democratic government.

Irving's satirical portrait of Jefferson in the *Knickerbocker History* (p. 540) gives some indication of the political temper of the last phase of the early national period, but the citizenry of Templeton as delineated in Cooper's *The Pioneers* (p. 586) are even better evidence. Special privileges had to go, even though their elimination might mean economic waste, ignorance enshrined in public office, and general irresponsibility. Cooper's own attitude, expressed far more irascibly elsewhere, was precisely that of the orderly man who surveys the litter in a public park on the morning after the Labor Day weekend. He doubted that the common people were yet prepared to take care of their heritage. The political spirit of the period was best expressed, however, by Jackson himself in the peroration to his *Farewell Address* (p. 397). Pride in the national accomplishment and assurance that there was no longer danger from abroad were combined with the recognition that "It is from within, among yourselves, from cupidity, from corruption, from disappointed ambition, and inordinate thirst for power, that factions will be formed and liberty endangered. It is against such designs, whatever disguise the actors may assume, that you have especially to guard yourselves." Who shall say that Jackson was not right?

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

The problem of earning a living was not so frequently or so fully the concern of literature after 1765 as it had been before. Nevertheless, the later writing can be better understood with

some knowledge of the economic thought and conflicts which distinguished American life in the early national period.

Fundamental, of course, was the desire of individuals to "get on" in the world. Simple living, thrift, and industry, the ideals preached by Poor Richard (see p. 264), were the ideals of most men. They were praised by writers as diverse as Crèvecoeur, Washington, Jefferson, Dwight, and Barlow. "My neighbor Freeport" (p. 500) and Rip Van Winkle (p. 559) were most decidedly not the heroes of the era. Americans were on their way to full acceptance of the gospel proclaimed in 1838 by Henry Wadsworth Longfellow (see "A Psalm of Life," p. 771):

Let us, then, be up and doing
  With a heart for any fate;
Still achieving, still pursuing,
  Learn to labor and to wait.

Most Americans probably felt that money was the chief thing to be up and doing about, and they did not question the validity of that end for work. John Woolman (p. 298) was an exception; like Thoreau in a later generation he wished to know the result of the pursuit of wealth. Far more averse to luxuries and pomp than many who cried out against them from higher places in the world, he reached a thought-provoking conclusion: "Wealth desired for its own sake Obstructs the increase of Virtue, and large possessions in the hands of selfish men have a bad tendency, for by their means too small a number of people are employed in things usefull, and therefore some of them are necessitated to labour too hard." A few other observers expressed a similar concern lest money-getting end in too wide a discrepancy between the very rich and the very poor (see, for example, Crèvecoeur and Dwight), but Poor Richard's disciples would scarcely have admitted the possibility that men could labor too hard.

At what, then, did Americans labor? They were primarily an agricultural people in

1765 and they were still so in 1829, but in the interval the economy of the nation underwent great changes which had their due effect upon literature. Three such changes may be mentioned: (1) the shift from a colonial to a national economy, although with continuing conflicts between those who wanted a centralized control of commerce, manufactures, finance, and transportation and those who wanted a large measure of local control; (2) the far-reaching development of industry and the factory system; and (3) the creation, through expansion to the West, of an enormous domestic market.

The colonies in 1766 were dependencies of a nation which, in so far as it had a colonial policy, had accepted the Mercantilist doctrine that overseas possessions should supply the home country with raw materials and serve as a market for manufactured products. The trade regulations based upon this theory caused much hard feeling, as may readily be seen in Franklin's "Edict" and "Rules"; they were, of course, one of the principal causes of the Revolution. Mercantilism was also partially responsible for the British desire to limit expansion to the West, where the control of markets would be more difficult. That attitude aroused as much antagonism, probably, as either the trade regulations or the taxation which was sought to help pay for the French and Indian War; the Virginians were particularly unwilling to give up the West to the Indians. As Paine's *Common Sense* shows, the Americans had arrived at the point where they thought in "continental" terms, and they were determined to control not merely their internal affairs but their economic life as well.

The success of the Revolution permitted the development of home manufactures and the West. The federal government gradually acquired title to the Western lands, and with the Constitution, internal tariff barriers were removed. Washington's *Farewell Address* provides a good view of the hope that the natural economic rivalries of the various sections might be minimized, a hope which was echoed by Jefferson and Jackson. Americans did not agree, however, on the extent to which the central government should aid the states in internal improve-

ments or "protect" infant industries or control the financial structure of the nation. They never have agreed on these matters, but their disagreements were especially sharp in the age of Hamilton's *Report on Manufactures,* of the clamor of the West for roads and canals, and of Jackson's titanic struggle with the Second Bank of the United States (see note, p. 403).

Industrialization was forced upon the United States by the situation in Europe, where France and Great Britain were at war almost continuously from 1793 until 1815. The unprecedented development of American foreign trade involved the nation in its first attempt to make good its right to trade as a neutral with belligerent nations, in the face of Napoleon's Berlin and Milan Decrees and the British Orders in Council. The Embargo Act of 1807 and the War of 1812 are usually credited with effecting a large measure of self-sufficiency in manufactures, although the full effect of the factory system was not to be felt until several decades later. Irving's satire on governing by proclamation (p. 543) suggests the Federalist attitude toward Jefferson's theory of economic isolation to avoid embroilment in war. Bryant's "A Meditation on Rhode Island Coal" (p. 471) reflects the development of industrialization.

The occupation of the West began almost immediately after the Revolution, but it was enormously accelerated by the introduction of new means of transportation. The steamboat reached the Ohio River in 1811, only four years after Robert Fulton's first successful demonstration on the Hudson. Roads and canals followed swiftly; the Cumberland or National Road had reached Zanesville, Ohio, by 1825, the year in which the Erie Canal was completed. The railroad era was soon to come, for construction of the Baltimore and Ohio began in 1828. The West soon had its own literature, reflecting the turbulence of the period, as may be seen in the writings of Morgan Neville (p. 502) and Peter Cartwright (p. 430). Its development is also suggested by Cooper's *The Pioneers,* despite a slightly earlier setting, and by Bryant's "The Prairies" (p. 473). From the time of the *Western Review* (1819-1821) of

Lexington, Kentucky, this Western section had periodicals of its own and a local literature.

RELIGION

Religion remained vastly important to Americans, but it did not occupy quite so central a position in the national life as it had previously. The disruption and damage of the Revolution perceptibly weakened the position of many churches; Congress was forbidden by the Constitution to make any laws leading to the establishment of a state church; and the Bill of Rights asserted the principle of complete religious freedom. Disestablishment in those states which had supported particular churches followed, and the period as a whole displays that wide variety of religious thought to which Americans are now accustomed. Nationalistic tendencies may be discerned in various denominations and in the continued dominance of Protestantism, but they are of minor significance.

This is not to say that religious fervor lessened, or that sectarianism disappeared. The masses wanted churches; denominational rivalries were no less intense; and the literature of religion was still enormous.

Calvinism remained a powerful force through the influence of such followers of Edwards as Dwight, and it may be observed in a watered-down form in certain lines of Bryant's "Inscription for the Entrance to a Wood" (p. 467) and "To a Waterfowl" (p. 468). Revivalism flourished at intervals throughout the period, especially in the West, as Cartwright's autobiography (p. 431) suggests. Quakerism, no longer noisily militant, found its finest American exponent in Woolman.

From the standpoint of literary history, however, the distinctive feature of the age is the emergence of the rationalistic and humanitarian doctrines of Deism and Unitarianism. Neither was new; neither was widely popular. The virulence with which they were both attacked gives us some hint of their effect upon the age, and from this distance it is clear that their common confidence in the powers of the human mind and their common tendency to pre-

sent a man-centered rather than a God-centered world expressed something basic in the times.

Deism, which denied the revelation of God in the Bible, preferring to seek religious truth through human reason, regarded religious duties as primarily humanitarian. Franklin arrived at Deistic beliefs early in life and he seems never to have deserted them. After his *Dissertation on Liberty and Necessity* (1725), however, he never expounded them openly, evidently having reached the conclusion that the orthodox Christian churches operated as a desirable social control, doing more good than harm. Somewhat similar attitudes are to be seen in Crèvecoèur, Freneau, Jefferson, and even Washington. With the French Revolution, however, Deism became momentarily a proselyting faith, spread in Deistic newspapers, magazines, and societies, as well as in more or less formal treatises. Three of the last are worth mention: Ethan Allen's *Reason the Only Oracle of God* (1784), for which the Revolutionary hero of Vermont was largely indebted to a Dr. Thomas Young; Paine's *The Age of Reason* (1794-1795; see p. 408); and Elihu Palmer's *Principles of Nature* (1802). These works were the object of almost unbelievably violent attacks by such orthodox Christians as Dwight, who regarded Deism not only as the worst form of infidelity and materialism but also as the handmaid of political radicalism. Deism was effectually destroyed, for the masses were not willing to give up the authority of the Bible, whatever they thought of social and political controls.

Unitarianism, the denial of the doctrine of the Trinity and the divinity of Jesus Christ, is fully explained in William Ellery Channing's sermon (p. 417). It had been common among the upper and more rationalistic classes in Boston and other large New England towns since the 1780's, and became a matter for violent debate only after 1805, when a Unitarian was appointed to the professorship of divinity in Harvard College. Differing from Deism in its acceptance of revelation, it is chiefly significant for its similar emphasis upon human nature and reason, and for its humanitarianism. The genesis of the succeeding age of reform, in so far as that reform was stimulated by Transcendentalism (see p. 716), has often been found in

Unitarianism. Closely related to it is Universalism, organized as a formal sect in 1794 with the central doctrine that, since God is all-good, He could never have intended other than that all men shall be saved—a position which had been anticipated some years earlier by Charles Chauncy (p. 184). These doctrines, although not widely popular, challenged the dominance of Calvinism throughout the nation.

SCIENCE and EDUCATION

When Benjamin Silliman founded the *American Journal of Science* in 1818 with the express purpose of raising science to "the elevation of our national character," he added one more link to the chain of nationalistic ambitions. The period abounded in new scientific associations, museums, libraries, and colleges. This aspect of the age is seldom apparent in literature because of the advance of specialization, but it is worth recalling to the reader of Franklin, Freneau, the Connecticut Wits, and even Cooper and Poe. Scientific rationalism was spreading rapidly, and it was finding institutional support.

Irving's satire on Jefferson's fondness for gadgets suggests that the advance of science was not universally appreciated, as does Poe's famous sonnet (p. 699). On the other hand, the absence of persistent appeals to a providential order of nature will be observed by every reader, and the scientific world-view may be regarded as generally accepted.

Neither the common schools nor the universities found much genuine state support before 1829; the democratization of education was to come somewhat later. The principle that the state should educate its citizens and exert itself for the diffusion of knowledge was, however, clearly enunciated by Washington (p. 379) and Jefferson (p. 353) and other of the founding fathers. The setting aside of public lands in the West for the maintenance of school systems had not succeeded, but the foundation had been laid. Dwight's prophecy of "new-born Oxfords" in the West (p. 456) and Cooper's account of the grandiose educational dreams of Templeton in *The Pioneers* show that Americans were thinking of education.

The fine arts, relatively unimportant in the colonial period, were especially susceptible to the later urgings of nationalism. Their connection with literature, moreover, was much more intimate than it had been before. While it cannot be said that they attained genuine distinction before 1829, their development was extraordinary and well worth attention.

The piety which had supported portraiture in the earlier age now became patriotic, and the founders of the Republic were given generously such immortality as paint could provide. The numerous portraits of Washington by Gilbert Stuart (1755-1828) are the best-known example of a demand which gave a livelihood to a dozen or more painters in the period. Most of them were trained abroad, many under Benjamin West (1738-1820), an expatriate from Pennsylvania who was President of the Royal Academy from 1792 until his death. Large historical paintings of incidents of the Revolution were also popular, although the most familiar, Emanuel Leutze's "Washington Crossing the Delaware," was painted somewhat later. Most interesting to students of literature, however, because it paralleled the literary search for new material, was the beginning of a landscape school with such painters as Thomas Cole (1801-1848), to whom Bryant addressed a highly characteristic sonnet (p. 472). Numerous galleries, art schools, and associations were founded, of which the most important was the National Academy of the Arts of Design, founded in 1826 and still in existence.

Sculpture was still in the future, although by 1825 a few Americans were settling in Italy to learn that art. They were soon to return to fill the halls of the Capitol at Washington with nationalistic statuary. The carving of ship figureheads was a folk form which later generations have much admired; the observant reader will notice Freneau's reference to the "girl at the head" in his "Lines by H. Salem" (p. 445).

Music became somewhat more popular in the period, with the organization of choral societies in the larger towns, even as far west as Cincinnati. There was much music in the cities.

and in the 1820's opera was introduced. Immigrants continued to provide the most genuine music-lovers, and except for a few songs such as Samuel Woodworth's "The Old Oaken Bucket" (p. 498) not even lyrics were American. Dwight's "Columbia, Columbia, to Glory Arise" is an example of the patriotic songs which found places in the popular books of music. Francis Scott Key's "The Star-Spangled Banner" is the major contribution of the era, but many generations of Americans have lamented that its melody is neither native nor within the range of most American voices.

Perhaps the most fascinating survival of the cultural nationalism of the period is the classical revival in architecture, with which Cooper had so much fun in *The Pioneers.* Sponsored by Jefferson, who fell in love with the Roman remains at Nîmes in southern France (and with the Maison Carré in particular), classical forms dominated both public and domestic architecture from shortly after the Revolution until the 1840's. They were closely connected with the conviction that American tastes should be exemplary and republican; they disregarded, as Cooper so neatly demonstrated, the American climate and the American way of life. Colonial and Georgian styles survived, especially in the seaboard towns, and the great architect of the period is now acknowledged to have been Charles Bulfinch (1763-1844), designer of the State House at Boston. The period is memorable, moreover, for the first architectural competition for designs for the national capitol. T. H.

II. *Literary Trends*

THE CIRCUMSTANCES of LITERARY PUBLICATION

The literate American between 1765 and 1829 had great advantages over his colonial ancestors. He was the heir of an enormous expansion of printing, of the establishment of a periodical

press scarcely equalled in vigor elsewhere in the world, and of the acceptance to a degree before unknown of the protection of literary property by copyright. None of these developments had reached its height by 1829, but their collective importance to literature can scarcely be overemphasized.

Almost all of the books represented in the present chapter were printed in America for American readers. The exceptions—certain pieces by Franklin, Crèvecoeur's *Letters,* Boucher's *View,* and Paine's *Age of Reason*—are those whose circumstances of publication were peculiar. Irving and Cooper were among the few authors who had audiences on both sides of the Atlantic, and they developed the custom of arranging for nearly simultaneous editions in London and New York.

The spread of printing can be suggested by statistics. In 1810 the census found 202 paper mills in the United States. Charles Evans, who sought in his *American Bibliography* to list all American imprints before 1820 (and did not complete the task), found 35,854 items before 1800, of which 25,634 were printed between 1766 and 1799 inclusive, as against 10,220 items between 1639 and 1765. He listed 329 imprints for 1765 and 784 for 1799. Nor was this steady increase centralized; it was, indeed, less so than would be the case today. The chief center of printing until the Revolution was Boston; Philadelphia then held the lead until the 1820's, when it went to New York. But there were presses in all the larger towns, including those in the West, and many of them published books as well as newspapers and magazines. All printing was still by hand, on flat-bed presses, but improvements and industrialization were in the offing. The Columbian Iron Press, developed about 1807, substituted the principle of the fulcrum for that of the screw. Steam and revolving cylinder presses were soon to be adopted, and one American, William Church (1778-1853), had patented in London in 1827 a typecasting and composing machine.

The stimulation to printing was primarily political, for this was the age of party journal-

ism. Much of the political writing by Franklin, Adams, Paine, Jefferson, Hamilton, and Freneau first appeared in newspapers, which, despite paper shortages and military occupations, played a highly valuable part in the Revolution. The war over, newspapers multiplied; it is said that about two hundred were published simultaneously by 1801. Dailies appeared at Philadelphia and New York in 1783 and 1785, when those cities numbered about 25,000 persons. In the Hamilton-Jefferson period, party journalism swiftly came to maturity with the help of Freneau (see p. 437). Newspapers survived the Alien and Sedition Acts (see Freneau's "Stanzas to an Alien," p. 447); their place in political controversy is vividly revealed by Jefferson's attention to them in his *Second Inaugural* (see p. 392). Bryant, it will be remembered (see p. 465), made his fortune as editor and part owner of the New York *Evening Post,* founded by Hamilton in 1801. Throughout the period, in short, newspapers increased rapidly in numbers (by 1829 there were probably more than a thousand of them), in size, and in influence.

Magazines developed more slowly. F. L. Mott has estimated that about seventy-five were begun between 1783 and 1801, several hundred more during the first third of the nineteenth century. Most of them were short-lived, but they played a large part in the rise of belles-lettres. Among those in which material reprinted in the following pages first appeared were the *United States Magazine* (Philadelphia, 1779, edited by H. H. Brackenridge), the *New-York Magazine* (1790-1797), and the *North American Review* (Boston, 1815-1939). Other important literary outlets included the *Farmer's Weekly Museum* (Walpole, N. H., 1793-1810, edited chiefly by Joseph Dennie), the *Columbian Magazine* (Philadelphia, 1786-1792), the *American Museum* (Philadelphia, 1787-1792), the *Massachusetts Magazine* (Boston, 1789-1796), and the *Port Folio* (Philadelphia, 1801-1827, edited by Dennie). These periodicals, and others like them all over the nation, provided a market for poems, essays, fiction, and literary criticism such as had never before been available. They were the background

for the magazine world which supported Edgar Allan Poe in the next decade (see p. 645).

The American author, moreover, was favored after 1790 by a national copyright law protecting him from the unauthorized use of his work within the United States (but not, it will be noted, abroad) for a period of fourteen years, with the possibility of an extension for another fourteen. This law, based upon the similar law passed in Great Britain in 1710, and upon legislation in Connecticut in 1783, was a great boon, although it did not protect American writers from the competition of pirated English books. International copyright was not achieved until 1891.

The book trade developed rapidly after the Revolution, and before the end of the period publishing, as now understood, was replacing older methods of bridging the gap between author and reader. Bookstores and printing establishments transformed themselves into publishers, and some of the familiar names of present-day publishing appeared. The firm of Wiley was founded by Charles Wiley in 1807, that of Harper by J. and J. Harper, printers, in 1817, that of Appleton by Daniel Appleton in 1825. Americans, nevertheless, were still largely dependent upon Great Britain; it has been estimated that American presses supplied only twenty per cent of current books in 1820, only thirty per cent in 1830.

NATIONALISM and ROMANTICISM

The content of American literature between 1765 and 1829 was, we have seen, largely determined by the peculiar circumstances of American life, and shows in large measure the dominant nationalistic pattern of thought of the period. When we turn, however, to problems of literary form, we are at once impressed by a quite dissimilar and even a conflicting factor—the continuing influence of European and especially English literary tradition. Our early national literature was written at approximately the same time as the so-called romantic revival, and its connections with that movement are so numerous that some scholars have preferred to describe it as American romanticism.

Romanticism is one of those tags of literary history which are useful as broad generalizations but impossible to define precisely. It was first used to serve as a contrast to classicism, in a description of the difference between the prevailing literary temper of the years between 1775 and 1837 and the prevailing literary temper of the century immediately preceding. The foremost English romanticists were Wordsworth, Coleridge, Scott, Byron, Shelley, and Keats, all of them except Scott primarily poets. Despite their wide divergences of temperament and literary production, they represented, taken together, something new in English literature.

The American romanticists included in the present chapter (it must be remembered that numerous later writers might be grouped with them) are Freneau, Bryant, Irving, Cooper, and Poe. Cooper wrote only prose, Irving only a poem or two, and Poe is quite as famous for his prose fiction and criticism as for his poetry. Nevertheless, these writers too, like their English contemporaries, represent something new. Their similarity may be readily demonstrated by brief consideration of five elements which are generally accepted as identifying marks of romanticism.

(1) The revolt against the literary forms and ideas of the period of classicism, evident in varying ways in the work of Wordsworth, Byron, and Shelley, has some parallel in the relatively new forms of fiction developed by Irving, Cooper, and Poe, and in the political poetry of Freneau and Bryant.

(2) The new emphasis upon the imaginative and emotional qualities of literature, apparent in all the English romanticists, is likewise observable in all the Americans. It includes a liking for the picturesque, the exotic, the sensuous, the sensational, and the supernatural, and sometimes, as in the case of Poe, all of them together.

(3) The strong tendency to exalt the individual and the common man, characteristic especially of Wordsworth, was in America almost a national religion, as we have seen.

(4) The fresh interest in external nature, for which Wordsworth is again most famous, may be felt in the poetry of Freneau and Bryant and in the novels of Cooper.

(5) The literary use of the more colorful aspects of the past, common in the work of Coleridge, Scott, and Keats, is also to be found in Freneau's use of the "ruins of empire" theme, in Bryant's fascination by the Mound Builders, in Irving's effort to exploit the legends of the Hudson River region, and in Cooper's long series of historical tales.

It is not surprising, therefore, that the Americans have often been compared with the English romanticists. Doubtless they were deeply influenced by the literary fashions of Great Britain and instances may be shown of direct imitation. Yet we must not too hastily dismiss all of their work as imitative, nor ignore their very great differences from the English. Americans contributed to romanticism as much, perhaps, as they derived from it. The interplay of forms and ideas was simply the continuation of a cultural bond with Europe which no degree of national pride could wholly sever. Always the American writers were drawn in two directions, on the one hand to their own land, which usually furnished them with the content for their writings, and on the other hand to that cosmopolitan tradition which ordinarily furnished them with the forms in which they shaped their ideas.

TYPES of DIMINISHING IMPORTANCE

A distinctive feature of the period is the rise to greater importance than ever before of poetry, the essay, drama, and fiction—those belletristic forms in which the ideas of the writer are shaped within a fairly well defined aesthetic pattern. It cannot be said that Americans uniformly displayed, within these forms, that cultural independence which they thought so desirable. The rise of belles-lettres nevertheless indicates the appearance of a class of men who thought of themselves as literary artists, and of a reading public ready for literature other than the merely informational or utilitarian.

With the advent of more polished and more self-consciously literary writers, the distinctive

ideas of the age were much more likely to find expression in belles-lettres than had previously been the case. Accounts of voyages, promotion tracts, sermons, histories, and biographies continued to be written, but they no longer had a central place.

The only material closely related to the accounts of voyages and the promotion tracts in the following pages is Crèvecoeur's *Letters,* Bartram's *Travels* having been included in Chapter One. The most cursory examination of Crèvecoeur will show that his book is more like a series of familiar essays than like the writing of Bartram and his predecessors. The older types by no means disappeared, but they take a subordinate place, in such works as Jonathan Carver's *Travels* (1778), Jefferson's *Notes on the State of Virginia* (written about 1782), Flint's *Geography and History of the Mississippi Valley* (1827), and the travel books of Bryant, Cooper, and Irving. An especially interesting survival is Poe's extensive use of the "imaginary voyage" form in the *Narrative of Arthur Gordon Pym* and other minor works.

Sermons similarly became freer and more polished, under the influence of ideals of composition like those expressed by Channing. They were still innumerable, but the only sermon besides Channing's included here is one by Boucher. Dwight's sermons are probably more typical of the time than Channing's, but they and the hundreds of others published during the period are now seldom read. The methods of oral discourse developed in the pulpit had their influence upon political oratory, which, as we shall see, now came into favor.

As we should expect, the nationalistic temper of the period had an immediate effect upon history and biography. The events of the Revolution were recorded, its heroes immortalized by such works as John Marshall's *Life of Washington* (1804-1807), and there was a flood of local histories, headed by Jeremy Belknap's *History of New Hampshire* (1784-1792). Little of this work was objective, and Irving's burlesque of antiquarianism and local pedantry (see p. 539) was doubtless needed. Not for several decades was history of literary merit and

sound scholarship to be popularized by Prescott, Motley, and Parkman. Cooper's history of the United States Navy and Irving's many biographies should not, however, be forgotten. Such writings were thoroughly characteristic of the period in which these men matured.

POLEMICAL TRACTS and TREATISES

The literature of persuasion was, of course, outstanding in an age of constant political discussion. It had a conspicuous place from the first, as we have seen; now it reached a very high level indeed in such examples as Franklin's "Edict" and "Rules," Adams' *Novanglus,* Paine's *Common Sense, American Crisis,* and *Age of Reason,* and *The Federalist.* Many other works might be named from the period, for the great bulk of political writings belongs to this class, as do many theological treatises. Closely related to the tract and treatise on the one hand, and to the sermon on the other, are the innumerable political addresses and orations, here represented by the farewell addresses of Washington and Jackson, and by Jefferson's inaugurals.

As was the case in the colonial period, the structure of this material defies generalization. Certain new tendencies are, however, evident. The development of newspapers and magazines made place for short pieces like Franklin's, and for lengthy series of essays and letters such as those by Adams, Paine (in the *Crisis*), and Hamilton. The latter were quite evidently influenced by the rise to prominence of the English periodical essay.

Topical arrangement continued to dominate, with the nature of the controversy determining the pattern. Of especial interest are the meticulous planning of *The Federalist,* described in the first number of that series, and the variety which was achieved by Paine, both in *Common Sense* and in the *Crisis* series.

The addresses and orations will be found to have remarkably similar structure, except that to the topical arrangement the speaker's invariable exordium (introduction) and peroration (conclusion) are added. The modest beginning and the highly dignified conclusion, often

embodying an appeal to divine guidance, which characterize all of the political speeches in the following pages, are still a part of the pattern of discourse expected of our national leaders.

The rhetorical height of the period was unquestionably the Declaration of Independence, which combines the topical structure of the tract with the tones and methods of oratory. The revisions of Jefferson's first draft (p. 359) provide an opportunity to study the standards of the Revolutionary period. The careful balance of emotion and reason makes the Declaration a model of its kind, and it is not surprising that its phrases have never lost their vividness. Paine's writings have a similar oratorical ring, as do Hamilton's (although less frequently); it is unfortunate that we have no authentic text of the speeches with which Patrick Henry and James Otis electrified their audiences, for they too were doubtless masterpieces of persuasion.

DIARIES and AUTOBIOGRAPHIES

Franklin's *Autobiography* (p. 245) and Woolman's *Journal* (p. 299) would be found upon any list of the great books of the period, and the enduring attraction of diaries and autobiographies is also attested by the inclusion herein of the efforts in these forms by Jefferson (p. 355) and Cartwright (p. 431). All these men had a didactic purpose, ethical, religious, or political, but Cartwright shows some wish to be entertaining. The structure of such writings is ordinarily chronological, with success depending almost wholly upon the attractiveness of the personality self-revealed. Woolman is of course the fulfilment of the tradition of spiritual autobiography, Franklin the most striking evidence of the secularization of American life. More than one commentator has noted the thought-provoking contrast between the two men.

POEMS

Poetry had been cultivated from the first in America; it now began to bulk much larger. The present chapter contains examples of the work of three poets who would be included in any

list of major American verse-makers: Freneau, Bryant, and Poe. Represented also are the poets of the Revolution, the Connecticut Wits—Dwight and Barlow, and the sentimentalists —Wilde and Woodworth.

The singers of the Revolution were more concerned with propaganda than with artistic finish, but the relative sophistication of their forms as compared with those of the *Bay Psalm Book* and *The Day of Doom* is immediately evident. Popular ballad meters were retained, together with such ballad devices as repetition and refrain, but both "Yankee Doodle" and "The Battle of the Kegs" consistently use feminine rhymes and "Nathan Hale," probably the finest of the anonymous ballads, has a subjectivity unusual in the type.

The Revolutionary songs are, in fact, somewhat more free and fresh in their forms than most of the poems of the Connecticut Wits, who regarded themselves as the "highbrows" of their time. The Wits had studied English literature and accepted the "rules" of classicism, including that respect for established types which is sometimes described as the "tyranny of the genres." Dwight thought so highly of Denham, Pope, Thomson, and Goldsmith that he incorporated whole lines of theirs in *Greenfield Hill* and deliberately imitated their forms and diction, even though he was dealing with American themes and problems. Barlow, least conservative of the Wits, felt most at home in the mock-heroic and the iambic pentameter couplet perfected (and worn out) by the predecessors and contemporaries of Pope. Nor are the examples here the most flagrant instances of the way in which a reverence for classical forms vitiated the sometimes original ideas of the Connecticut Wits. Their efforts at the epic—Dwight's *Conquest of Canaan* (1785) and Barlow's *Columbiad* (1807)—are the most familiar evidences of misguided nationalistic endeavor.

We may leave sentimentalism for definition in connection with fiction, remembering, however, that such pieces as "The Lament of the Captive" and "The Old Oaken Bucket" merely foreshadow the reign of tears and self-pity in the holiday gift-books of the 1830's and 1840's.

These poems reflect the romantic tradition quite as obviously as those of the Connecticut Wits reflect the Neoclassical, but they are much less pretentious and appealed to a public only casually concerned with literary art.

Freneau, Bryant, and Poe, taken together, show the steady progress of romanticism in America. Freneau's admiration for the classics, Milton, and Ossian identifies him as a precursor of the romantic revival as was the English poet Thomas Gray, whom he much resembles. Bryant, with his many similarities to Wordsworth, had deep roots in the English poetic theory of the eighteenth century; his concept of the imagination and his emphasis upon the moral quality of beauty sometimes were in conflict with his more romantic glorification of emotion. In Poe, finally, we may see the central conviction that the business of the poet is simply the creation of beauty or, in other words, the achievement of an aesthetic effect with no relation to moral truth—an extreme romantic view. A similar progress in forms is evident, paralleling the change from established patterns to great variety which had taken place slightly earlier in English poetry. Freneau's regular verse forms give way to Bryant's experiments with anapestic substitutions in iambic meter and, eventually, to Poe's notion of organic form, which amounted in practice to such emphasis upon the musical and emotional effects of rhyme, alliteration, and assonance that sometimes, as in "Ulalume," sound became more important than sense.

Examination of the minor poetry written between 1765 and 1829 will corroborate this description of the trend, and may be conveniently accomplished by looking through some of the anthologies of the age. Elihu Hubbard Smith's *American Poems, Selected and Original* (1793), *The Columbian Muse* (1794), and Samuel Kettell's *Specimens of American Poetry* (1829) are particularly valuable. The transition was by no means over by 1829.

ESSAYS

Newspapers and magazines played their part in the increase of poetic production, but they were most fundamental, perhaps, to the American development of the literary essay. The

essay form had firmly established itself in England with *The Spectator* (begun 1711) of Addison and Steele, and its prestige was much enhanced by Samuel Johnson, Oliver Goldsmith, and other later authors. Its brevity and variety, together with the ease with which it could be adapted to didactic purposes, made it very attractive to Americans, who had had nothing quite like it before except the squibs in the almanacs (see Franklin's "Way to Wealth," p. 264, and the excerpts from Thomas' almanacs, p. 499). As early as 1722 Franklin was imitating *The Spectator* in his brother's newspaper, over the signature of "Silence Dogood." Thereafter the newspaper or magazine which lacked its "Tomo Cheeki" (Freneau) or "Jonathan Oldstyle" (Irving) or "Oliver Oldschool" (Joseph Dennie) was a rarity. The attempt to maintain a dignified anonymity gave a sameness to these productions in a type which depends for its success upon the personality, even the idiosyncrasy, of the author. In Irving's *Sketch Book,* however, the essay achieved genuine distinction. Crèvecoeur, moreover, has some claim to being regarded as one of the earliest of nature essayists.

Newspaper and magazine requirements were likewise responsible for the beginnings of American literary criticism, in reviews and leading articles such as those by Poe (p. 646). Bryant's lectures on poetry (p. 482), although prepared for oral delivery, might easily have taken the review form, as much of his other criticism did. The earliest American reviewers learned their trade from the British quarterlies, much as they deplored the strictures of those journals on American politics and culture.

PLAYS

Imitation and adaptation of European models, combined with the all-pervading nationalism, appeared also in the drama. Royall Tyler's *The Contrast,* produced in 1787, is an admirable illustration of the trend.

Important changes in the theatrical situation must first be noted. The repertoire company system which had grown up during the colonial period survived the closing of most of

the principal theaters in the decade after 1774, but before 1829 it was giving way to the "star" system, which throughout the nineteenth century brought famous English actors to tour the chief American cities. Prejudice against the theater lessened, as is evident from the opening of an undisguised theater in Boston in 1794, and the repeal in 1789 of a long-ignored Pennsylvania law against stage plays. Neither public support nor international copyright laws yet favored a native drama. All that can be said is that the theater became firmly established, with an ever-increasing number of native-born actors, managers, and playwrights.

Some native plays, now lost, may have been produced in the years just before the Revolution. During the conflict itself some political use was made of dramatic dialogues and satires, but few of them were actually produced. H. H. Brackenridge's *Battle of Bunkers Hill* (1776) is typical. Beginning with Tyler, however, American playwrights began to see their work on the professional stage. Many of them were amateurs like Tyler and James Nelson Barker (1784-1858) of Philadelphia. Two—William Dunlap (1766-1839) and John Howard Payne (1791-1852)—made the theater their profession, so that a brief description of their work will provide an impression of theatrical affairs and of the difficulties which lay in the way of native drama. Their plays were traditional in structure; it is only in experimental theaters that attempts are made to extend the limits of dramatic form.

Dunlap, born in New Jersey, was a boy in New York City during the Revolution. Between 1784 and 1787 he was in London, studying painting under Benjamin West and attending plays. Soon after his return to New York he began writing, and in 1789 had his first production. Before his death he wrote at least twenty-nine original plays, adapted and translated twenty-one more from the German and the French, and published, in 1832, the first history of the American theater. As manager of the Park Theater in New York in 1796-1805, he turned largely to foreign themes and fashions, but his most famous tragedy, *André* (acted in

1798), was based upon a well-known spy story of the Revolution and exemplifies the tendency to use nationalistic material.

Payne, like Washington Irving, did most of his writing for the English audience, and was inclined to be critical of the failure of his countrymen to support native authors. Like Irving, too, he was at length rewarded for his services as literary ambassador by consular appointments. Payne's distinction rests upon the fact that he was first of all an actor, trained in the American theaters. He went to England in 1813 and did not return for nineteen years. Over sixty plays have been attributed to him; the best known are the tragedy of *Brutus* (1818), which became one of the widely popular plays of the century; *Clari or the Maid of Milan* (1823), an adaptation from the French into which was inserted Payne's most famous composition, "Home, Sweet Home"; and *Charles the Second* (1826), a comedy in which Washington Irving was his collaborator. As the titles indicate, Payne looked abroad for his themes and models.

At home, however, Tyler had numerous successors in the attempt to glorify the Revolutionary struggle and native American types. Not many of them had sufficient theatrical sense to succeed, and it may be added in their defense that the drama everywhere was in one of its not infrequent doldrums.

NOVELS and SHORT STORIES

The prejudice against fiction which had marked the colonial period did not disappear in America until well after 1800. Jefferson, Dwight, and Noah Webster must be counted among the many who expressed belief that stories gave wholly false notions of life to impressionable youth. Nevertheless, fiction grew steadily more popular. In the late eighteenth century circulating libraries specializing in fiction prospered at the expense of the young ladies who demanded romance, and the new magazines, although expressing a suitable editorial concern about the possible moral effect of fiction, could not afford to bar it from their pages. By the 1780's American authors were ready to help supply the market with native productions,

often meeting the anticipated criticism by protestations that their tales were drawn from "real life," or pointing out that they invariably portrayed the awful consequences of sin and the fair rewards of virtue. That sin was made attractive was purely coincidental.

The prevailing nationalism was evident in the quest for American settings and characters, but the American novel in its first stages was heavily indebted to English models. Three distinct trends may be discerned, in an order which is roughly chronological. (1) The earliest American novels were adaptations of the fiction of sentiment and sensibility which had made the reputations of Samuel Richardson and Laurence Sterne; Mrs. Hannah Webster Foster's *The Coquette* (p. 489) is generally regarded as the best example of the type. (2) Americans next imitated the sensationalism of the so-called Gothic romance, as practiced in its later stages by Mrs. Ann Radcliffe, and the mystery-laden propaganda novel of which William Godwin's *Caleb Williams* (1794) is typical; this trend is illustrated by the work of Charles Brockden Brown (1771-1810) and, so far as propaganda is concerned, by H. H. Brackenridge's *Modern Chivalry.* (3) Finally, the society or domestic novel for which Fanny Burney and Jane Austen were famous and the historical romance as developed by Sir Walter Scott became naturalized in the United States; in these forms James Fenimore Cooper led the way, achieving the first really striking success.

Sentiment and sensibility—alike in their release of the "tender" emotions but differing in that sentimentalism was didactic and moral, sensibility deliberately throat-filling and tear-jerking—can scarcely be separated in *The Power of Sympathy; or, The Triumph of Nature* (1789), written "to expose the dangerous Consequences of Seduction and to set forth the advantages of female Education." Usually accepted as the first American novel, it was long attributed to Mrs. Sarah Wentworth Morton, but is now claimed for William Hill Brown. Mrs. Susanna Haswell Rowson's *Charlotte Temple, a Tale of Truth* (1790) was more popular. Many other sentimental novels might be named, and seduction and suicide and floods of tears

filled many pages of fiction far into the nineteenth century. For most readers, however, *The Coquette* will be sufficient introduction to the type. Its form—a series of letters—was derived from Richardson's *Pamela* and *Clarissa Harlowe* and, while not universal, was characteristic. The contemporary attitude toward such fiction may be accurately gauged by *The Contrast* (p. 509), in which sentimentalism is vigorously attacked.

Charles Brockden Brown made use of the epistolary form in *Jane Talbot* (1801) and *Clara Howard* (1801), but he is better known for his "thrillers": *Wieland* (1798), *Ormond* (1799), *Arthur Mervyn* (1799-1800), and *Edgar Huntley* (1801). These are remarkable for their use of such mysteries as ventriloquism and sleep-walking, as well as for wonder-working heroes and deep-dyed villains. Brown's imitation of the Gothic romance and of Godwin is unmistakable but not slavish. His work shows traces also of social purpose. That theme, however, was best used by Brackenridge, whose models were *Don Quixote* and Henry Fielding. *Modern Chivalry* is a rambling book, partly a satirical tract on the times (for which it is now usually read) and partly a picaresque romance, with Teague O'Regan as its rogue hero.

The work of Cooper, weak as it is in some respects, was a clear improvement over earlier attempts in the form. His first effort, *Precaution* (1820), was an imitation of the Jane Austen type of English domestic fiction, and foreshadowed a lifelong concern with social distinctions. *The Spy* (1821) was doubtless suggested by the success of the then unidentified author of *Waverley* and *Ivanhoe* in combining history and fiction. Nationalism helped to make Cooper's work popular, but he must be credited with great skill in obtaining suspense in those parts of his novels in which physical action dominates, as well as with advances in the use of setting and in characterization. The escape-pursuit pattern, evident at intervals throughout *The Pioneers,* is the structure in which he excelled; unfortunately he often combined it with overelaborate mysteries such as that of the Effinghams. Unquestionably, however, Cooper made the American novel respectable, and his excursions into new types were paralleled by the novels of Lydia

Maria Child (1802-1880), Catherine Maria Sedgwick (1769-1867), and James Kirke Paulding (1778-1860).

Unlike the novel, the short story was largely dependent upon the magazines, and therefore had a relatively even start in international competition. Its beginnings are closely connected with those of the essay and with "characters," delineations of unusual or typical personalities. Franklin came close to the short story in "The Way to Wealth" (p. 264) and "The Ephemera" (p. 278), while Crèvecoeur's "The American Belisarius" is half-essay, half-story. The English magazines, although full of Oriental and moral tales, widely imitated in America, had not perfected the short story by 1815, nor had the German and French storytellers. The Americans had, therefore, a relatively new field, in which the contributions of Irving and Poe were outstanding. Although not many of their contemporaries rivalled them (see Morgan Neville, for example, p. 502), it is not unreasonable to argue that with the short story the Americans first took a place in the main stream of world literature.

The story sketches of Irving retained many of the characteristics of the essay: a sense of the author's presence and manipulation, leisurely movement, a fullness of detail that is sometimes almost digression, and the achievement of atmosphere rather than suspense and sharp climax. With Poe, however, a close student of magazine requirements, the short story became distinctive. His detective tales, his scientific tales, his psychological studies, his tales of terror—all have a structural sureness which has been universally admired and imitated. They are often regarded as the first and the best of their kind.

Writing in 1835 to T. W. White, owner of the *Southern Literary Messenger,* Poe remarked that editors were demanding tales containing "the ludicrous heightened into the grotesque; the fearful colored into the horrible; the witty exaggerated into the burlesque; and the singular heightened into the strange and mystical." He could turn out stories with any of these effects, but he was at his best in creating the second and the fourth of them. "The Fall

of the House of Usher," "Ligeia," "The Masque of the Red Death," and "The Cask of Amontillado" are all spine-tingling, gooseflesh-raising stories. They owe something, no doubt, to the Gothic romances, but Poe's artistic genius, which was marked by a passion for unity of effect, raises them far above his models. To the most romantically unreal situations imaginable he brought such realistic and carefully ordered detail, such psychological convincingness, that many generations of readers have reacted exactly as Poe intended that they should.

His theory that the short story should produce one single effect—and one only—is now regarded as too cramping; there are many other purposes which a short-story writer may legitimately pursue. Poe, however, presented his conception of a story so clearly (in his review of *Twice-Told Tales,* p. 646), and carried it out so effectively in his own work, that it was accepted almost without challenge down to the twentieth century. Whatever may have been its limitations, it remains one of the most original aesthetic positions in American literature. Working within it, Poe produced a substantial body of short fiction which belongs with the classics, not merely of the United States but of the world. T. H.

Chronological Table of Literature and History

1766

Numerous pamphlets printed relating to the Stamp Act and the right of Parliament to tax the colonies • Oliver Goldsmith's The Vicar of Wakefield, English novel

Franklin examined before the House of Commons, 28 January • Declaratory Act, 7 March, affirmed the right of Parliament to legislate for the colonies "in all cases whatsoever" • Stamp Act repealed, 18 March

1767

John Dickinson's **Letters from a Farmer in Pennsylvania**, a shrewd presentation of the conviction that British regulation of colonial trade had been unfair

Townshend Acts, effective 20 November, imposed duties on paper, tea, glass, and painter's lead entering American ports • The Earl of Hillsborough became secretary of state responsible for American affairs

1768

Circular Letter, drafted by Samuel Adams for the Massachusetts House of Representatives, urged all colonial assemblies to resist the policies of the British ministry

Massachusetts House was dissolved after defying Hillsborough's order that it rescind the **Circular Letter** • British troops moved to Boston from Halifax to impress the Whig "extremists"

1769

Samuel Adams and others, **An Appeal to the World, or a Vindication of the Town of Boston**

Nonimportation agreements adopted throughout the colonies, winning British merchants to press for the repeal of the Townshend Acts • Dartmouth College founded

1770

Woolman's **Considerations on the True Harmony of Mankind** • Goldsmith's **Deserted Village**, English poem popular in America

Boston Massacre, 5 March • Townshend Acts repealed, with the exception of the duty on tea • Thomas Hutchinson became Governor of Massachusetts • Population (estimated) about 2,200,000

1771

Franklin wrote the first part of his **Autobiography** • **Encyclopaedia Britannica**, first edition

First spinning-mill established by Samuel Arkwright in Derbyshire, England

1772

Philip Freneau and H. H. Brackenridge, **Rising Glory of America**

Death of John Woolman • Local committee of correspondence formed in Boston by Samuel Adams • The **Gaspee**, a revenue cutter, burned by exasperated citizens of Rhode Island

1773

Franklin's "Edict by the King of Prussia" and "Rules by Which a Great Empire May be Reduced to a Small One," in the London **Public Advertiser** • Woolman's **Serious Considerations on Various Important Subjects** • Goldsmith's **She Stoops to Conquer**, English comedy

Hutchinson Letters sent to Boston by Franklin undermine the little remaining colonial confidence in the British ministry • Intercolonial committees of correspondence established • Boston Tea Party, 16 December

1774

Woolman's **Journal** • John Adams' "Novanglus" letters in the Boston **Gazette** • Thomas Jefferson's **Summary View of the Rights of British America** • Alexander Hamilton's **Vindication of the Measures of Congress** • Francis Hopkinson's **Pretty Story**, a political allegory • Edmund Burke's **Speech on American Taxation**, best example of the British Whig support for American complaints against the policy of the ministry • Chesterfield's **Letters to His Son**, English gentleman's account of the manners of a man of the world • Goethe's **Sorrows of Werther**, German romantic novel

Five "Intolerable Acts" passed by Parliament: (1) Boston Port Bill closing that port to all but essential commerce until the tea should be paid for; (2) Massachusetts Government Act giving the royal governor added power and virtually suppressing town meetings; (3) Act for the Impartial Administration of Justice providing trial in England when the governor believed a fair trial in the local courts was improbable; (4) Quartering Act, giving the colonial governors the power to requisition buildings for the use of royal troops; and (5) Quebec Act recognizing French law and Roman Catholicism in Canada, whose boundaries were extended to include the Ohio country • First Continental Congress met in Philadelphia, 5 September, demanded the repeal of the "Intolerable Acts," and formed a "Continental Association" for administering nonimportation and nonexportation agreements • Sharp division of Americans on the question of resistance to British policy, the Tories or Loyalists deploring the acts of the illegally constituted Congress, the Whigs or Patriots applauding them • Thomas Paine arrived in Pennsylvania

1775

Samuel Seabury's **Westchester Farmer** pamphlets, the most important exposition of the Loyalist position • Hamilton's **The Farmer Refuted** • Trumbull's **M'Fingal**, first part • Burke's **Speech on Conciliation with America**, the plea of a British Whig for resolution of the difficulties • Samuel Johnson's **Taxation No Tyranny**, a typical British Tory pamphlet

General Gage marched from Boston to seize military supplies at Concord, 18 April, his intention being announced by Paul Revere—"The redcoats are coming" • Skirmishes at Lexington and Concord, 19 April • Second Continental Congress convened at Philadelphia, 10 May • Battle of Bunker Hill, 17 June • Washington assumed command of the Continental Army besieging Boston, 3 July • Americans captured Montreal, November, but failed in an attack on Quebec and were eventually forced to withdraw from Canada

1776

Paine's **Common Sense** • **The Declaration of Independence** • Adam Smith's **Wealth of Nations**, English economic treatise advocating laissez faire

Boston evacuated by the British, 17 March • Sentiment for independence culminated in the Declaration, signed 4 July and 2 August • British army landed on Long Island, 22 August, and soon occupied Manhattan Island • Nathan Hale executed, 22 September • Washington and his troops forced to retreat across New Jersey • Americans heartened by victory at Trenton, 26 December, after Washington's dramatic crossing of the Delaware • Various naval actions, in which John Paul Jones emerged as a skillful leader • Organization of state governments begun

1777

Hopkinson's **Political Catechism** • Richard Brinsley Sheridan's **School for Scandal**, English comedy

First supplies received from France • British occupied Philadelphia, September • General Burgoyne, after marching from Canada, surrendered a force of 5800 men to the Americans under General Gates at Saratoga, 17 October • Articles of Confederation, legalizing the Continental Congress, submitted to the states for ratification; finally adopted in 1781, after lengthy discussion of the titles to Western lands • "Conway Cabal" to displace Washington as commander-in-chief failed • Winter quarters at Valley Forge

1778

Freneau's **America Independent**

Death of Rousseau and Voltaire, French philosophers • American independence recognized by France and a military alliance effected • Unofficial aid received from Spain • Philadelphia evacuated by the British, 18 June

1779

Hopkinson's **Battle of the Kegs**

Spain declared war on Great Britain, 16 June • The **Serapis** captured by John Paul Jones and the **Bon Homme Richard**, 23 September

1780

British captured Charleston • Spaniards took Mobile • Benedict Arnold's treason discovered, 26 September • Major John André executed, 2 October • Various military actions in North Carolina and Virginia, hereafter the chief battle area • Population (estimated) about 2,800,000

1781

Freneau's **British Prison-Ship** • Samuel Peters' **General History of Connecticut** • Immanuel Kant's **Critique of Pure Reason**, German philosophical treatise • Rousseau's **Confessions**, French autobiography

Action at Eutaw Springs, South Carolina, 8 September • British campaign in the South ended with the surrender of Cornwallis and his troops at Yorktown, Virginia, 19 October

1782

Crèvecoeur's **Letters from an American Farmer**

Provisional treaty of peace signed at Paris, 30 November • First balloon ascension, observed by Franklin near Paris

1783

End of the war proclaimed by Washington, 19 April • Society of the Cincinnati formed • Treaty of Paris, 3 September, recognized American independence, restored Florida to Spain, various East Indian territories to France, and certain West Indian islands to Great Britain • New York evacuated by the British, 25 November

1784

Ordinance providing for the survey and sale of public lands in the West, supplemented by Ordinances of 1785 and 1787 (the latter being the famous Northwest Ordinance)

1785

Timothy Dwight's **Conquest of Canaan**

John Adams appointed minister to Great Britain, with instructions to negotiate commercial agreements and settlement of Western land question, the British being still garrisoned in the forts at Detroit, Niagara, and elsewhere • Jefferson appointed American minister to France • Franklin returned to Philadelphia • American ships seized by Algerine pirates

1786

Royall Tyler's **Contrast** acted • Freneau's **Poems** • Robert Burns' **Poems chiefly in the Scottish dialect**, first edition

Steamboat experiments by John Fitch on the Delaware and by James Ramsey on the Potomac • Shays' Rebellion in Massachusetts, first Populist uprising • Annapolis Convention, September, dominated by Hamilton, issued call for a convention to consider amending the Articles of Confederation • Second Ohio Company organized in Boston

1787

John Adams' **Defence of the Constitutions of Government of the United States**, first volume • Joel Barlow's **Vision of Columbus** • **The Constitution of the United States**, published 19 September

Death of Charles Chauncy • Constitutional Convention held at Philadelphia, 14 May–17 September • Constitution submitted for ratification by the states, nine votes being sufficient to put it into effect

1788

Hamilton, James Madison, and John Jay, **The Federalist** • Freneau's **Miscellaneous Works** • London **Times** established

Constitution ratified by the ninth state, New Hampshire, 6 April • Marietta, Ohio, settled by the Ohio Company

1789

Washington's **First Inaugural** • John Adams' **Discourses on Davila** begun

Constitution in effect, 4 March • Washington and Adams chosen President and Vice-President, 6 April • Washington inaugurated in New York City, 30 April • Fall of the Bastille, Paris, 14 July • Declaration of the Rights of Man, 4 August

1790

Susanna Haswell Rowson's **Charlotte Temple**, among the best-known of early American novels • Burke's **Reflections on the Revolution in France**, classic British example of the conservative reaction to events in France

Death of Benjamin Franklin • First United States census: population of approximately 4,000,000

1791

William Bartram's **Travels** • Barlow's **Advice to the Privileged Orders** • Paine's **Rights of Man**, first part • Hamilton's **Report on Manufactures** • **National Gazette** founded, with Freneau as editor

First ten amendments to the Constitution • First Bank of the United States chartered • Vermont admitted as the fourteenth state • Louis XVI fled from Paris, but was captured and returned • French Constitution adopted

1792

H. H. Brackenridge's **Modern Chivalry**, first part • Barlow's **Conspiracy of Kings** • Paine's **Age of Reason**, first part

Kentucky admitted as the fifteenth state • Paine imprisoned in Paris, as the French Revolution became more and more violent • First French Republic proclaimed, 22 September • Capitol at Washington begun • Washington reëlected President

1793

Louis XVI executed • France declared war on Great Britain, Holland, and Spain, being already at war with Austria and Prussia • "Citizen" Genêt landed in the United States, April • United States proclaimed neutrality despite the alliance of 1778 with France • Reign of Terror in France • Cotton gin invented by Eli Whitney • Jefferson resigned as secretary of state

1794

Dwight's **Greenfield Hill**

Whiskey Insurrection in western Pennsylvania • Robespierre executed, 28 July

1795

Treaty of San Lorenzo permitted American navigation of the Mississippi and the deposit of export goods at New Orleans duty free • French government organized as a Directory

1796

Barlow's **Hasty Pudding** • Washington's **Farewell Address**

Tennessee admitted as the sixteenth state • John Adams chosen second President, with Jefferson as Vice-President • British troops finally withdrawn from the Western forts • Napoleon Bonaparte achieved spectacular military victories for France in northern Italy

1797

Anti-French feeling increased by the attempt of Talleyrand, foreign minister for the Directory, to bribe American emissaries—"X. Y. Z. affair," origin of the phrase "Millions for defense, but not one cent for tribute"

1798

Charles Brockden Brown's **Wieland,** first of a long series of novels • William Wordsworth and Samuel Taylor Coleridge, **Lyrical Ballads,** a landmark in the development of the English Romantic Movement • Malthus' **Essay on the Principle of Population,** pioneer English study in sociology

Alien and Sedition Laws, an expression of the Federalist fear of "French principles" • The Virginia and Kentucky Resolutions, setting forth the states' rights position of the Jeffersonian Republicans • Napoleon invaded Egypt

1799

Brown's **Ormond** • Tyler's **Algerine Captive**

Death of George Washington and Patrick Henry • Napoleon, his Egyptian campaign a failure, returned to France and by a **coup d'état,** 9 November, overthrew the Directory and became First Consul

1800

Mason Weems' **Life of Washington,** origin of the cherry-tree story • Nathaniel Bowditch's **American Practical Navigator,** first edition

Jefferson elected third President • United States census: population of nearly 5,500,000 • Government of France centralized and military power rebuilt by Napoleon • Louisiana ceded by Spain to France by the secret Treaty of San Ildefonso

1801

Brown's **Edgar Huntley** • New York **Evening Post** established • Chateaubriand's **Atala,** French novel

Numerous Federalist judges appointed under the "lame duck" Judiciary Act • John Marshall became Chief Justice of the Supreme Court • Jefferson inaugurated in the new capital city, Washington • Tripoli declared war on the United States

1802

Ohio admitted as seventeenth state • Peace of Amiens established temporary truce between France and England • Napoleon named Consul for life

1803

The Monthly Anthology and Boston Review established

Louisiana purchased from Napoleon for $15,000,000 • Expedition under Meriwether Lewis sent to the Northwest, under authorization made by Congress prior to the Purchase • John Marshall established doctrine of judicial review by the Supreme Court of the constitutionality of acts of Congress, in the case of **Marbury vs. Madison** • Great Britain declared war on France

1804

Death of Hamilton • Jefferson reëlected President • Napoleon crowned as Emperor of France, 2 December

1805

Napoleon defeated the Austrians at Austerlitz • Lord Nelson and the English fleet destroyed French sea power at Trafalgar

1806

French coast blockaded by the British • By the Berlin Decree, 21 November, Napoleon attempted to halt neutral trade with Great Britain

1807

Washington Irving and others, **Salmagundi** • Barlow's

Columbiad • Lord Byron's **Hours of Idleness**, English romantic poems

British Orders in Council forbade neutral trade with Europe • Napoleon established his "Continental System" with the aid of Russia and Prussia • Anti-British feeling aroused in the United States by the Chesapeake affair, June, in which seamen were taken off an American man-of-war • Jefferson, by proclamation, forbade the entrance of British warships into American harbors • Embargo Act, 21 December, prohibited all ships from leaving American ports • Slave trade abolished in the British Empire • Robert Fulton demonstrated the practicability of the steamboat on the Hudson River

1808

William Cullen Bryant's **Embargo**, first edition • Goethe's Faust, German poetic drama, first part

Importation of slaves into the United States forbidden • Jefferson became highly unpopular as a result of the economic distress caused by the Embargo Act • James Madison elected fourth President

1809

Irving's **Knickerbocker History of New York**

Embargo Act repealed • Non-Intercourse Act passed, permitting American shipping to destinations other than French and English ports • Metternich became first minister in Austria, holding that post until 1848

1810

Death of Charles Brockden Brown • United States census: population of approximately 7,240,000 • Rambouillet Decree, 23 March, by which Napoleon seized all American ships in French ports

1811

Baron De la Motte Fouqué's **Undine**, German romantic novelette much admired by Edgar Allan Poe

Charter of the First Bank of the United States lapsed without renewal • Astoria founded at the mouth of the Columbia River • United States broke off diplomatic relations with Great Britain, after failing to obtain agreement on the rights of neutrals

1812

Death of Joel Barlow • Louisiana admitted as the eighteenth state • United States declared war on Great Britain • Madison reëlected President • Napoleon invaded Russia

1813

Jane Austen's **Pride and Prejudice**, English novel of manners

Blockade of American ports established by the British, after a number of naval victories by the Americans • American fleet under Oliver Hazard Perry victorious at Put-in-Bay, on Lake Erie, 10 September • Revolt of Colombia against the rule of Spain, the beginning of a series of revolutions in South America

1814

Sir Walter Scott's **Waverley**, English historical novel

Washington captured by the British, 24 August • Hartford Convention assembled, 15 December, to express New England disapproval of the war; although there was talk of secession, the convention contented itself with recommending amendments to the Constitution • Treaty of Ghent, 24 December, ended the war but failed to settle any of the major differences • Abdication of Napoleon and his exile to Elba

1815

North American Review established • Freneau's **Poems on American Affairs**

British defeated in the Battle of New Orleans, 8 January • Napoleon returned from Elba, 1 March, was defeated at Waterloo, 18 June, and banished to St. Helena, 8 August • Holy Alliance formed as an aftermath of the Congress of Vienna

1816

Death of Hugh Henry Brackenridge • Second Bank of the United States created • Indiana admitted as the nineteenth state • First tariff for protection adopted • James Monroe elected fifth President

1817

Bryant's "Thanatopsis," in the **North American Review** • Coleridge's **Biographia Literaria**, important English critical work

Death of Timothy Dwight • Mississippi admitted as the twentieth state

1818

Dwight's **Theology Explained and Defended** • Mary Wollstonecraft Shelley's **Frankenstein**, English novel

Illinois admitted as the twenty-first state • Boundary between the United States and Canada defined • Cumberland Road completed • First steamship crossed the Atlantic Ocean, in twenty-six days

1819

Irving's **Sketch Book** • Byron's **Don Juan**, English poem, first two cantos • Scott's **Ivanhoe**, English historical novel

Alabama admitted as the twenty-second state • Tallmadge amendment to the bill for the admission of Missouri brought the slavery question to the forefront in national affairs • Florida acquired from Spain • Dartmouth College case decision by Marshall denied the right of a state to abrogate a charter granted to a corporation

1820

James Fenimore Cooper's **Precaution** • Percy Bysshe Shelley's **Prometheus Unbound**, English poem

Missouri Compromise adopted, providing that all states created from the Louisiana Territory north of the latitude of 36° 30′ should be free, except for Missouri, which might be admitted as a slave state • Maine admitted as the twenty-third state • United States census: population of more than 9,500,000 • Death of George III (reigned 1760-1820, under regency after 1811); accession of George IV • Monroe re-elected President

1821

Bryant's **Poems** • Cooper's **Spy** • Shelley's **Adonais**, English elegy

Missouri admitted as the twenty-fourth state • Greeks began struggle for independence from the Turks

1822

Irving's **Bracebridge Hall**

1823

Cooper's **Pilot, Pioneers,** and **Lionel Lincoln** • Charles Lamb's **Essays of Elia**, classic English familiar essays

1824

Irving's **Tales of a Traveller**

John Quincy Adams elected sixth President • Lafayette toured the United States

1825

Erie Canal completed

1826

Cooper's **Last of the Mohicans**

Death of John Adams and Thomas Jefferson • National Academy of the Arts of Design established

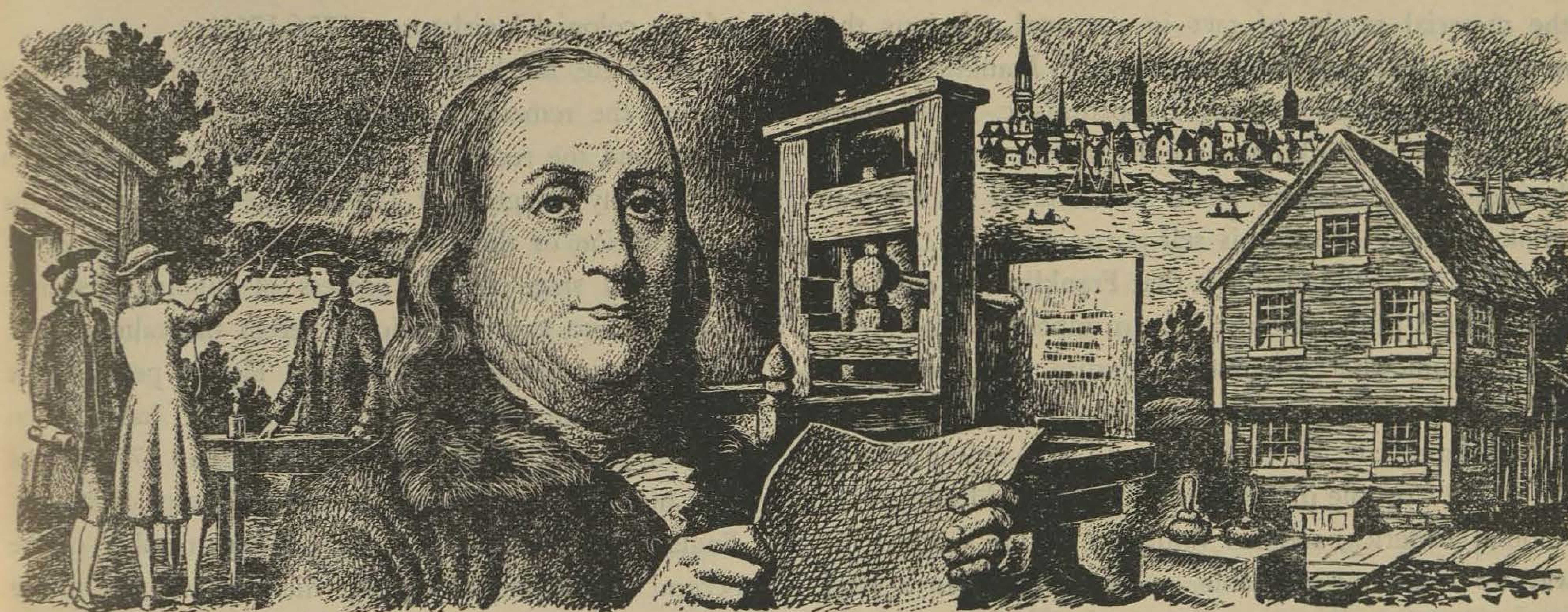
1827

Cooper's **Prairie** • Edgar Allan Poe's **Tamerlane and Other Poems,** anonymously published • Alfred and Charles Tennyson's **Poems by Two Brothers**, English

1828

Nathaniel Hawthorne's **Fanshawe** • Irving's **Life and Voyages of Christopher Columbus** • Noah Webster's **American Dictionary of the English Language**

Baltimore and Ohio Railroad began construction • "Tariff of Abominations," high protective tariff unacceptable to the South • Doctrine of nullification stated by John C. Calhoun in the "South Carolina Exposition," adopted by the legislature of that state • Andrew Jackson elected seventh President



Benjamin Franklin

1706 · 1790

Benjamin Franklin was one of the great men of the eighteenth century, famous far beyond the limits of the colonies which he helped unite into a nation. John Adams once remarked—and there is good reason to think he was right—that Franklin was more renowned than Sir Isaac Newton, Frederick the Great, or Voltaire, and "more beloved and esteemed than any or all of them." There was a warmth in Franklin; his mind, inquiring rather than dogmatic, endeared him to an age which regarded itself as peculiarly "enlightened," the more so since his reasonableness and simplicity were combined with a generous flair for showmanship. His contemporaries, and to some extent their posterity, saw Franklin in a series of sharply dramatic pictures—flying his kite in a thunderstorm to demonstrate the identity of lightning with electricity, standing modest but unawed before the House of Commons to assert the justice of American complaints, beaming philosophically yet with obvious delight in the adulation of the ladies of the court of Louis XVI, suggesting to the Constitutional Convention that it break a deadlock in debate by an appeal for the guidance of the Supreme Being.

Panel (l. to r.): An experiment with electricity • Franklin, about 55 years old • Printing-press used by Franklin • View of Philadelphia, 1754 • Franklin's birthplace, Milk Street, Boston

Unfortunately for his later reputation Franklin wrote an autobiography in which he reviewed his early life. It is a classic of its type—the first "rags-to-riches" success story in American literature—but it so glorified thrift, industry, conformity, and shrewd calculation of the material results of tact in personal relations that many sensitive readers have damned Franklin, on his own testimony, as selfishly opportunistic. Only those who accept unthinkingly the bourgeois standard that "getting ahead" is the be-all and end-all of life can wholeheartedly admire his self-portrait.

The truth of the matter is that Franklin was neither a great-souled philanthropist nor an unprincipled "careerist." A somewhat enigmatic mixture of idealist and realist, he comes close to being the first example of the typical American. He could not well have emerged from the mass of people in any corner of the world other than colonial America, and his vanity in having worked his way up is both pardonable and widespread in a land where class lines have never been rigid. Not very many self-made men, however, have turned as Franklin did from the making of a fortune to the broadening of a mind. Blessed with an insatiable curiosity and an admirable gusto for living, he became so widely traveled and so universally acquainted that there was scarcely a nook of the age in which he lived where he was not at home.

The details of his early life are familiar through his autobiography. There he tells of his ancestry and birth (in Boston in 1706), of his early apprenticeship to his printer brother, of the circumstances which led to his running off to Philadelphia when he was seventeen, of his disillusion there and in London concerning easy roads to wealth. In 1728 he founded his own printing firm, determined to make his fortune by hard work and thrift. Only men with financial security could afford to indulge themselves in the public service which he had in the back of his mind.

It took just twenty years for him to make enough money so that he could retire. Other men of forty-two would have gone on to pile up the pounds, shillings, and pence; Franklin, for all his preaching of the gospel of moneymaking, was not ambitious for mere financial power. He turned first to science, long one of his enthusiasms, and within a few years was internationally famous for his *Experiments & Observations on Electricity,* first published in London in 1751. Already, however, he was busy with public projects and political affairs, notable among them the founding of the Library Company of Philadelphia (1731), the organization of the American Philosophical Society (1743), the proposal for the Academy of Philadelphia, later the University of Pennsylvania (1749), and his service as clerk of the colonial legislature (1736-1751).

To recite, much less to evaluate, Franklin's activities during the remainder of his life would require many pages and the recapitulation of American history from the Albany Congress of 1754 to the ratification of the Constitution of the United States in 1789. There was scarcely a stage in the process of binding disparate colonies into a great nation wherein the calm counsel of Benjamin Franklin had no part. He was probably the first American to assert the principle of "no taxation without representation"; between 1757 and 1775 he was the chief representative of the colonial point of view in England; in 1775-1776 he was a key member of the Second Continental Congress, where he was one of the drafting committee for the Declaration of Independence; between 1777 and 1785 he was in France, where he was largely responsible for the alliance without which the Revolution could hardly have been successful and where he helped to negotiate the treaty of peace; and in 1787, back in Philadelphia, he ended his good works by acting as a balance wheel in the stormy Constitutional Convention.

Franklin would not have obtained the influence which he had if he had not been a writer. At sixteen he was contributing essays to his brother's newspaper, over the signature of "Silence Dogood." Thereafter he wrote steadily, with growing ease and polish. Most of his early work appeared in the newspapers and almanacs which helped him make his fortune; later he became a skillful writer of political pamphlets, many of them published anonymously; throughout his life he was an accomplished letter writer. In an age which tended to like ornate Latinate prose he cultivated simplicity in style and structure. He did not think of himself as an author in the belletristic sense, although all his life he had a critical eye for style both in prose and in poetry. His literary purposes, like those in politics, were utilitarian; "that is best wrote," he once said, "which is best adapted for obtaining the end of the writer." Never a writer of books, he succeeded in leaving papers which are ordinarily collected in ten volumes—and there is as yet no really complete edition.

His literary ends were many and various. *A Disserta-*

tion on Liberty and Necessity, Pleasure and Pain (1725) expressed his youthful convictions on the fundamentals of morality—Deistic convictions which he later decided were not "useful," however sound they may have been. *Plain Truth* (1747) marked his entrance into political pamphleteering, with a plea for measures to defend Pennsylvania from the French and Indians. *Experiments & Observations on Electricity* (1751; 2d ed., 1754; 4th ed., 1769) was composed of letters describing his scientific work and that of his friends. *The Interest of Great Britain Considered with Regard to Her Colonies* (1760) was representative of his long effort to persuade the British of the necessity for a home-rule policy. Most of his other pieces were composed for newspaper or periodical publication or for the entertainment and edification of his friends. The *Autobiography,* by far his most extended work, not published until long after his death, was written for the younger members of his family.

Franklin and his writings have meant many things to many men, and they will doubtless continue to attract commentators and special students. The problems which they present are universal problems in religion, education, economics, politics, and the social and physical sciences. To the general reader, moreover, Franklin, as much as any colonial American, has the fascinating power of a great and versatile personality. To understand the drives which found expression in his life and work is not only a means of understanding the eighteenth century but also a way of clarifying certain personal values. What should a man or woman seek to find in the vocation which he chooses to gain his livelihood? To what extent is self-aggrandizement compatible with self-respect? What, after all, is success? Franklin did not give an ultimate answer to these questions, but few persons will read his life or writings without reflecting upon them with new insight.

The Complete Works of Benjamin Franklin, ed. John Bigelow, 10 vols., New York, 1887-1889 • The Writings of Benjamin Franklin, ed. A. H. Smyth, 10 vols., New York, 1905-1907 • Benjamin Franklin: Representative Selections, ed. F. L. Mott and C. E. Jorgenson, Cincinnati, 1936 • P. L. Ford, Franklin Bibliography, Brooklyn, 1889 • Carl Van Doren, Benjamin Franklin, New York, 1938

From the *Autobiography*

Franklin began writing his autobiography when he was sixty-five. Vacationing with his friend Jonathan Shipley, Bishop of St. Asaph's, in Hampshire, he determined to use his unwonted leisure to give an account of his ancestry and early life to his son William, then governor of New Jersey. After setting down a list of events and topics to be discussed, he composed eighty-six pages of manuscript, carrying the story of his life down to 1730. He may have sent this manuscript to his son, although there is no real proof that he did so. At any rate, busy with political affairs, he forgot about his memoirs for eleven years. In 1782, living at Passy, a suburb of Paris, he received a letter from an American friend in which was enclosed a copy of the first portion of the autobiography (how obtained no one knows), with the urgent suggestion that it be continued. After consultation with his French friends, who agreed that the project should be completed, Franklin wrote fourteen more pages in 1784. In this portion he described his effort to learn virtue by a chart system; he was over seventy-eight when he composed it. Four years later, back in Philadelphia, he added a third section of 117 pages, and in 1790, a few weeks before his death, he wrote still a fourth part of seven and one-half pages. Although his memoirs were eagerly awaited, it was, through circumstances too complicated to describe here, many years before there was an edition based upon the original manuscript. John Bigelow's transcription, first published in 1868, is now known to be far from accurate, so far as Franklin's capitalization, punctuation, and sentence structure are concerned. A definitive edition, based upon the original manuscript at the Henry E. Huntington Library and now in preparation by Max Farrand, will embody careful study of the innumerable interlinear changes.

The following selections include about one third of the portion of the **Autobiography** written at Twyford in 1771, the larger part of the portion written at Passy in 1784, and a small part (that describing Franklin's success with the investigation of electricity) of the portion written at Philadelphia in 1788. The "preachy" tone of the Twyford and Passy sections may be explained in part by his desire to edify his son, for whom he had high ambitions, and by his penchant for moralizing, evident throughout his work. It should be remembered, however, that the **Autobiography**, with its strong suggestion that anyone who is willing to pay the price of caution and industry can succeed, is not, for all its frankness, a full revelation of Franklin.

TWYFORD, at the Bishop of St. Asaph's, 1771

Dear Son, I have ever had a Pleasure in obtaining any little Anecdotes of my Ancestors. You may remember the Enquiries I made among the Remains of my Relations when you were with me in England; and the journey I undertook for that purpose. Now imagining it may be equally agreable to you to know the Circumstances of *my* Life, many of which you are yet unacquainted with; and expecting a Weeks uninterrupted Leisure in my present Country Retirement, I sit down to write them for you. To which I have besides some other Inducements. Having emerg'd from the Poverty and Obscurity in which I was born and bred, to a State of Affluence and some Degree of Reputation in the World, and having gone so far thro' Life with a considerable Share of Felicity, the conducing Means I made use of, which, with the Blessing of God, so well succeeded, my Posterity may like to know, as they may find some of them suitable to their own Situations, and therefore fit to be imitated. That Felicity, when I reflected on it, has induc'd me sometimes to say, that were it offer'd to my Choice, I should have no Objection to a Repetition of the same Life from its Beginning, only asking the Advantages Authors have in a second Edition to correct some Faults of the first. So would I if I might, besides corr[ecting] the Faults, change some sinister Accidents and Events of it for others more favourable, but tho' this were deny'd, I should still accept the Offer. However, since such a Repetition is not to be expected, the next Thing most like living one's Life over again, seems to be a *Recollection* of that Life; and to make that Recollection as durable as possible, the putting it down in Writing. Hereby, too, I shall indulge the Inclination so natural in old Men, to be talking of themselves and their own past Actions, and I shall indulge it, without being troublesome to others who thro' respect to Age might think themselves oblig'd to give me a Hearing, since this may be read or not as any one pleases. And lastly (I may as well confess it, since my Denial of it will be believ'd by no Body) perhaps I shall a good deal gratify my own *Vanity*. Indeed I scarce ever heard or saw the introductory Words, *Without vanity I may say,* &c but some vain thing immediately follow'd. Most People dislike Vanity in others whatever share they have of it themselves, but I give it fair Quarter wherever I meet with it, being persuaded that it is often productive of Good to the Possessor and to others that are within his Sphere of Action: And therefore in many Cases it would not be quite absurd if a Man were to thank God for his Vanity among the other Comforts of Life.—

And now I speak of thanking God, I desire with all Humility to acknowledge, that I owe the mention'd Happiness of my past Life to his kind Providence, which led me to the Means I us'd and gave them Success. My Belief of this, induces me to *hope,* tho' I must not *presume,* that the same Goodness will still be exercis'd towards me in continuing that Happiness, or in enabling me to bear a fatal Reverse, which I may experience as others have done, the Complexion of my future Fortune being known to him only: in whose Power it is to bless to us even our Afflictions.

The Notes one of my Uncles (who had the same kind of Curiosity in collecting Family Anecdotes) once put into my Hands, furnish'd me with several Particulars relating to our Ancestors. From these Notes I learnt that the Family had liv'd in the same Village, Ecton in Northamptonshire, for 300 Years, and how much longer

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Text: That of the first section is based upon the original manuscript as examined by F. L. Mott and C. E. Jorgenson, that of the second and third sections is from the Bigelow edition, Vol. I (1887) • **1 Twyford,** a village near Winchester, about fifty miles southwest of London • **5 with me.** William Franklin and his father made a genealogical tour into central England in 1758 • **62 one . . . Uncles,** Benjamin Franklin, who died in Boston in 1728 • **66 Ecton,** about fifty miles north-northeast of London

he knew not (perhaps from the Time when the Name *Franklin* that before was the name of an Order of People, was assum'd by them for a Surname, when others took surnames all over the kingdom)[,] on a Freehold of about 30 Acres, aided by the Smith's Business, which had continued in the Family till his Time, the eldest son being always bred to that Business[.] A Custom which he and my Father both followed as to their eldest Sons.—When I search'd the Register at Ecton, I found an Account of their Births, Marriages and Burials, from the Year 1555 only, there being no Register kept in that Parish at any time preceding.—By that Register I perceiv'd that I was the youngest Son of the youngest Son for 5 Generations back. My Grandfather Thomas, who was born in 1598, lived at Ecton till he grew too old to follow Business longer, when he went to live with his Son John, a Dyer at Banbury in Oxfordshire, with whom my Father serv'd an Apprenticeship. There my Grandfather died and lies buried. We saw his Gravestone in 1758. His eldest Son Thomas liv'd in the House at Ecton, and left it with the Land to his only Child, a Daughter, who, with her Husband, one Fisher of Wellingborough sold it to Mr. Isted, now Lord of the Manor there. My Grandfather had 4 Sons that grew up, viz Thomas, John, Benjamin and Josiah. I will give you what Account I can of them at this distance from my Papers, and if these are not lost in my Absence, you will among them find many more Particulars. Thomas was bred a Smith under his Father, but being ingenious, and encourag'd in Learning (as all his Brothers likewise were) by an Esquire Palmer then the principal Gentleman in that Parish, he qualify'd himself for the Business of Scrivener, became a considerable Man in the County Affairs, was a chief Mover of all publick Spirited Undertakings for the County or Town of Northampton and his own village, of which many instances were told us; and he was at Ecton much taken Notice of and patroniz'd by the then Lord Halifax. He died in 1702, Jan. 6, old Stile, just 4 Years to a Day before I was born. The Account we receiv'd of his Life and Character from some old People at Ecton, I remember struck you as something extraordinary, from its Similarity to what you knew of mine. Had he died on the same Day, you said one might have suppos'd a Transmigration.—John was bred a Dyer, I believe of Woollens. Benjamin, was bred a Silk Dyer, serving an Apprenticeship at London. He was an ingenious Man, I remember him well, for when I was a Boy he came over to my Father in Boston, and lived in the House with us some Years. He lived to a great Age. His Grandson Samuel Franklin now lives in Boston. He left behind him two Quarto Volumes, M. S. of his own Poetry, consisting of little occasional Pieces address'd to his Friends and Relations, of which the following sent to me, is a Specimen. He had form'd a Shorthand of his own, which he taught me, but, never practising it I have now forgot it. I was nam'd after this Uncle, there being a particular Affection between him and my Father. He was very pious, a great Attender of Sermons of the best Preachers, which he took down in his Shorthand and had with him many Volumes of them. He was also much of a Politician, too much perhaps for his Station. There fell lately into my Hands in London a Collection he had made of all the principal Pamphlets relating to Publick Affairs from 1641 to 1717. Many of the Volumes are wanting, as appears by the Numbering, but there still remains 8 Vols. Folio, and 24 in $4.^{to}$ and $8.^{vo}$.—A Dealer in old Books met with them, and knowing me by my sometimes buying of him, he brought them to me. It seems my Uncle must have left them here when he went to America, which was above 50 years since. There are many of his Notes in the Margins.—

This obscure Family of ours was early in the Reformation, and continu'd Protestants thro' the Reign of Queen Mary, when they were sometimes in Danger of Trouble on Account of their Zeal against Popery. They had got an English Bible, and to conceal and secure it, it was fastened open with Tapes under and within the Frame of a Joint Stool. When my Great Great Grandfather read it [it] to his Family, he turn'd up the joint Stool upon his Knees, turning over the Leaves then under the Tapes. One of the Children stood at the Door to give Notice if he saw the Apparitor coming, who was an

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2 **Order of People.** Franklins were small landowners in the English feudal society of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries • 38 **Lord Halifax,** Charles Montague, first Earl of Halifax (1661-1715), a noted financier • 38 **old Stile,** the Julian calendar, superseded by the present Gregorian calendar in 1752. By modern reckoning Franklin was born on January 17, 1706 • 54 **a Specimen,** which Franklin failed to insert, as a marginal note shows was intended. Examples of Uncle Benjamin's verses are printed in the Bigelow edition • 73 **Reign . . . Mary,** 1553-1558 • 78 **Joint Stool,** a wooden footstool made by a joiner

Officer of the Spiritual Court. In that Case the Stool was turn'd down again upon its feet, when the Bible remain'd conceal'd under it as before. This Anecdote I had from my Uncle Benjamin.—The Family continu'd all of the Church of England till about the End of Charles the 2ds Reign, when some of the Ministers that had been outed for Nonconformity, holding Conventicles in Northamptonshire, Benjamin and Josiah adher'd to them, and so continu'd all their Lives. The rest of the Family remain'd with the Episcopal Church.

Josiah, my father, married young, and carried his Wife with three Children into New England, about 1682. The Conventicles having been forbidden by Law, and frequently disturbed, induced some considerable Men of his Acquaintance to remove to that Country, and he was prevail'd with to accompany them thither, where they expected to enjoy their Mode of Religion with Freedom.—By the same Wife he had 4 Children more born there, and by a second wife ten more, in all 17, of which I remember 13 sitting at one time at his Table, who all grew up to be Men and Women, and married. I was the youngest Son, and the youngest Child but two, and was born in Boston, N. England. My mother, the 2d wife was Abiah Folger, a daughter of Peter Folger, one of the first Settlers of New England, of whom honourable mention is made by Cotton Mather, in his Church History of that Country, (entitled Magnalia Christi Americana) as *a godly learned Englishman,* if I remember the Words rightly. I have heard that he wrote sundry small occasional Pieces, but only one of them was printed which I saw now many years since. It was written in 1675, in the home-spun Verse of that Time and People, and address'd to those then concern'd in the Government there. It was in favour of Liberty of Conscience, and in behalf of the Baptists, Quakers, and other Sectaries, that had been under Persecution; ascribing the Indian Wars and other Distresses, that had befallen the Country to that Persecution, as so many Judgments of God, to punish so heinous an Offense; and exhorting a Repeal of those uncharitable Laws. The whole appear'd to me as written with a good deal of Decent Plainness and manly Freedom. The six last concluding Lines I remember, tho' I have forgotten the two first of the Stanza, but the Purport of them was that his Censures proceeded from Good will, and therefore he would be known as the Author,

"Because to be a Libeller, (says he)
I hate it with my Heart.
From Sherburne Town where now I dwell,
My Name I do put here,
Without Offense, your real Friend,
It is Peter Folgier."

My elder Brothers were all put Apprentices to different Trades. I was put to the Grammar School at Eight Years of Age, my Father intending to devote me as the Tithe of his Sons to the Service of the Church. My early Readiness in learning to read (which must have been very early, as I do not remember when I could not read) and the Opinion of all his Friends that I should certainly make a good Scholar, encourag'd him in this Purpose of his. My Uncle Benjamin too approv'd of it, and propos'd to give me all his Shorthand Volumes of Sermons I suppose as a Stock to set up with, if I would learn his Character. I continu'd however at the Grammar School not quite one Year, tho' in that time I had risen gradually from the Middle of the Class of that Year to be the Head of it, and farther was remov'd into the next Class above it, in order to go with that into the third at the End of the Year. But my Father in the mean time, from a View of the Expence of a College Education which, having so large a Family, he could not well afford, and the mean Living many so educated were afterwards able to obtain, Reasons that he gave to his Friends in my Hearing, altered his first Intention, took me from the Grammar School, and sent me to a School for Writing and Arithmetic kept by a then famous Man, Mr. Geo. Brownell, very successful in his Profession generally, and that by

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5 **Charles . . . Reign,** 1660-1685 • 7 **for Nonconformity,** that is, for refusing to read the prayer book as required by the Act of Uniformity of 1662 • 7 **Conventicles,** secret religious meetings, outlawed by the Conventicle Act of 1664 • 28 **a godly . . . Englishman,** actually "an Able Godly Englishman," mentioned very briefly in Bk. VI, Chap. VI, of the **Magnalia** (see p. 149) • 30 **one . . . printed,** an allusion to "A Looking Glass for the Times: or, the Former Spirit of New England Revived in This Generation," a fourteen-page pamphlet published at Boston in 1676 • 49 **Sherburne Town,** "In the Island of Nantucket."—Franklin • 54 **the Grammar School.** There were two grammar schools in Boston in 1714. Franklin is thought to have attended the older one, now known as the Boston Latin School • 56 **Tithe.** Benjamin was Josiah Franklin's tenth son • 76 **Mr. Geo. Brownell,** who taught private pupils in Boston between 1712 and 1734

mild encouraging Methods. Under him I acquired fair Writing pretty soon, but I fail'd in the Arithmetic, and made no Progress in it.—At Ten Years old, I was taken home to assist my Father in his Business, which was that of a Tallow Chandler and Sope Boiler. A Business he was not bred to, but had assumed on his Arrival in New England and on finding his Dying Trade would not maintain his Family, being in little Request. Accordingly I was employed in cutting Wick for the Candles, filling the Dipping Mold, and the Molds for cast Candles, attending the Shop, going of Errands, etc.—I dislik'd the Trade and had a strong Inclination for the Sea; but my Father declar'd against it; however, living near the Water, I was much in and about it, learnt early to swim well, and to manage Boats, and when in a Boat or Canoe with other Boys I was commonly allow'd to govern, especially in any case of Difficulty; and upon other Occasions I was generally a Leader among the Boys, and sometimes led them into Scrapes, of w^{ch} I will mention one Instance, as it shows an early projecting public Spirit, tho' not then justly conducted. There was a salt Marsh that bounded part of the Mill Pond, on the Edge of which at Highwater, we us'd to stand to fish for Min[n]ows. By much Trampling, we had made it a mere Quagmire. My Proposal was to build a Wharf there fit for us to stand upon, and I show'd my Comrades a large Heap of Stones which were intended for a new House near the Marsh, and which would very well suit our Purpose. Accordingly in the Evening when the Workmen were gone, I assembled a Number of my Playfellows; and working with them diligently like so many Emmets, sometimes two or three to a Stone, we brought them all away and built our little Wharff.—The next Morning the Workmen were surpriz'd at Missing the Stones; which were found in our Wharff; Enquiry was made after the Removers; we were discovered and complain'd of; several of us were corrected by our Fathers; and tho' I pleaded the Usefulness of the Work, mine convinc'd me that nothing was useful which was not honest.

I think you may like to know something of his Person and Character. He had an excellent Constitution of Body, was of middle Stature, but well set and very strong. He was ingenious, could draw prettily, was skill'd a little in Music and had a clear pleasing Voice, so that when he play'd Psalm Tunes on his Violin and sung withal as he sometimes did in an Evening after the Business of the Day was over, it was extreamly agreable to hear. He had a mechanical Genius too, and on occasion was very handy in the Use of other Tradesmen's Tools. But his great Excellence lay in a sound Understanding, and solid Judgment in prudential Matters, both in private and publick Affairs. In the latter indeed he was never employed, the numerous Family he had to educate and the straitness of his Circumstances, keeping him close to his Trade, but I remember well his being frequently visited by leading People, who consulted him for his Opinion in Affairs of the Town or of the Church he belong'd to and show'd a good deal of Respect for his Judgment and advice. He was also much consulted by private Persons about their affairs when any Difficulty occurr'd, and frequently chosen an Arbitrator between contending Parties.—At his Table he lik'd to have as often as he could, some sensible Friend or Neighbour to converse with, and always took care to start some ingenious or useful Topic for Discourse, which might tend to improve the Minds of his Children. By this means he turn'd our Attention to what was good, just, and prudent in the Conduct of Life; and little or no Notice was ever taken of what related to the Victuals on the Table, whether it was well or ill drest, in or out of season, of good or bad flavour, preferable or inferior to this or that other thing of the kind; so that I was bro't up in such a perfect Inattention to those Matters as to be quite Indifferent what kind of Food was set before me, and so unobservant of it, that to this Day, if I am ask'd I can scarce tell a few Hours after Dinner, what I din'd upon. This has been a Convenience to me in travelling, where my Companions have been sometimes very unhappy for want of a suitable Gratification of their more delicate[,] because better instructed[,] tastes and appetites.

My Mother had likewise an excellent Constitution. She suckled all her 10 Children. I never knew either my Father or Mother to have any Sickness but that of which they dy'd he at 89 and she at 85 years of age. They lie buried together at Boston, where I some years since placed a Marble Stone over their Grave with this Inscription:

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20 projecting, promoting

JOSIAH FRANKLIN
And ABIAH his Wife
Lie here interred.
They lived lovingly together in Wedlock
Fifty-five Years.
Without an Estate or any gainful Employment,
By constant labour and Industry,
With God's blessing,
They maintained a large Family
Comfortably;
And brought up thirteen Children,
And seven Grandchildren
Reputably.
From this Instance, Reader,
Be encouraged to Diligence in thy Calling,
And Distrust not Providence.
He was a pious and prudent Man,
She a discreet and virtuous Woman.
Their youngest Son,
In filial Regard to their Memory,
Places this Stone.
J. F. born 1655—Died 1744—Ætat 89.
A. F. born 1667—Died 1752——85.

By my rambling Digressions I perceive myself to be grown old. I us'd to write more methodically.—But one does not dress for private Company as for a publick Ball. 'Tis perhaps only Negligence.—

To return. I continu'd thus employ'd in my Father's Business for two Years, that is till I was 12 Years old; and my Brother John, who was bred to that Business having left my Father, married and set up for himself at Rhodeisland, there was all Appearance that I was destin'd to supply his Place and be a Tallow Chandler. But my Dislike to the Trade continuing, my Father was under Apprehensions that if he did not find one for me more agreable, I should break away and get to Sea, as his Son Josiah had done to his great Vexation. He therefore sometimes took me to walk with him, and see Joiners, Bricklayers, Turners, Braziers, etc. at their Work, that he might observe my Inclination, and endeavour to fix it on some Trade or other on Land. It has ever since been a Pleasure to me to see good Workmen handle their Tools; and it has been useful to me, having learnt so much by it, as to be able to do little Jobs myself in my House, when a Workman could not readily be got; and to construct little Machines for my Experiments while the Intention of making the Experiment was fresh and warm in my Mind. My Father at last fix'd upon the Cutler's Trade, and my Uncle Benjamin's Son Samuel was bred to that Business in London[,] being about that time establish'd in Boston, I was sent to be with him some time on liking. But his Expectations of a Fee with me displeasing my Father, I was taken home again.—

From a Child I was fond of Reading, and all the little Money that came into my Hands was ever laid out in Books. Pleas'd with the Pilgrim's Progress, my first Collection was of John Bunyan's Works, in separate little Volumes. I afterwards sold them to enable me to buy R. Burton's Historical Collections; they were small Chapmen's Books and cheap, 40 or 50 in all.—My Father's little Library consisted chiefly of Books in polemic Divinity, most of which I read, and have since often regretted, that at a time when I had such a Thirst for Knowledge, more proper Books had not fallen in my Way, since it was now resolv'd I should not be a Clergyman. Plutarch's Lives there was, in which I read abundantly, and I still think that time spent to great Advantage. There was also a Book of Defoe's, called an Essay on Projects, and another of Dr. Mather's, called Essays to do Good which perhaps gave me a Turn of thinking that had an influence on some of the principal future Events of my Life.

This Bookish inclination at length determin'd my Father to make me a Printer, tho' he had already one Son (James) of that Profession. In 1717 my Brother James return'd from England with a Press and Letters to set

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56 **Pilgrim's Progress,** allegorical novel (1678) by John Bunyan (1628-1688), English nonconformist. Bunyan's writings were not collected at this date; Franklin's purchases were probably early editions of separate works • 59 **R. Burton's . . . Collections,** a series of compilations by an English publisher and hack writer, Nathaniel Crouch (1632?-1725?). Sold at a shilling each by chapmen (peddlers) and bookdealers, they were widely popular in colonial America • 66 **Plutarch's Lives,** the most famous collection of biographies of the Greeks and Romans, by a Greek who lived at Rome in the first century A.D. • 68 **Essay on Projects** (1697) by Daniel Defoe (1661?-1731), English journalist and novelist. The book dealt with such matters as education and insurance • 69 **Essays . . . Good,** contained the ideas of Cotton Mather (see p. 144) on coöperative societies for religious and humanitarian improvement • 75 **James,** James Franklin (1696/7-1735)

up his Business in Boston. I lik'd it much better than that of my Father, but still had a Hankering for the Sea.—To prevent the apprehended Effect of such an Inclination, my Father was impatient to have me bound to my Brother. I stood out some time, but at last was persuaded and signed the Indentures, when I was yet but 12 Years old.—I was to serve as an Apprentice till I was 21 Years of Age, only I was to be allow'd Journeyman's Wages during the last Year. In a little time I made great Proficiency in the Business, and became a useful Hand to my Brother. I now had Access to better Books. An Acquaintance with the Apprentices of Booksellers, enabled me sometimes to borrow a small one, which I was careful to return soon and clean. Often I sat up in my Room reading the greatest Part of the Night, when the Book was borrow'd in the Evening and to be return'd early in the Morning[,] lest it should be miss'd or wanted. And after some time an ingenious Tradesman Mr. Matthew Adams who had a pretty Collection of Books, and who frequented our Printing House, took Notice of me, invited me to his Library, and very kindly lent me such Books as I chose to read. I now took a Fancy to Poetry, and made some little Pieces. My Brother, thinking it might turn to account encourag'd me, and put me on composing two occasional Ballads. One was called The *Lighthouse Tragedy,* and contained an Acc[t] of the drowning of Capt. Worthilake with his Two Daughters; the other was a Sailor Song on the Taking of *Teach* or Blackbeard the Pirate. They were wretched Stuff, in the Grub-street Ballad Stile, and when they were printed he sent me about the town to sell them. The first sold wonderfully, the Event being recent, having made a great Noise. This flatter'd my Vanity. But my Father discourag'd me, by ridiculing my Performances, and telling me Verse-makers were generally Beggars; so I escap'd being a Poet, most probably a very bad one. But as Prose Writing has been of great Use to me in the Course of my Life, and was a principal Means of my Advancement, I shall tell you how in such a Situation I acquir'd what little Ability I have in that Way.

There was another Bookish Lad in the Town, John Collins by Name, with whom I was intimately acquainted. We sometimes disputed, and very fond we were of Argument, and very desirous of confuting one another. Which disputacious Turn, by the way, is apt to become a very bad Habit, making People often extreamly disagreeable in Company, by the Contradiction that is necessary to bring it into Practice, and thence, besides souring and spoiling the Conversation, is productive of Disgusts and perhaps Enmities where you may have occasion for Friendship. I had caught it by reading my Father's Books of Dispute about Religion. Persons of good Sense, I have since observ'd, seldom fall into it, except Lawyers, University Men, and Men of all Sorts that have been bred at Edinborough. A Question was once some how or other started between Collins and me, of the Propriety of educating the Female Sex in Learning, and their Abilities for Study. He was of Opinion that it was improper, and that they were naturally unequal to it. I took the contrary Side, perhaps a little for Dispute['s] sake. He was naturally more eloquent, had a ready Plenty of Words, and sometimes as I thought bore me down more by his Fluency than by the Strength of his Reasons. As we parted without settling the Point, and were not to see one another again for some time, I sat down to put my Arguments in Writing, which I copied fair and sent to him. He answer'd and I reply'd. Three of [or] four Letters of a Side had pass'd, when my Father happen'd to find my Papers, and read them. Without ent'ring into the Discussion, he took occasion to talk to me about the Manner of my Writing, observ'd that tho' I had the Advantage of my Antagonist in correct Spelling and pointing (which I ow'd to the Printing House) I fell far short in elegance of Expression, in Method and in Perspicuity, of which he convinc'd me by several Instances. I saw the Justice of his Remarks, and thence grew more attentive to the *Manner* in writing, and determin'd to endeavour at Improvement.—

About this time I met with an odd Volume of the Spectator. It was the Third. I had never before seen any of them. I bought it, read it over and over, and was much delighted with it. I thought the Writing excellent, and wish'd if possible to imitate it. With that

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27 **Capt. Worthilake** or Worthylake, first keeper of the Boston lighthouse. He and his wife and one daughter were drowned (Franklin's memory was at fault here) in November 1718 • 28 **Teach,** Edward Teach or Thatch, better known as Blackbeard, killed by a British naval officer in North Carolina in 1718 • 73 **pointing,** punctuating • 81 **Spectator** (1711-1712; second series, 1714), English literary periodical conducted by Joseph Addison (1672-1719) and Sir Richard Steele (1672-1729)

View, I took some of the Papers, and making short Hints of the Sentiment in each Sentence, laid them by a few Days, and then without looking at the Book, try'd to compleat the Papers again, by expressing each hinted Sentiment at length, and as fully as it had been express'd before, in any suitable Words, that should come to hand.

Then I compar'd my Spectator with the Original, discover'd some of my Faults and corrected them. But I found I wanted a Stock of Words or a Readiness in recollecting and using them, which I thought I should have acquir'd before that time, if I had gone on making Verses, since the continual Occasion for Words of the same Import but of different Length, to suit the Measure, or of different Sound for the Rhyme, would have laid me under a constant Necessity of searching for Variety, and also have tended to fix that Variety in my Mind, and make me Master of it. Therefore I took some of the Tales and turn'd them into Verse: And after a time, when I had pretty well forgotten the Prose, turn'd them back again. I also sometimes jumbled my Collections of Hints into Confusion, and after some Weeks, endeavour'd to reduce them into the best Order, before I began to form the full Sentences, and compleat the Paper. This was to teach me Method in the Arrangement of Thoughts. By comparing my work afterwards with the original, I discover'd many faults and amended them; but I sometimes had the Pleasure of Fancying that in certain Particulars of small Import, I had been lucky enough to improve the Method or the Language and this encourag'd me to think I might possibly in time come to be a tolerable English Writer, of which I was extreamly ambitious.

My time for these Exercises and for Reading, was at Night, after Work or before it began in the Morning; or on Sundays, when I contrived to be in the Printing House alone, evading as much as I could the common Attendance on publick Worship, which my Father used to exact of me when I was under his Care: And which indeed I still thought a Duty; tho' I could not, as it seemed to me, afford the Time to practise it.

When about 16 Years of Age, I happen'd to meet with a Book, written by one Tryon, recommending a Vegetable Diet. I determined to go into it. My Brother being yet unmarried, did not keep House, but boarded himself and his Apprentices in another Family. My refusing to eat Flesh occasioned an Inconveniency, and I was frequently chid for my singularity. I made myself acquainted with Tryon's Manner of preparing some of his Dishes, such as Boiling Potatoes or Rice, making Hasty Pudding, and a few others, and then propos'd to my Brother, that if he would give me Weekly half the Money he paid for my Board I would board myself. He instantly agreed to it, and I presently found that I could save half what he paid me. This was an additional Fund for buying Books. But I had another Advantage in it. My Brother and the rest going from the Printing House to their Meals, I remain'd there alone, and dispatching presently my light Repast, (which often was no more than a Bisket or a Slice of Bread, a Handful of Raisins or a Tart from the Pastry Cook's, and a Glass of Water) had the rest of the Time till their Return, for Study, in which I made the greater Progress from the greater Clearness of Head and quicker Apprehension which usually attend Temperance in Eating and Drinking. And now it was that being on some Occasion made asham'd of my Ignorance in Figures, which I had twice failed in Learning when at School, I took Cocker's Book of Arithmetick, and went thro' the whole by myself with great Ease. I also read Seller's and Sturmy's Books of Navigation, and became acquainted with the little Geometry they contain, but never proceeded far in that Science.—And I read about this Time Locke on Human Understanding, and the Art of Thinking by Mess^{rs} du Port Royal.

While I was intent on improving my Language, I met with an English Grammar (I think it was Greenwood's) at the End of which there were two little

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43 **Tryon,** Thomas Tryon (1634-1703), English mystic. Franklin probably read **Health's Grand Preservative** (1682) • 68 **Cocker's.** Edward Cocker (1631-1675), English textbook writer, was the author of several different arithmetics, the most popular of which was first published in 1678, after Cocker's death • 70 **Seller's.** John Seller (fl. 1700) was the author of **The English Pilot** (1671) and **Practical Navigation** (1718). The latter is the book which Franklin probably read • 70 **Sturmy's,** presumably Samuel Sturmy's **The Mariner's Magazine** (1669) • 73 **Locke . . . Understanding,** the best-known work of the English philosopher John Locke (1632-1704), **An Essay Concerning Human Understanding** (1690) • 75 **Messrs . . . Royal.** Port-Royal, originally a nunnery near Chevreuse in France, became in the seventeenth century the center of Jansenism, a movement within the Roman Catholic Church with which were associated Cornelius Jansen (1585-1638) and Blaise Pascal (1623-1662). The book referred to by Franklin is **L'Art de penser,** a logic first published in 1662 • 77 **Greenwood's,** "An Essay towards a Practical English Grammar" (1711) by James Greenwood (d. 1737), English grammarian

Sketches of the Arts of Rhetoric and Logic, the latter finishing with a Specimen of a Dispute in the Socratic Method. And soon after I procur'd Xenophon's Memorable Things of Socrates, wherein there are many Instances of the same Method. I was charm'd with it, adopted it, dropt my abrupt Contradiction, and positive Argumentation, and put on the humble Enquirer and Doubter. And being then, from reading Shaftsbury and Collins, become a real Doubter in many Points of our religious Doctrine, I found this Method safest for myself and very embarrassing to those against whom I us'd it, therefore I took a Delight in it, practis'd it continually and grew very artful and expert in drawing People even of superior Knowledge into Concessions the Consequences of which they did not forsee, entangling them in Difficulties out of which they could not extricate themselves, and so obtaining Victories that neither myself nor my Cause always deserved.—I continu'd this Method some few years, but gradually left it, retaining only the Habit of expressing myself in Terms of modest Diffidence, never using when I advance any thing that may possibly be disputed, the Words, *Certainly, undoubtedly;* or any others that give the Air of Positiveness to an Opinion; but rather say, I conceive, or I apprehend a Thing to be so or so, It appears to me, or I should think it so or so for such and such Reasons, or I imagine it to be so, or it is so if I am not mistaken. This Habit I believe has been of great Advantage to me, when I have had occasion to inculcate my Opinions and persuade Men into Measures that I have been from time to time engag'd in promoting.—And as the chief Ends of Conversation are to *inform,* or to be *informed,* to *please* or to *persuade,* I wish wellmeaning sensible Men would not lessen their Power of doing Good by a Positive assuming Manner that seldom fails to disgust, tends to create Opposition, and to defeat every one of those Purposes for which Speech was given us, to wit, giving or receiving Information, or Pleasure: For if you would *inform,* a positive dogmatical Manner in advancing your Sentiments, may provoke Contradiction and prevent a candid Attention. If you wish Information and Improvement from the Knowledge of others and yet at the same time express yourself as firmly fix'd in your present Opinions, modest sensible Men, who do not love Disputation, will probably leave you undisturbed in the Possession of your Error; and by such a Manner you can seldom hope to recommend yourself in *pleasing* your Hearers, or to persuade those whose Concurrence you desire.—Pope says, judiciously,

Men should be taught as if you taught them not,
And things unknown propos'd as things forgot,—

farther recommending it to us,

To speak tho' sure, with seeming Diffidence.

And he might have coupled with this Line that which he has coupled with another, I think less properly,

For want of Modesty is want of Sense.

If you ask why *less properly,* I must repeat the lines;

"Immodest Words admit of *no* Defence;
For Want of Modesty is Want of Sense."

Now is not *Want of Sense* (where a Man is so unfortunate as to want it) some Apology for his *Want of Modesty?* and would not the Lines stand more justly thus?

Immodest Words admit *but this* Defence,
That Want of Modesty is Want of Sense.

This however I should submit to better Judgments.—

My Brother had in 1720 or 21, begun to print a Newspaper. It was the second that appear'd in America, and was called *The New England Courant.* The only one before it, was *the Boston News Letter.* I remember his being dissuaded by some of his Friends from the Undertaking, as not likely to succeed, one Newspaper

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3 **Xenophon's . . . Socrates,** probably the translation by that title published in 1712 by Edward Bysshe, an English hack writer. Xenophon (444-354? B.C.) wrote his **Memorabilia** (in dialogue form) to defend Socrates against the charge that he had corrupted the youth of Athens • 8 **Shaftsbury and Collins,** presumably a reference to "Characteristicks of Men, Manners, Opinions, and Times" (1711) by Anthony Ashley Cooper, third Earl of Shaftesbury (1671-1713), a moralist whose remarks on the Bible show Deistic tendencies, and the "Discourse of Freethinking" (1713) by Anthony Collins (1676-1729), in which that English writer advanced the thesis that all belief should be based upon reason • 49 **Pope says,** in the **Essay on Criticism** (1711), Part II, ll. 574-575. Franklin substitutes "should" for "must" in the first line, evidently quoting from memory. The additional line is from the same poem, line 567 • 55 **another,** not actually by Pope. The couplet Franklin had in mind, concluding "For want of decency is want of sense," is from the "Essay on Translated Verse" (1684) by Wentworth Dillon, fourth Earl of Roscommon (1633?-1685) • 68 **the second.** The New-England Courant had been preceded by three other newspapers (see p. 29)

being in their Judgment enough for America. — At this time 1771 there are not less than five and twenty. — He went on however with the Undertaking, and after having work'd in composing the Types and printing off the Sheets, I was employ'd to carry the Papers thro' the Streets to the Customers.—He had some ingenious Men among his Friends who amus'd themselves by writing little Pieces for this Paper, which gain'd it Credit, and made it more in Demand; and these Gentlemen often visited us. — Hearing their Conversations, and their Accounts of the Approbation their Papers were receiv'd with, I was excited to try my Hand among them. But being still a Boy, and suspecting that my Brother would object to printing any Thing of mine in his Paper if he knew it to be mine, I contriv'd to disguise my Hand, and writing an anonymous Paper I put it in at Night under the Door of the Printing House. It was found in the Morning and communicated to his Writing Friends when they call'd in as usual. They read it, commented on it in my Hearing, and I had the exquisite Pleasure, of finding it met with their Approbation, and that in their different Guesses at the Author none were named but Men of some Character among us for Learning and Ingenuity. — I suppose now that I was rather lucky in my Judges: And that perhaps they were not really so very good ones as I then esteem'd them. Encourag'd however by this, I wrote and convey'd in the same Way to the Press several more Papers, which were equally approv'd, and I kept my Secret till my small Fund of Sense for such Performances was pretty well exhausted, and then I discovered it; when I began to be considered a little more by my Brother's Acquaintance, and in a manner that did not quite please him, as he thought, probably with reason, that it tended to make me too vain. And perhaps this might be one Occasion of the Differences that we began to have about this Time. Tho' a Brother, he considered himself as my Master, and me as his Apprentice; and accordingly expected the same Services from me as he would from another; while I thought he demean'd me too much in some he requir'd of me, who from a Brother expected more Indulgence. Our Disputes were often brought before our Father, and I fancy I was either generally in the right, or else a better Pleader, because the Judgment was generally in my favour. But my Brother was passionate and had often beaten me, which I took extreamly amiss; and thinking my Apprenticeship very tedious, I was continually wishing for some Opportunity of shortening it, which at length offered in a manner unexpected.

One of the Pieces in our Newspaper, on some political Point which I have now forgotten, gave Offence to the Assembly. He was taken up, censur'd and imprison'd for a Month by the Speaker's Warrant, I suppose because he would not discover his Author. I too was taken up and examin'd before the Council; but tho' I did not give them any Satisfaction, they contented themselves with admonishing me, and dismiss'd me; considering me perhaps as an Apprentice who was bound to keep his Master's Secrets. During my Brother's Confinement, which I resented a good deal, notwithstanding our private Differences, I had the Management of the Paper, and I made bold to give our Rulers some Rubs in it, which my Brother took very kindly, while others began to consider me in an unfavourable Light, as a young Genius that had a Turn for Libelling and Satyr. My Brother's Discharge was accompany'd with an Order of the House, (a very odd one) *that James Franklin should no longer print the Paper called the New England Courant.* There was a Consultation held in our Printing House among his Friends what he should do in this Case. Some propos'd to evade the Order by changing the Name of the Paper; but my Brother seeing Inconveniences in that, it was finally concluded on as a better Way, to let it be printed for the future under the Name of *Benjamin Franklin.* And to avoid the Censure of the Assembly that might fall on him, as still printing it by his Apprentice, the Contrivance was, that my old Indenture should be return'd to me with a full Discharge on the Back of it, to be shown on Occasion; but to secure to him the Benefit of my Service I was to sign new Indentures for the Remainder of the Term, w^{ch} were to be kept private.

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49 unexpected. "I fancy his harsh and tyrannical treatment of me, might be a means of impressing me with that aversion to arbitrary power that has stuck to me thro' my whole life."—Franklin • 50 **some political Point.** James Franklin's offense, hardly heinous from a present-day point of view, was to print a fictitious letter from Newport saying that pirates had been seen off the coast and that it was reported that the Massachusetts government was fitting out a ship to go after them, "wind and weather permitting." Franklin was arrested for contempt and released only after apology. The Order of the House came six months later, after James Franklin had printed (in January 1723) an article attacking "hypocritical pretenders to religion." Benjamin Franklin's name appeared as publisher from February 11, 1723, until fall, when he ran away to New York

A very flimsy Scheme it was, but however it was immediately executed, and the Paper went on accordingly under my Name for several Months. At length a fresh Difference arising between my Brother and me, I took upon me to assert my Freedom, presuming that he would not venture to produce the new Indentures. It was not fair in me to take this Advantage, and this I therefore reckon one of the first Errata of my life: But the Unfairness of it weighed little with me, when under the Impressions of Resentment, for the Blows his Passion too often urg'd him to bestow upon me. Tho' he was otherwise not an ill-natur'd Man: Perhaps I was too saucy and provoking.

When he found I would leave him, he took care to prevent my getting Employment in any other Printing-House of the Town, by going round and speaking to every Master, who accordingly refus'd to give me Work. I then thought of going to New York as the nearest Place where there was a Printer: and I was the rather inclin'd to leave Boston, when I reflected that I had already made myself a little obnoxious to the governing Party; and from the arbitrary Proceedings of the Assembly in my Brother's Case it was likely I might if I stay'd soon bring myself into Scrapes; and farther that my indiscrete Disputations about Religion began to make me pointed at with Horror by good People, as an Infidel or Atheist. I determin'd on the Point: but my Father now siding with my Brother, I was sensible that if I attempted to go openly, Means would be used to prevent me. My Friend Collins therefore undertook to manage a little for me. He agreed with the Captain of a New York Sloop for my Passage, under the Notion of my being a young Acquaintance of his that had got a naughty Girl with Child, whose Friends would compel me to marry her, and therefore I could not appear or come away publickly. So I sold some of my Books to raise a little Money, Was taken on board privately, and as we had a fair Wind[,] in three Days I found myself in New York near 300 Miles from home, a Boy of but 17, without the least Recommendation to or Knowledge of any Person in the Place, and with very little Money in my Pocket.

My Inclinations for the Sea, were by this time worne out, or I might now have gratify'd them. But having a Trade, and supposing myself a pretty good Workman, I offer'd my Service to the Printer in the Place, old Mr. Wm Bradford, who had been the first Printer in Pensilvania, but remov'd from thence upon the Quarrel of Geo. Keith. — He could give me no Employment, having little to do, and Help enough already: But, says he, my Son at Philadelphia has lately lost his principal Hand, Aquila Rose, by Death. If you go thither I believe he may employ you. — Philadelphia was 100 Miles farther. I set out, however, in a Boat for Amboy, leaving my Chest and Things to follow me round by Sea. In crossing the Bay we met with a Squall that tore our rotten sails to pieces, prevented our getting into the Kill, and drove us upon Long Island. In our Way a drunken Dutchman, who was a Passenger too, fell overboard; when he was sinking I reach'd thro' the Water to his shock Pate and drew him up so that we got him in again. His ducking sober'd him a little, and he went to sleep, taking first out of his Pocket a Book which he desir'd I would dry for him. It prov'd to be my old favourite Author Bunyan's Pilgrim's Progress in Dutch, finely printed on good Paper with copper Cuts, a Dress better than I had ever seen it wear in its own Language. I have since found that it has been translated into most of the Languages of Europe, and suppose it has been more generally read than any other Book except perhaps the Bible. Honest John was the first that I know of who mix'd Narration and Dialogue, a Method of Writing very engaging to the Reader, who in the most interesting Parts finds himself, as it were brought into the Company, and present at the Discourse. De foe in his Cruso, his Moll Flanders, Religious Courtship, Family Instructor, and other Pieces, has imitated it with Success. And Richardson has done the same in his Pamela, etc.—

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46 old . . . Bradford. William Bradford (1663-1752) was the pioneer printer of the middle colonies, having first visited Pennsylvania in 1682 • 51 **my Son,** Andrew Bradford (1686-1742), for many years Franklin's chief rival in Philadelphia • 52 **Aquila Rose** (1695-1723), a minor poet, author of the posthumous **Poems on Several Occasions** (1740) • 54 **Amboy,** Perth Amboy, on the southern shore of Raritan Bay in New Jersey • 58 **Kill,** Kill van Kull, the strait between Staten Island and New Jersey • 75 **De foe . . . Pieces.** The references are to **Robinson Crusoe** (1719), **Moll Flanders** (1722), **Religious Courtship** (1722), and **The Family Instructor** (1715-1718) or **A New Family Instructor** (1727). Franklin's acquaintance with the work of Defoe has interesting implications for the student of his style • 78 **Richardson,** Samuel Richardson (1689-1761), English novelist, whose **Pamela, or Virtue Rewarded** was first printed in 1740

When we drew near the Island we found it was at a Place where there could be no Landing, there being a great Surff on the stony Beach. So we dropt Anchor and swung round towards the Shore. Some People came down to the Water Edge and hallow'd to us, as we did to them. But the Wind was so high and the Surff so loud, that we could not hear so as to understand each other. There were Canoes on the Shore, and we made Signs and hallow'd that they should fetch us, but they either did not understand us, or thought it impracticable. So they went away, and Night coming on, we had no Remedy but to wait till the Wind should abate, and in the mean time the Boatman and I concluded to sleep if we could, and so crouded into the Scuttle with the Dutchman who was still wet, and the Spray beating over the Head of our Boat, leak'd thro' to us, so that we were soon almost as wet as he. In this Manner we lay all Night with very little Rest. But the Wind abating the next Day, we made a Shift to reach Amboy before Night, having been 30 Hours on the Water without Victuals, or any Drink but a Bottle of filthy Rum: The Water we sail'd on being salt. —

In the Evening I found myself very feverish, and went in to Bed. But having read somewhere that cold Water drank plentifully was good for a Fever, I follow'd the Prescription, sweat plentifully most of the Night, my Fever left me, and in the Morning crossing the Ferry, I proceeded on my Journey, on foot, having 50 Miles to Burlington, where I was told I should find Boats that would carry me the rest of the Way to Philadelphia.

It rain'd very hard all the Day, I was thoroughly soak'd, and by Noon a good deal tir'd, so I stopt at a poor Inn, where I staid all night, beginning now to wish I had never left home. I cut so miserable a Figure too, that I found by the Questions ask'd me I was suspected to be some runaway Servant, and in danger of being taken up on that Suspicion. However I proceeded the next Day, and got in the Evening to an Inn within 8 or 10 Miles of Burlington, kept by one Dr. Brown. —

He ent[e]red into Conversation with me while I took some Refreshment, and finding I had read a little, became very sociable and friendly. Our Acquaintance continu'd as long as he liv'd. He had been, I imagine, an itinerant Doctor, for there was no Town in England, or Country in Europe, of which he could not give a very particular Account. He had some Letters, and was ingenious, but much of an Unbeliever, and wickedly undertook, some Years after to travesty the Bible in doggrel Verse as Cotton had done Virgil. By this means he set many of the Facts in a very ridiculous Light, and might have hurt weak minds if his Work had been publish'd: — but it never was. — At his House I lay that Night, and the next Morning reach'd Burlington. — But had the Mortification to find that the regular Boats were gone, a little before my coming, and no other expected to go till Tuesday, this being Saturday. Wherefore I returned to an old Woman in the Town of whom I had bought Gingerbread to eat on the Water, and ask'd her Advice; she invited me to lodge at her House till a Passage by Water should offer: and being tired with my foot Travelling, I accepted the Invitation. She understanding I was a Printer, would have had me stay at that Town and follow my Business, being ignorant of the Stock necessary to begin with. She was very hospitable, gave me a Dinner of Ox Cheek with great Goodwill, accepting only of a Pot of Ale in return. And I thought myself fix'd till Tuesday should come. However walking in the Evening by the Side of the River, a Boat came by, which I found was going towards Philadelphia, with several People in her. They took me in, and as there was no wind, we row'd all the Way; and about Midnight not having yet seen the City, some of the Company were confident we must have pass'd it, and would row no farther, the others knew not where we were, so we put towards the Shore, got into a Creek, landed near an old Fence[,] with the Rails of which we made a Fire, the Night being cold, in October, and there we remain'd till Daylight. Then one of the Company knew the Place to be Cooper's Creek a little above Philadelphia, which we saw as soon as we got out of the Creek, and arriv'd there about 8 or 9 o'Clock, on the Sunday morning, and landed at the Market Street Wharff.—

I have been the more particular in this Description of my Journey, and shall be so of my first Entry into that

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29 **Burlington,** on the Delaware River, northeast of Philadelphia • 39 **Dr. Brown,** apparently an obscure physician, Dr. John Browne, who died in 1737 • 49 **as . . . Virgil,** an allusion to a burlesque poem, "Scarronides," or the "First Book of Virgil Travestie" (1664), by Charles Cotton (1630-1687), English translator • 78 **Cooper's Creek,** a small stream which empties into the Delaware at Camden, just above downtown Philadelphia

City, that you may in your Mind compare such unlikely Beginnings with the Figure I have since made there. I was in my Working Dress, my best Cloaths being to come round by Sea. I was dirty from my Journey; my Pockets were stuff'd out with Shirts and Stockings; I knew no Soul, nor where to look for Lodging. I was fatigued with Travelling, Rowing and Want of Rest. I was very hungry, and my whole Stock of Cash consisted of a Dutch Dollar and about a Shilling in Copper. The latter I gave the People of the Boat for my Passage, who at first refus'd it on Acc^{t} of my Rowing; but I insisted on their taking it, a Man being sometimes more generous when he has but a little Money than when he has plenty, perhaps thro' Fear of being thought to have but little. Then I walk'd up the Street, gazing about, till near the Market House I met a Boy with Bread. I had made many a Meal on Bread, and inquiring where he got it, I went immediately to the Baker's he directed me to in Second Street; and ask'd for Bisket, intending such as we had in Boston, but they it seems were not made in Philadelphia, then I ask'd for a threepenny Loaf, and was told they had none such: so not considering or knowing the Difference of Money and the greater Cheapness nor the Names of his Bread, I bad[e] him give me threepenny worth of any sort. He gave me accordingly three great Puffy Rolls. I was surpriz'd at the Quantity, but took it, and having no room in my Pockets, walk'd off, with a Roll under each Arm, and eating the other. Thus I went up Market Street as far as fourth Street, passing by the Door of Mr. Read, my future Wife's Father, when she standing at the Door saw me, and thought I made as I certainly did a most awkward ridiculous Appearance. Then I turn'd and went down Chestnut Street and part of Walnut Street, eating my Roll all the Way, and coming round found myself again at Market Street Wharff, near the Boat I came in, to which I went for a Draught of the River Water, and being fill'd with one of my Rolls, gave the other two to a Woman and her Child that came down the River in the Boat with us and were waiting to go farther. Thus refresh'd I walk'd again up the Street, which by this time had many clean dress'd People in it who were all walking the same Way; I join'd them, and thereby was led into the great Meeting House of the Quakers near the Market. I sat down among them, and after looking round awhile and hearing nothing said; being very drowsy thro' Labour and want of Rest the preceding Night, I fell fast asleep, and continu'd so till the Meeting broke up, when one was kind enough to rouse me. This was therefore the first House I was in or slept in, in Philadelphia.—

. . . I had been religiously educated as a Presbyterian; and tho' some of the dogmas of that persuasion, such as *the eternal decrees of God, election, reprobation, etc.,* appeared to me unintelligible, others doubtful, and I early absented myself from the public assemblies of the sect, Sunday being my studying day, I never was without some religious principles. I never doubted, for instance, the existence of the Deity; that he made the world, and govern'd it by his Providence; that the most acceptable service of God was the doing good to man; that our souls are immortal; and that all crime will be punished, and virtue rewarded, either here or hereafter. These I esteem'd the essentials of every religion; and, being to be found in all the religions we had in our country, I respected them all, tho' with different degrees of respect, as I found them more or less mix'd with other articles, which, without any tendency to inspire, promote, or confirm morality, serv'd principally to divide us, and make us unfriendly to one another. This respect to all, with an opinion that the worst had some good effects, induc'd me to avoid all discourse that might tend to lessen the good opinion another might have of his own religion; and as our province increas'd in people, and new places of worship were continually wanted, and generally erected by voluntary contribution, my mite for such purpose, whatever might be the sect, was never refused.—

Tho' I seldom attended any public worship, I had still an opinion of its propriety, and of its utility when rightly conducted, and I regularly paid my annual subscription for the support of the only Presbyterian minister or meeting we had in Philadelphia. He us'd to visit me sometimes as a friend, and admonish me to attend his

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50 **Philadelphia.** The selection from the portion of the **Autobiography** written at Twyford ends here; Franklin went on to describe his first connections in Philadelphia, his voyage to England and his work there in 1724-1726, and his business life in Philadelphia down to 1730 • 63 **the essentials . . . religion,** derived, that is to say, from comparing the fundamentals of all faiths—a typical Deistic method. Note also that Franklin omits mention of the Bible as the revealed word of God, an omission which is the surest distinguishing mark of Deism

administrations, and I was now and then prevail'd on to do so, once for five Sundays successively. Had he been in my opinion a good preacher, perhaps I might have continued, notwithstanding the occasion I had for the Sunday's leisure in my course of study; but his discourses were chiefly either polemic arguments, or explications of the peculiar doctrines of our sect, and were all to me very dry, uninteresting, and unedifying, since not a single moral principle was inculcated or enforc'd, their aim seeming to be rather to make us Presbyterians than good citizens.

At length he took for his text that verse of the fourth chapter of Philippians: "*Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true, honest, just, pure, lovely, or of good report, if there be any virtue, or any praise, think on these things.*" And I imagin'd, in a sermon on such a text, we could not miss of having some morality. But he confin'd himself to five points only, as meant by the apostle, viz.: 1. Keeping holy the Sabbath day. 2. Being diligent in reading the holy Scriptures. 3. Attending duly the publick worship. 4. Partaking of the Sacrament. 5. Paying a due respect to God's ministers. These might be all good things; but, as they were not the kind of good things that I expected from that text, I despaired of ever meeting with them from any other, was disgusted, and attended his preaching no more. I had some years before compos'd a little Liturgy, or form of prayer, for my own private use (viz., in 1728), entitled, *Articles of Belief and Acts of Religion.* I return'd to the use of this, and went no more to the public assemblies. My conduct might be blameable, but I leave it, without attempting further to excuse it; my present purpose being to relate facts, and not to make apologies for them.

It was about this time I conceiv'd the bold and arduous project of arriving at moral perfection. I wish'd to live without committing any fault at any time; I would conquer all that either natural inclination, custom, or company might lead me into. As I knew, or thought I knew, what was right and wrong, I did not see why I might not always do the one and avoid the other. But I soon found I had undertaken a task of more difficulty than I had imagined. While my care was employ'd in guarding against one fault, I was often surprised by another; habit took the advantage of attention; inclination was sometimes too strong for reason. I concluded, at length, that the mere speculative conviction that it was our interest to be completely virtuous, was not sufficient to prevent our slipping; and that the contrary habits must be broken, and good ones acquired and established, before we can have any dependence on a steady, uniform rectitude of conduct. For this purpose I therefore contrived the following method.

In the various enumerations of the moral virtues I had met with in my reading, I found the catalogue more or less numerous, as different writers included more or fewer ideas under the same name. Temperance, for example, was by some confined to eating and drinking, while by others it was extended to mean the moderating every other pleasure, appetite, inclination, or passion, bodily or mental, even to our avarice and ambition. I propos'd to myself, for the sake of clearness, to use rather more names, with fewer ideas annex'd to each, than a few names with more ideas; and I included under thirteen names of virtues all that at that time occurr'd to me as necessary or desirable, and annexed to each a short precept, which fully express'd the extent I gave to its meaning.

These names of virtues, with their precepts, were:

1. TEMPERANCE.

Eat not to dullness; drink not to elevation.

2. SILENCE.

Speak not but what may benefit others or yourself; avoid trifling conversation.

3. ORDER.

Let all your things have their places; let each part of your business have its time.

4. RESOLUTION.

Resolve to perform what you ought; perform without fail what you resolve.

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28 Articles . . . Religion, to be found in Bigelow's Complete Works, I, 307-316, and in Smyth's Writings, II, 91-100

5. FRUGALITY.

Make no expense but to do good to others or yourself; *i.e.,* waste nothing.

6. INDUSTRY.

Lose no time; be always employ'd in something useful; cut off all unnecessary actions.

7. SINCERITY.

Use no hurtful deceit; think innocently and justly, and, if you speak, speak accordingly.

8. JUSTICE.

Wrong none by doing injuries, or omitting the benefits that are your duty.

9. MODERATION.

Avoid extreams; forbear resenting injuries so much as you think they deserve.

10. CLEANLINESS.

Tolerate no uncleanliness in body, cloaths, or habitation.

11. TRANQUILLITY.

Be not disturbed at trifles, or at accidents common or unavoidable.

12. CHASTITY.

Rarely use venery but for health or offspring, never to dulness, weakness, or the injury of your own or another's peace or reputation.

13. HUMILITY.

Imitate Jesus and Socrates.

My intention being to acquire the *habitude* of all these virtues, I judg'd it would be well not to distract my attention by attempting the whole at once, but to fix it on one of them at a time; and, when I should be master of that, then to proceed to another, and so on, till I should have gone thro' the thirteen; and, as the previous acquisition of some might facilitate the acquisition of certain others, I arrang'd them with that view, as they stand above. Temperance first, as it tends to procure that coolness and clearness of head, which is so necessary where constant vigilance was to be kept up, and guard maintained against the unremitting attraction of ancient habits, and the force of perpetual temptations. This being acquir'd and establish'd, Silence would be more easy; and my desire being to gain knowledge at the same time that I improv'd in virtue, and considering that in conversation it was obtain'd rather by the use of the ears than of the tongue, and therefore wishing to break a habit I was getting into of prattling, punning, and joking, which only made me acceptable to trifling company, I gave *Silence* the second place. This and the next, *Order,* I expected would allow me more time for attending to my project and my studies. *Resolution,* once become habitual, would keep me firm in my endeavors to obtain all the subsequent virtues; *Frugality* and Industry freeing me from my remaining debt, and producing affluence and independence, would make more easy the practice of Sincerity and Justice, etc., etc. Conceiving then, that, agreeably to the advice of Pythagoras in his Golden Verses, daily examination would be necessary, I contrived the following method for conducting that examination.

I made a little book, in which I allotted a page for each of the virtues. I rul'd each page with red ink, so as to have seven columns, one for each day of the week, marking each column with a letter for the day. I cross'd these columns with thirteen red lines, marking the beginning of each line with the first letter of one of the virtues, on which line, and in its proper column, I might mark, by a little black spot, every fault I found upon examination to have been committed respecting that virtue upon that day.

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57 Pythagoras . . . Verses. The Greek philosopher Pythagoras (fl. 540-512 B.C.) favored an ascetic discipline as a means of attaining spiritual perfection. A translation of the verses referred to by Franklin, showing remarkable similarity to the program here outlined, is given in Bigelow's Complete Works, I, 177-179. It seems probable that Franklin derived his Pythagorean ideas from Thomas Tryon, whose vegetarianism has been mentioned earlier • **60 a little book,** which bears, according to William Temple Franklin, the date July 1, 1733

Form of the Pages

TEMPERANCE.							
EAT NOT TO DULNESS; DRINK NOT TO ELEVATION.							
	S.	M.	T.	W.	T.	F.	S.
T.							
S.	*	*		*		*	
O.	**	*	*		*	*	*
R.			*			*	
F.		*			*		
I.			*				
S.							
J.							
M.							
C.							
T.							
C.							
H.							

I determined to give a week's strict attention to each of the virtues successively. Thus, in the first week, my great guard was to avoid every the least offence against *Temperance,* leaving the other virtues to their ordinary chance, only marking every evening the faults of the day. Thus, if in the first week I could keep my first line, marked T, clear of spots, I suppos'd the habit of that virtue so much strengthen'd, and its opposite weaken'd, that I might venture extending my attention to include the next, and for the following week keep both lines clear of spots. Proceeding thus to the last, I could go thro' a course compleat in thirteen weeks, and four courses in a year. And like him who, having a garden to weed, does not attempt to eradicate all the bad herbs at once, which would exceed his reach and his strength, but works on one of the beds at a time, and, having accomplish'd the first, proceeds to a second, so I should have, I hoped, the encouraging pleasure of seeing on my pages the progress I made in virtue, by clearing successively my lines of their spots, till in the end, by a number of courses, I should be happy in viewing a clean book, after a thirteen weeks' daily examination.

This my little book had for its motto these lines from Addison's *Cato:*

Here will I hold. If there's a power above us
(And that there is, all nature cries aloud
Thro' all her works), He must delight in virtue;
And that which He delights in must be happy.

Another from Cicero,

O vitæ Philosophia dux! O virtutum indagatrix expultrixque vitiorum! Unus dies, bene et ex præceptis tuis actus, peccanti immortalitati est anteponendus.

Another from the Proverbs of Solomon, speaking of wisdom or virtue:

Length of days is in her right hand, and in her left hand riches and honour. Her ways are ways of pleasantness, and all her paths are peace.—iii. 16, 17.

And conceiving God to be the fountain of wisdom, I thought it right and necessary to solicit his assistance for obtaining it; to this end I formed the following little prayer, which was prefix'd to my tables of examination, for daily use.

O powerful Goodness! bountiful Father! merciful Guide! Increase in me that wisdom which discovers my truest interest. Strengthen my resolutions to perform what that wisdom dictates. Accept my kind offices to thy other children as the only return in my power for thy continual favours to me.

I used also sometimes a little prayer which I took from Thomson's Poems, viz.:

Father of light and life, thou Good Supreme!
O teach me what is good; teach me Thyself!
Save me from folly, vanity, and vice,
From every low pursuit; and fill my soul
With knowledge, conscious peace, and virtue pure;
Sacred, substantial, never-fading bliss!

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24 **Addison's Cato,** a tragedy produced and published in 1713. The lines quoted (except for the "us" at the end of the first line) appear in a soliloquy by Cato on Plato's views of the immortality of the soul, at the beginning of Act V • 29 **Cicero,** Marcus Tullius Cicero (106-43 B.C.), Roman orator and philosopher. The sentences, with a few lines intervening, may be found in Bk. V, Chap. II, of the **Tusculan Disputations,** and may be translated as follows: "O philosophy, thou guide of life, O thou explorer of virtue and expeller of vice. One day well spent and in accordance with thy lessons is to be preferred to an eternity of error" • 50 **Thomson's Poems.** The lines are from "Winter" (1726), ll. 210-215, by the English poet James Thomson (1700-1748)

The precept of *Order* requiring that *every part of my business should have its allotted time,* one page in my little book contain'd the following scheme of employment for the twenty-four hours of a natural day.

THE MORNING. *Question.* What good shall I do this day?	5, 6, 7	Rise, wash and address *Powerful Goodness!* Contrive day's business, and take the resolution of the day; prosecute the present study, and breakfast.
	8, 9, 10, 11	Work.
NOON.	12, 1	Read, or overlook my accounts, and dine.
	2, 3, 4, 5	Work.
EVENING. *Question.* What good have I done to-day?	6, 7, 8, 9	Put things in their places. Supper. Music or diversion, or conversation. Examination of the day.
NIGHT.	10, 11, 12, 1, 2, 3, 4	Sleep.

I enter'd upon the execution of this plan for self-examination, and continu'd it with occasional intermissions for some time. I was surpris'd to find myself so much fuller of faults than I had imagined; but I had the satisfaction of seeing them diminish. To avoid the trouble of renewing now and then my little book, which, by scraping out the marks on the paper of old faults to make room for new ones in a new course, became full of holes, I transferr'd my tables and precepts to the ivory leaves of a memorandum book, on which the lines were drawn with red ink, that made a durable stain, and on those lines I mark'd my faults with a black-lead pencil, which marks I could easily wipe out with a wet sponge. After a while I went thro' one course only in a year, and afterward only one in several years, till at length I omitted them entirely, being employ'd in voyages and business abroad, with a multiplicity of affairs that interfered; but I always carried my little book with me.

My scheme of ORDER gave me the most trouble; and I found that, tho' it might be practicable where a man's business was such as to leave him the disposition of his time, that of a journeyman printer, for instance, it was not possible to be exactly observed by a master who must mix with the world and often receive people of business at their own hours. *Order,* too, with regard to places for things, papers, etc., I found extreamly difficult to acquire. I had not been early accustomed to it, and, having an exceeding good memory, I was not so sensible of the inconvenience attending want of method. This article, therefore, cost me so much painful attention, and my faults in it vexed me so much, and I made so little progress in amendment, and had such frequent relapses, that I was almost ready to give up the attempt, and content myself with a faulty character in that respect, like the man who, in buying an ax of a smith, my neighbour, desired to have the whole of its surface as bright as the edge. The smith consented to grind it bright for him if he would turn the wheel; he turn'd, while the smith press'd the broad face of the ax hard and heavily on the stone, which made the turning of it very fatiguing. The man came every now and then from the wheel to see how the work went on, and at length would take his ax as it was, without farther grinding. "No," said the smith, "turn on, turn on; we shall have it bright by-and-by; as yet, it is only speckled." "Yes," says the man, *"but I think I like a speckled ax best."* And I believe this may have been the case with many who, having, for want of some such means as I employ'd, found the difficulty of obtaining good and breaking bad habits in other points of vice and virtue, have given up the struggle, and concluded that *"a speckled ax was best";* for something, that pretended to be reason, was every now and then suggesting to me that such extream nicety as I exacted of myself might be a kind of foppery in morals, which, if it were known, would make me ridiculous; that a perfect character might be attended with the inconvenience of being envied and hated; and that a benevolent man should allow a few faults in himself, to keep his friends in countenance.

In truth, I found myself incorrigible with respect to Order; and now I am grown old, and my memory bad,

I feel very sensibly the want of it. But, on the whole, tho' I never arrived at the perfection I had been so ambitious of obtaining, but fell far short of it, yet I was, by the endeavour, a better and a happier man than I otherwise should have been if I had not attempted it; as those who aim at perfect writing by imitating the engraved copies, tho' they never reach the wish'd-for excellence of those copies, their hand is mended by the endeavour, and is tolerable while it continues fair and legible.

It may be well my posterity should be informed that to this little artifice, with the blessing of God, their ancestor ow'd the constant felicity of his life, down to his 79th year, in which this is written. What reverses may attend the remainder is in the hand of Providence; but, if they arrive, the reflection on past happiness enjoy'd ought to help his bearing them with more resignation. To Temperance he ascribes his long-continued health, and what is still left to him of a good constitution; to Industry and Frugality, the early easiness of his circumstances and acquisition of his fortune, with all that knowledge that enabled him to be a useful citizen, and obtained for him some degree of reputation among the learned; to Sincerity and Justice, the confidence of his country, and the honorable employs it conferred upon him; and to the joint influence of the whole mass of the virtues, even in the imperfect state he was able to acquire them, all that evenness of temper, and that cheerfulness in conversation, which makes his company still sought for, and agreeable even to his younger acquaintances. I hope, therefore, that some of my descendants may follow the example and reap the benefit. . . .

In 1746, being at Boston I met there with a Dr. Spence who was lately arrived from Scotland, and show'd me some electric experiments. They were imperfectly perform'd as he was not very expert but, being on a subject quite new to me, they equally surpris'd and pleased me. Soon after my return to Philadelphia, our library company receiv'd from Mr. P. Collinson, Fellow of the Royal Society of London, a present of a glass tube with some account of the use of it in making such experiments. I eagerly seized the opportunity of repeating what I had seen at Boston; and, by much practice, acquir'd great readiness in performing those, also, which we had an account of from England, adding a number of new ones. I say much practice, for my house was continually full, for some time, with people who came to see these new wonders.

To divide a little this incumbrance among my friends, I caused a number of similar tubes to be blown at our glass-house, with which they furnished themselves, so that we had at length several performers. Among these, the principal was Mr. Kinnersley, an ingenious neighbor, who, being out of business, I encouraged to undertake showing the experiments for money, and drew up for him two lectures, in which the experiments were rang'd in such order, and accompanied with such explanations in such method, as that the foregoing should assist in comprehending the following. He procur'd an elegant apparatus for the purpose, in which all the little machines that I had roughly made for myself were nicely form'd by instrument-makers. His lectures were well attended, and gave great satisfaction, and after some time he went thro' the colonies exhibiting them in every capital town and pick'd up some money. In the West India Islands, indeed, it was with difficulty the experiments could be made, from the general moisture of the air.

Oblig'd as we were to Mr. Collinson for his present of the tube, etc., I thought it right he should be inform'd of our success in using it, and wrote him several letters containing accounts of our experiments. He got them read in the Royal Society where they were not at first thought worth so much notice as to be printed in their

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32 **benefit.** Here ends the selection from the portion of the **Autobiography** written at Passy in 1784. A few paragraphs, relating chiefly to a proposed book on the "Art of Virtue," which Franklin never got around to writing, have been omitted • 33 **Dr. Spence** has been identified tentatively by I. Bernard Cohen in his edition (1941) of Franklin's **Experiments** as a Dr. A. Spencer, who advertised courses in experimental philosophy in Boston in 1743 and in Philadelphia in 1744. It appears probable that Franklin erred both in the date of his first acquaintance with electrical experiments and in the name of the man who displayed them • 39 **Mr. P. Collinson,** Peter Collinson (1694-1768), a Quaker merchant of London whose large trade with America enabled him to gratify a fondness for gardening and natural history. He formed intimate connections not only with Franklin but also with John Bartram, the father of William Bartram (see p. 117), and throughout his life imported exotic plants for his gardens at Mill Hill, near London • 53 **Mr. Kinnersley,** Ebenezer Kinnersley (1711-1778), one of Franklin's closest associates and himself a considerable contributor to electrical science. After 1751 he lectured, on a plan drawn up by Franklin, throughout the colonies and even in the West Indies

Transactions. One paper, which I wrote for Mr. Kinnersley, on the sameness of lightning with electricity, I sent to Dr. Mitchel, an acquaintance of mine and one of the members also of that society, who wrote me word that it had been read, but was laughed at by the connoisseurs. The papers, however, being shown to Dr. Fothergill, he thought they were of too much value to be stifled, and advis'd the printing of them. Mr. Collinson then gave them to Cave for publication in his *Gentleman's Magazine;* but he chose to print them separately in a pamphlet and Dr. Fothergill wrote the preface. Cave, it seems, judged rightly for his profit, for by the additions that arrived afterward, they swell'd to a quarto volume which has had five editions, and cost him nothing for copy-money.

It was, however, some time before those papers were much taken notice of in England. A copy of them happening to fall into the hands of the Count de Buffon, a philosopher deservedly of great reputation in France, and, indeed, all over Europe, he prevailed with M. Dalibard to translate them into French, and they were printed at Paris. The publication offended the Abbé Nollet, preceptor in Natural Philosophy to the royal family, and an able experimenter, who had form'd and publish'd a theory of electricity, which then had the general vogue. He could not at first believe that such a work came from America, and said it must have been fabricated by his enemies at Paris, to decry his system. Afterwards, having been assur'd that there really existed such a person as Franklin at Philadelphia, which he had doubted, he wrote and published a volume of "Letters," chiefly address'd to me, defending his theory, and denying the verity of my experiments, and of the positions deduc'd from them.

I once purpos'd answering the abbé, and actually began the answer; but, on consideration that my writings contain'd a description of experiments which any one might repeat and verify, and if not to be verifi'd, could not be defended; or of observations offer'd as conjectures, and not delivered dogmatically, therefore not laying me under any obligation to defend them; and reflecting that a dispute between two persons, writing in different languages, might be lengthened greatly by mistranslations and thence misconceptions of one another's meaning, much of one of the abbé's letters being founded on an error in the translation, I concluded to let my papers shift for themselves, believing it was better to spend what time I could spare from public business in making new experiments, than in disputing about those already made. I therefore never answered M. Nollet, and the event gave me no cause to repent my silence; for my friend M. le Roy, of the Royal Academy of Sciences, took up my cause and refuted him; my book was translated into the Italian, German, and Latin languages; and the doctrine it contain'd was by degrees universally adopted by the philosophers of Europe in preference to that of the abbé; so that he lived to see himself the last of his sect, except Monsieur B———, of Paris, his *élève* and immediate disciple.

What gave my book the more sudden and general celebrity, was the success of one of its proposed experiments, made by Messrs. Dalibard and Delor at Marly, for drawing lightning from the clouds. This engag'd the public attention every where. M. Delor, who had an apparatus for experimental philosophy, and lectur'd in that branch of science, undertook to repeat what he called the *Philadelphia Experiments;* and, after they were performed before the king and court, all the curious of Paris flocked to see them. I will not swell this narrative with an account of that capital experiment, nor of the infinite pleasure I receiv'd in the success of a similar one I made soon after with a kite at Philadelphia, as both are to be found in the histories of electricity.

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3 **Dr. Mitchel,** John Mitchell (d. 1768), an English physician and scientist who resided from about 1721 until 1747 or 1748 at Urbanna, Virginia. He is most famous for his map of North America, printed in 1755 • 6 **Dr. Fothergill,** John Fothergill (1712-1780), English Quaker physician. He had many close connections with the American colonies and subsidized William Bartram's expedition into the Floridas and Georgia in 1773-1777 (see pp. 118-126) • 9 **Cave,** Edward Cave (1691-1754), English printer and founder of the **Gentleman's Magazine** (1731), probably the most widely circulated periodical of the eighteenth century • 18 **Count de Buffon,** George Louis Leclerc, Comte de Buffon (1707-1785), one of the great natural philosophers of the age • 20 **M. Dalibard,** Jean François Dalibard (1703-1799). His translation was printed in 1752; on May 10 of the same year he successfully carried out the experiment suggested by Franklin of drawing lightning from the clouds • 22 **Abbé Nollet,** Jean Antoine Nollet (1700-1770), the chief French opponent to Franklin's theories. He appears to have been offended because Franklin ignored his earlier work in the field of electricity • 52 **M. le Roy,** Jean Baptiste Le Roy (1719-1800), a French physician much interested in electricity • 62 **Delor.** Of Delor, "master of experimental philosophy," little is known beyond the fact that he performed Franklin's experiments before the King and his courtiers and on May 18, 1752, repeated the experiment of drawing lightning from the clouds by using a ninety-foot iron rod

Richard says; and *He that riseth late, must trot all Day, and shall scarce overtake his Business at Night.* While *Laziness travels so slowly, that Poverty soon overtakes him,* as we read in *Poor Richard,* who adds, *Drive thy Business, let not that drive thee;* and *Early to Bed, and early to rise, makes a Man healthy, wealthy and wise.*

So what signifies *wishing* and *hoping* for better Times. We may make these Times better if we bestir ourselves. *Industry need not wish,* as *Poor Richard* says, and *He that lives upon Hope will die fasting. There are no Gains, without Pains;* then *Help Hands, for I have no Lands,* or if I have, they are smartly taxed. And, as *Poor Richard* likewise observes, *He that hath a Trade hath an Estate,* and *He that hath a Calling, hath an Office of Profit and Honour;* but then the *Trade* must be worked at, and the *Calling* well followed, or neither the *Estate,* nor the *Office,* will enable us to pay our Taxes.—If we are industrious we shall never starve; for, as *Poor Richard* says, *At the working Man's House* Hunger *looks in, but dares not enter.* Nor will the Bailiff or the Constable enter, for *Industry pays Debts, while Despair encreaseth them,* says *Poor Richard.*—What though you have found no Treasure, nor has any rich Relation left you a Legacy, *Diligence is the Mother of Good luck,* as *Poor Richard* says, *and God gives all Things to Industry.* Then *plough deep, while Sluggards sleep, and you shall have Corn to sell and to keep,* says *Poor Dick.* Work while it is called To-day, for you know not how much you may be hindered To-morrow, which makes *Poor Richard* say, *One To-day is worth two To-morrows;* and farther, *Have you somewhat to do To-morrow, do it To-day.* If you were a Servant, would you not be ashamed that a good Master should catch you idle? Are you then your own Master, *be ashamed to catch yourself idle,* as *Poor Dick* says. When there is so much to be done for yourself, your Family, your Country, and your gracious King, be up by Peep of Day; *Let not the Sun look down and say, Inglorious here he lies.* Handle your Tools without Mittens; remember that *the Cat in Gloves catches no Mice,* as *Poor Richard* says. 'Tis true there is much to be done, and perhaps you are weak handed, but stick to it steadily, and you will see great Effects, for *constant Dropping wears away Stones,* and by *Diligence and Patience the Mouse ate in two the Cable;* and *little Strokes fell great Oaks,* as *Poor Richard* says in his Almanack, the Year I cannot just now remember.

Methinks I hear some of you say, *Must a Man afford himself no Leisure?*—I will tell thee, my Friend, what *Poor Richard* says, *Employ thy Time well if thou meanest to gain Leisure;* and *since thou art not sure of a Minute, throw not away an Hour.* Leisure, is Time for doing something useful; this Leisure the diligent Man will obtain, but the lazy Man never; so that, as *Poor Richard* says, a *Life of Leisure and a Life of Laziness are two Things.* Do you imagine that Sloth will afford you more Comfort than Labour? No, for as *Poor Richard* says, *Trouble springs from Idleness, and grievous Toil from needless Ease. Many without Labour, would live by their* WITS *only, but they break for want of Stock.* Whereas Industry gives Comfort, and Plenty, and Respect: *Fly Pleasures, and they'll follow you. The diligent Spinner has a large Shift;* and *now I have a Sheep and a Cow, every Body bids me Good morrow;* all which is well said by *Poor Richard.*

But with our Industry, we must likewise be *steady, settled* and *careful,* and oversee our own Affairs *with our own Eyes,* and not trust too much to others; for, as *Poor Richard* says,

I never saw an oft removed Tree,
Nor yet an oft removed Family,
That throve so well as those that settled be.

And again, *Three Removes is as bad as a Fire;* and again, *Keep thy Shop, and thy Shop will keep thee;* and again, *If you would have your Business done, go; If not, send.* And again,

He that by the Plough would thrive,
Himself must either hold or drive.

And again, *The Eye of a Master will do more Work than both his Hands;* and again, *Want of Care does us more Damage than Want of Knowledge;* and again, *Not to oversee Workmen, is to leave them your Purse open.* Trusting too much to others Care is the Ruin of many; for, as the *Almanack* says, *In the Affairs of this World, Men are saved, not by Faith, but by the Want of it;* but a Man's own Care is profitable; for, saith *Poor Dick, Learning is to the Studious,* and *Riches to the Careful,* as well as *Power to the Bold,* and *Heaven to the Virtuous.* And farther, *If you would have a faithful Servant, and one that you like, serve yourself.* And again, he adviseth to Circumspection and Care, even in the smallest Mat-

ters, because sometimes *a little Neglect may breed great Mischief;* adding, *For want of a Nail the Shoe was lost; for want of a Shoe the Horse was lost; and for want of a Horse the Rider was lost,* being overtaken and slain by the Enemy, all for want of Care about a Horse shoe Nail.

So much for Industry, my Friends, and Attention to one's own Business; but to these we must add *Frugality,* if we would make our *Industry* more certainly successful. A Man may, if he knows not how to save as he gets, *keep his Nose all his Life to the Grindstone,* and die not worth a *Groat* at last. *A fat Kitchen makes a lean Will,* as *Poor Richard* says; and,

Many Estates are spent in the Getting,
Since Women for Tea forsook Spinning and Knitting,
And Men for Punch forsook Hewing and Splitting.

If you would be wealthy, says he, in another Almanack, *think of Saving as well as of Getting: The* Indies *have not made* Spain *rich, because her* Outgoes *are greater than her* Incomes. Away then with your expensive Follies, and you will not have so much Cause to complain of hard Times, heavy Taxes, and chargeable Families; for, as *Poor Dick* says,

Women and Wine, Game and Deceit,
Make the Wealth small, and the Wants great.

And farther, *What maintains one Vice, would bring up two Children.* You may think perhaps, That a *little* Tea, or a *little* Punch now and then, Diet a *little* more costly, Clothes a *little* finer, and a *little* Entertainment now and then, can be no *great* Matter; but remember what *Poor Richard* says, *Many* a Little *makes a Mickle;* and farther, *Beware* of little *Expences; a small Leak will sink a great Ship;* and again, *Who Dainties love, shall Beggars prove;* and moreover, *Fools make Feasts, and wise Men eat them.*

Here you are all got together at this Vendue of *Fineries* and *Knicknacks.* You call them *Goods,* but if you do not take Care, they will prove *Evils* to some of you. You expect they will be sold *cheap,* and perhaps they may for less than they cost; but if you have no Occasion for them, they must be *dear* to you. Remember what *Poor Richard* says, *Buy what thou hast no Need of, and ere long thou shalt sell thy Necessaries.* And again, *At a great Pennyworth pause a while:* He means, that perhaps the Cheapness is *apparent* only, and not *real;* or the Bargain, by straitning thee in thy Business, may do thee more Harm than Good. For in another Place he says, *Many have been ruined by buying good Pennyworths.* Again, *Poor Richard* says, *'Tis foolish to lay out Money in a Purchase of Repentance;* and yet this Folly is practised every Day at Vendues, for want of minding the Almanack. *Wise Men,* as *Poor Dick* says, *learn by others Harms, Fools scarcely by their own;* but *Felix quem faciunt aliena Pericula cautum.* Many a one, for the Sake of Finery on the Back, have gone with a hungry Belly, and half starved their Families; *Silks and Sattins, Scarlet and Velvets,* as *Poor Richard* says, *put out the Kitchen Fire.* These are not the *Necessaries* of Life; they can scarcely be called the *Conveniences,* and yet only because they look pretty, how many *want* to *have* them. The *artificial* Wants of Mankind thus become more numerous than the *natural;* and, as *Poor Dick* says, *For one* poor *Person, there are an hundred* indigent. By these, and other Extravagancies, the Genteel are reduced to Poverty, and forced to borrow of those whom they formerly despised, but who through *Industry* and *Frugality* have maintained their Standing; in which Case it appears plainly, that a *Ploughman on his Legs is higher than a Gentleman on his Knees,* as *Poor Richard* says. Perhaps they have had a small Estate left them which they knew not the Getting of; they think *'tis Day, and will never be Night;* that a little to be spent out of *so much,* is not worth minding; *(a Child and a Fool, as Poor Richard says, imagine* Twenty Shillings *and Twenty Years can never be spent)* but, *always taking out of, the Meal-tub, and never putting in, soon comes to the Bottom;* then, as *Poor Dick* says, *When the Well's dry, they know the Worth of Water.* But this they might have known before, if they had taken his Advice; *If you would know the Value of Money, go and try to borrow some;* for, *he that goes a borrowing goes a sorrowing;* and indeed so does he that lends to such People, when he goes *to get it in again.—Poor Dick* farther advises, and says,

Fond Pride of Dress *is sure a very Curse;*
E'er Fancy *you consult, consult your Purse.*

And again, *Pride is as loud a Beggar as Want, and a*

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51 **Felix . . . cautum.** Fortunate is he whom the mistakes of others make wary

great deal more saucy. When you have bought one fine Thing you must buy ten more, that your Appearance may be all of a Piece; but *Poor Dick* says, *'Tis easier to* suppress *the first Desire, than to* satisfy *all that follow it.* And 'tis as truly Folly for the Poor to ape the Rich, as for the Frog to swell, in order to equal the Ox.

Great Estates may venture more,
But little Boats should keep near Shore.

'Tis however a Folly soon punished; for *Pride that dines on Vanity sups on Contempt,* as *Poor Richard* says. And in another Place, *Pride breakfasted with Plenty, dined with Poverty, and supped with Infamy.* And after all, of what Use is this *Pride of Appearance,* for which so much is risked, so much is suffered? It cannot promote Health, or ease Pain; it makes no Increase of Merit in the Person, it creates Envy, it hastens Misfortune.

What is a Butterfly? At best
He's but a Caterpillar drest.
The gaudy Fop's his Picture just,

as *Poor Richard* says.

But what Madness must it be to *run in Debt* for these Superfluities! We are offered, by the Terms of this Vendue, *Six Months Credit;* and that perhaps has induced some of us to attend it, because we cannot spare the ready Money, and hope now to be fine without it. But, ah, think what you do when you run in Debt; *You give to another, Power over your Liberty.* If you cannot pay at the Time, you will be ashamed to see your Creditor; you will be in Fear when you speak to him; you will make poor pitiful sneaking Excuses, and by Degrees come to lose your Veracity, and sink into base downright lying; for, as *Poor Richard* says, *The second Vice is Lying, the first is running in Debt.* And again, to the same Purpose, *Lying rides upon Debt's Back.* Whereas a freeborn *Englishman* ought not to be ashamed or afraid to see or speak to any Man living. But Poverty often deprives a Man of all Spirit and Virtue: *'Tis hard for an empty Bag to stand upright,* as *Poor Richard* truly says. What would you think of that Prince, or that Government, who should issue an Edict forbidding you to dress like a Gentleman or a Gentlewoman, on Pain of Imprisonment or Servitude? Would you not say, that you are free, have a Right to dress as you please, and that such an Edict would be a Breach of your Privileges, and such a Government tyrannical? And yet you are about to put yourself under that Tyranny when you run in Debt for such Dress! Your Creditor has Authority at his Pleasure to deprive you of your Liberty, by confining you in Goal [*sic*] for Life, or to sell you for a Servant, if you should not be able to pay him! When you have got your Bargain, you may, perhaps, think little of Payment; but *Creditors, Poor Richard* tells us, *have better Memories than Debtors;* and in another Place says, *Creditors are a superstitious Sect, great Observers of set Days and Times.* The Day comes round before you are aware, and the Demand is made before you are prepared to satisfy it. Or if you bear your Debt in Mind, the Term which at first seemed so long, will, as it lessens, appear extreamly short. *Time* will seem to have added Wings to his Heels as well as Shoulders. *Those have a short Lent,* saith *Poor Richard, who owe Money to be paid at Easter.* Then since, as he says, *The Borrower is a Slave to the Lender, and the Debtor to the Creditor,* disdain the Chain, preserve your Freedom; and maintain your Independency: Be *industrious* and *free;* be *frugal* and *free.* At present, perhaps, you may think yourself in thriving Circumstances, and that you can bear a little Extravagance [*sic*] without Injury; but,

For Age and Want, save while you may;
No Morning Sun lasts a whole Day,

as *Poor Richard* says—Gain may be temporary and uncertain, but ever while you live, Expence is constant and certain; and *'tis easier to build two Chimnies than to keep one in Fuel,* as *Poor Richard* says. So *rather go to Bed supperless than rise in Debt.*

Get what you can, and what you get hold;
'Tis the Stone that will turn all your Lead into Gold,

as *Poor Richard* says. And when you have got the Philosopher's Stone, sure you will no longer complain of bad Times, or the Difficulty of paying Taxes.

This Doctrine, my Friends, is *Reason* and *Wisdom;* but after all, do not depend too much upon your own *Industry,* and *Frugality,* and *Prudence,* though excellent Things, for they may all be blasted without the Blessing of Heaven; and therefore ask that Blessing humbly, and be not uncharitable to those that at present seem to want it, but comfort and help them. Remember *Job* suffered, and was afterwards prosperous.

And now to conclude, *Experience keeps a dear School, but Fools will learn in no other, and scarce in that;* for

it is true, *we may give Advice, but we cannot give Conduct,* as *Poor Richard* says: However, remember this, *They that won't be counselled, can't be helped,* as *Poor Richard* says: And farther, That *if you will not hear Reason, she'll surely rap your Knuckles.*

Thus the old Gentleman ended his Harangue. The People heard it, and approved the Doctrine and immediately practised the contrary, just as if it had been a common Sermon; for the Vendue opened, and they began to buy extravagantly, notwithstanding all his Cautions, and their own Fear of Taxes.—I found the good Man had thoroughly studied my Almanacks, and digested all I had dropt on those Topicks during the Course of Five-and-twenty Years. The frequent Mention he made of me must have tired any one else, but my Vanity was wonderfully delighted with it, though I was conscious that not a tenth Part of the Wisdom was my own which he ascribed to me, but rather the *Gleanings* I had made of the Sense of all Ages and Nations. However, I resolved to be the better for the Echo of it; and though I had at first determined to buy Stuff for a new Coat, I went away resolved to wear my old One a little longer. *Reader,* if thou wilt do the same, thy Profit will be as great as mine.

I am, as ever,
Thine to serve thee,
RICHARD SAUNDERS.

July 7, 1757

1757·1758

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18 **The Gleanings . . . Nations.** Not all of Franklin's adages can be traced to particular sources, but examination of earlier collections of proverbs will disclose most of them in some form similar to that he used • 27 **Richard Saunders,** the fictitious compiler of **Poor Richard**

Letter to Sir John Pringle

It is difficult to represent Franklin's scientific writing, particularly that which deals with electricity, in small space. The following letter, however, illustrates both the clarity of his explanatory style—a factor which had a great deal to do with the wide acceptance of his theories and suggestions—and his talent for devising simple apparatus for the experimental investigation of his hypotheses. His thinking in the field of hydrodynamics has been amply justified by later expenditures to provide experimental tanks for the study of naval architecture and, although he did not foresee them, wind tunnels for the investigation of aerodynamics. Sir John Pringle (1707-1782) was a Scottish physician and professor who served as president of the Royal Society of London from 1772 until 1778. He and Franklin traveled together on the continent in the summer of 1766. This letter was first printed in the 1769 edition of **Experiments & Observations on Electricity.**

Craven Street, 10 May, 1768

Sir:—You may remember that when we were travelling together in Holland, you remarked that the *trackschuit* in one of the stages went slower than usual, and inquired of the boatman what might be the reason; who answered that it had been a dry season and the water in the canal was low. On being again asked if it was so low that the boat touched the muddy bottom, he said no, not so low as that, but so low as to make it harder for the horse to draw the boat. We neither of us at first could conceive that if there was enough water for the boat to swim clear of the bottom, its being deeper would make any difference. But, as the man affirmed it seriously as a thing well known among them, and as the punctuality required in their stages was likely to make such difference, if any there were, more readily observed by them than by other watermen who did not pass so regularly and constantly backwards and forwards in the same track, I began to apprehend there might be something in it, and attempted to account for it from this

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Text: Bigelow, **Complete Works,** IV, 159-162 • 3 **trackschuit,** the Dutch trek-schuit, towboat

consideration, that the boat, in proceeding along the canal, must, in every boat's length of her course, move out of her way a body of water equal in bulk to the room her bottom took up in the water; that the water so moved must pass on each side of her and under her bottom to get behind her; that if the passage under her bottom was straitened by the shallows, more of that water must pass by her sides, and with a swifter motion, which would retard her, as moving the contrary way; or that the water becoming lower behind the boat than before, she was pressed back by the weight of its difference in height, and her motion retarded by having that weight constantly to overcome. But as it is often lost time to attempt accounting for uncertain facts, I determined to make an experiment of this when I should have convenient time and opportunity.

After our return to England, as often as I happened to be on the Thames, I enquired of our watermen whether they were sensible of any difference in rowing over shallow or deep water. I found them all agreeing in the fact that there was a very great difference, but they differed widely in expressing the quantity of the difference; some supposing it was equal to a mile in six, others to a mile in three, &c. As I did not recollect to have met with any mention of this matter in our philosophical books, and conceiving that if the difference should really be great it might be an object of consideration in the many projects now on foot for digging new navigable canals in this island, I lately put my design of making the experiment in execution, in the following manner.

I provided a trough of planed boards fourteen feet long, six inches wide, and six inches deep, in the clear, filled with water within half an inch of the edge, to represent a canal. I had a loose board of nearly the same length and breadth, that, being put into the water, might be sunk to any depth, and fixed by little wedges where I would choose to have it stay, in order to make different depths of water, leaving the surface at the same height with regard to the sides of the trough. I had a little boat in form of a lighter or boat of burthen, six inches long, two inches and a quarter wide, and one inch and a quarter deep. When swimming it drew one inch water. To give motion to the boat I fixed one end of a long silk thread to its bow, just even with the water's edge, the other end passed over a well-made brass pulley of about an inch diameter, turning freely on a small axis; and a shilling was the weight. Then placing the boat at one end of the trough, the weight would draw it through the water to the other.

Not having a watch that shows seconds, in order to measure the time taken up by the boat in passing from end to end, I counted as fast as I could count to ten repeatedly, keeping an account of the number of tens on my fingers. And, as much as possible to correct any little inequalities in my counting, I repeated the experiment a number of times at each depth of water, that I might take the medium. And the following are the results:

	Water 1½ inches deep.	2 inches.	4½ inches.
1st exp.	100	94	79
2	104	93	78
3	104	91	77
4	106	87	79
5	100	88	79
6	99	86	80
7	100	90	79
8	100	88	81
	813	717	632
	Medium 101	Medium 89	Medium 79

I made many other experiments, but the above are those in which I was most exact; and they serve sufficiently to show that the difference is considerable. Between the deepest and shallowest it appears to be somewhat more than one fifth. So that, supposing large canals and boats and depths of water to bear the same proportions, and that four men or horses would draw a boat in deep water four leagues in four hours, it would require five to draw the same boat in the same time as far in shallow water; or four would require five hours.

Whether this difference is of consequence enough to justify a greater expense in deepening canals, is a matter of calculation, which our ingenious engineers in that way will readily determine. I am, &c.,

B. Franklin

1768·1769

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28 many . . . foot. Most of the canals of Great Britain were constructed between 1760 and 1840

Rules by Which a Great Empire May be Reduced to a Small One

A large part of Franklin's time in the decade after the repeal of the Stamp Act (1766) was devoted to pleading the cause of the American colonies before the British public and the Tory government. Had his policy of mediation been successful, some scheme of home rule, foreshadowing the later colonial policy of Great Britain, might have been worked out. Franklin was ordinarily good-natured about the situation, but sometimes he grew impatient with the measures of men who did not know or wish to know the true state of affairs in America. The latter mood lay behind the "Rules by Which a Great Empire May be Reduced to a Small One," perhaps the most vitriolic of his satires, first published in a London newspaper, the **Public Advertiser**, in 1773. Using his favorite method of irony, he displayed the worst features of the British colonial administration, which was based on favoritism and selfishness rather than on any desire for efficiency and competence. On the surface it was pointed most directly, perhaps, at William Legge, second Earl of Dartmouth (1731-1801), who had become, in August 1772, secretary of state for the colonies and president of board of trade and foreign plantations. Actually, however, the acts and policies listed form a scathing review of the record of Dartmouth's predecessor in those posts, Wills Hill, first Earl of Hillsborough (1718-1793), who served as the cabinet member chiefly responsible for American affairs from 1768 until 1772. Some printings, in fact, bear the half-title "Presented to a late Minister, when he entered upon his Administration."

An ancient Sage boasted, that, tho' he could not fiddle, he knew how to make a *great city* of a *little one.* The science that I, a modern simpleton, am about to communicate, is the very reverse.

I address myself to all ministers who have the management of extensive dominions, which from their very greatness are become troublesome to govern, because the multiplicity of their affairs leaves no time for *fiddling.*

I. In the first place, gentlemen, you are to consider, that a great empire, like a great cake, is most easily diminished at the edges. Turn your attention, therefore, first to your remotest provinces; that, as you get rid of them, the next may follow in order.

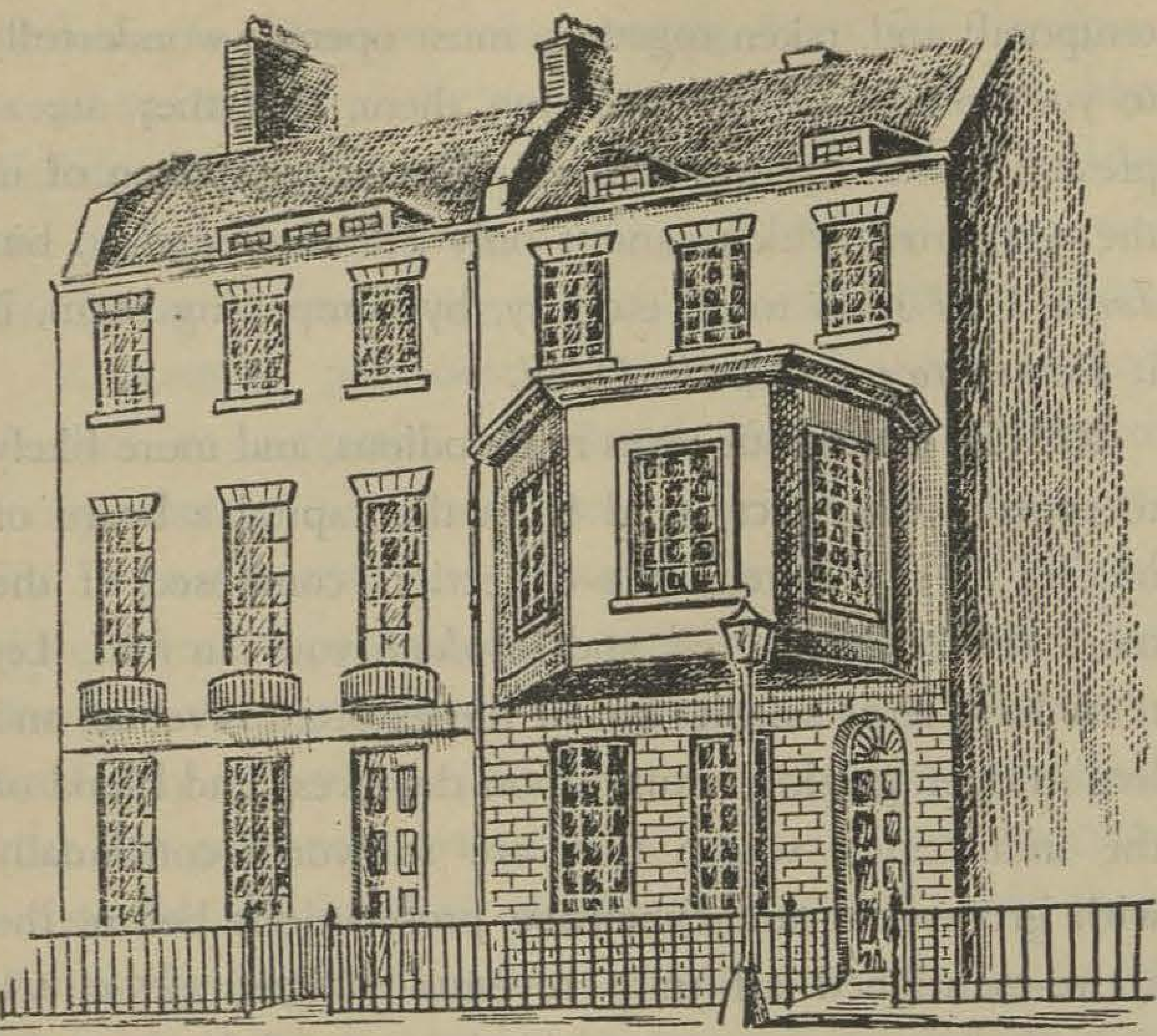
II. That the possibility of this separation may always exist, take special care the provinces are never incorporated with the mother country; that they do not enjoy the same common rights, the same privileges in commerce; and that they are governed by *severer* laws, all of *your enacting,* without allowing them any share in the choice of the legislators. By carefully making and preserving such distinctions, you will (to keep to my simile of the cake) act like a wise gingerbread baker, who, to facilitate a division, cuts his dough half through in those places, where, when baked, he would have it *broken to pieces.*

III. These remote provinces have perhaps been acquired, purchased, or conquered, at the *sole expence* of the settlers or their ancestors, without the aid of the mother country. If this should happen to increase her *strength* by their growing numbers ready to join in her wars; her *commerce,* by their growing demand for her manufactures, or her *naval power* by greater employment for her ships and seamen, they may probably suppose some merit in this, and that it entitles them to some favour; you are therefore to *forget it all,* or resent it as if they had done you injury. If they happen to be zealous Whigs, friends of liberty, nurtured in revolution principles, *remember all that* to their prejudice, and resolve to punish it; for such principles, after a revolution is thoroughly established, are of *no more use;* they are even *odious* and *abominable.*

IV. However peaceably your colonies have submitted to your government, shewn their affection to your interests, and patiently borne their grievances; you are to *suppose* them always inclined to revolt, and treat them

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Text: from the Gentleman's Magazine, September 1773 • 37 revolution principles, an allusion to the Whig leadership in the "Glorious Revolution" of 1688, an event which was the chief precedent for those who believed in the supremacy of the people over the crown



No. 7 Craven Street, Franklin's London residence.

all shall contribute to your *main purpose,* of making them *weary of your government.*

XIII. If the people of any province have been accustomed to support their own Governors and Judges to satisfaction, you are to apprehend that such Governors and Judges may be thereby influenced to treat the people kindly, and to do them justice. This is another reason for applying part of that revenue in larger salaries to such Governors and Judges, given, as their commissions are, *during your pleasure* only, forbidding them to take any salaries from their provinces; that thus the people may no longer hope any kindness from their Governors, or (in Crown cases) any justice from their Judges. And as the money thus misapplied in one province is extorted from all, probably *all will resent the misapplication.*

XIV. If the parliaments of your provinces should dare to claim rights, or complain of your administration, order them to be harrassed with repeated *dissolutions.* If the same men are continually returned by new elections, adjourn their meetings to some country village where they cannot be accommodated, and there keep them *during pleasure;* for this, you know, is your PREROGATIVE; and an excellent one it is, as you may manage it, to promote discontents among the people, diminish their respect, and *increase their disaffection.*

XV. Convert the brave, honest officers of your navy into pimping tide-waiters and colony officers of the customs. Let those who, in time of war, fought gallantly in defence of the commerce of their countrymen, in peace be taught to prey upon it. Let them learn to be corrupted by great and real smugglers; but (to shew their diligence) scour with armed boats every bay, harbour, river, creek, cove, or nook, throughout the coast of your colonies; stop and detain every coaster, every wood-boat, every fisherman, tumble their cargoes, and even their ballast, inside out, and upside down; and, if a penn'orth of pins is found un-entered, let the whole be seized and confiscated. Thus shall the trade of your colonists suffer more from their friends in time of peace, than it did from their enemies in war. Then let these boats crews land upon every farm in their way, rob the orchards, steal the pigs and the poultry, and insult the inhabitants. If the injured and exasperated farmers, unable to procure other justice, should attack the agressors, drub them and burn their boats; you are to call this *high treason* and *rebellion,* order fleets and armies into their country, and threaten to carry all the offenders three thousand miles to be hanged, drawn, and quartered. *O! this will work admirably!*

XVI. If you are told of discontents in your colonies, never believe that they are general, or that you have given occasion for them; therefore, do not think of applying any remedy, or of changing any offensive measure. Redress no grievance, lest they should be encouraged to demand the redress of some other grievance. Grant no request that is just and reasonable, lest they should make another that is unreasonable. Take all your informations of the state of the colonies from your Governors and officers in enmity with them. Encourage and reward these *leasing makers;* secrete their lying accusations, lest they should be confuted; but act upon them as the clearest evidence, and believe nothing you hear from the friends of the people: suppose all *their* complaints to be invented and promoted by a few factious demagogues, whom if you could catch and hang, all would be quiet. Catch and hang a few of them accordingly; and the *blood of the Martyrs* shall *work miracles* in favour of your purpose.

XVII. If you see *rival nations* rejoicing at the pros-

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18 **dissolutions,** such as those in Massachusetts. Franklin seems to have had in mind the refusal of the House of Representatives in 1768 to rescind the circular letter sent to other colonial assemblies, although Hillsborough ordered them to do so or face dissolution • 45 **burn their boats,** an allusion to the burning of the schooner Gaspée, June 10, 1772, an act of violence which called forth the threats mentioned

pect of your disunion with your provinces, and endeavouring to promote it; if they translate, publish and applaud all the complaints of your discontented colonists, at the same time privately stimulating you to severer measures, let not that *alarm* or offend you. Why should it? since you all mean *the same thing.*

XVIII. If any colony should, at their own charge, erect a fortress to secure their port against the fleets of a foreign enemy, get your Governor to betray that fortress into your hands. Never think of paying what it cost the country, for that would *look,* at least, like some regard for justice; but turn it into a citadel to awe the inhabitants, and curb their commerce. If they should have lodged in such fortress the very arms they bought and used to aid you in your conquests, seize them all; it will provoke like *ingratitude* added to *robbery.* One admirable effect of these operations will be, to discourage every other colony from erecting such defences, and so your enemies may more easily invade them, to the great disgrace of your government, and, of course, *the furtherance of your project.*

XIX. Send armies into their country under pretence of protecting the inhabitants; but, instead of garrisoning the forts on their frontiers with those troops, to prevent incursions, demolish those forts, and order the troops into the heart of the country, that the savages may be encouraged to attack the frontiers, and that the troops may be protected by the inhabitants: this will seem to proceed from your ill-will or your ignorance, and contribute farther to produce and strengthen an opinion among them, *that you are no longer fit to govern them.*

XX. Lastly, invest the General of your army in the provinces with great and unconstitutional powers, and free him from the controul of even your own Civil Governors. Let him have troops enow under his command, with all the fortresses in his possession; and who knows but (like some provincial Generals in the Roman empire, and encouraged by the universal discontent you have produced) he may take it into his head to set up for himself. If he should, and you have carefully practised these few *excellent rules* of mine, take my word for it, all the provinces will immediately join him, and you will that day (if you have not done it sooner) get rid of the trouble of governing them, and all the *plagues* attending their *commerce* and connection, from thenceforth and for ever.

Q. E. D.

1773·1773

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8 a fortress, Castle William in Boston Harbor, delivered to the British by Governor Thomas Hutchinson (1711-1780) in September 1770 • 48 Q.E.D., abbreviation of **quod erat demonstrandum,** which was to be demonstrated

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An Edict by the King of Prussia

A second satire of 1773, also published in the **Public Advertiser,** is usually known as "An Edict by the King of Prussia." By skillfully paraphrasing actual laws by which Parliament had regulated trade in Ireland and America, Franklin dramatized the illogicality of the ministry's position in a way remarkable for its brevity and its effectiveness. Of the reception of the piece he left an account in one of his letters: "What made it the more noticed here was, that people in reading it were, as the phrase is, taken in, till they had got half through it, and imagined it a real edict, to which mistake I suppose the King of Prussia's character must have contributed. I was down at Lord Le Despencer's, when the post brought that day's papers. Mr. Whitehead was there, too [Paul Whitehead, the author of "Manners"], who runs early through all the papers, and tells the company what he finds remarkable. He had them in another room, and we were chatting in the breakfast parlour, when he came running in to us, out of breath, with the paper in his hand. 'Here!' says he, 'here's news for ye! Here's the King of Prussia claiming a right to this kingdom!' All stared, and I as much as anybody; and

he went on to read it. When he had read two or three paragraphs, a gentleman present said, 'Damn his impudence. I dare say we shall hear by next post, that he is upon his march with one hundred thousand men to back this.' Whitehead, who is very shrewd, soon after began to smoke it, and looking in my face, said, 'I'll be hanged if this is not some of your American jokes upon us.' The reading went on, and ended with abundance of laughing, and a general verdict that it was a fair hit."

Dantzick, Sept. 5

We have long wondered here at the supineness of the English nation, under the Prussian impositions upon its trade entering our port. We did not, till lately, know the claims, ancient and modern, that hang over that nation, and therefore could not suspect that it might submit to those impositions from a sense of duty, or from principles of equity. The following Edict, just made publick, may, if serious, throw some light upon this matter:

"FREDERICK, by the grace of God, King of Prussia, &c. &c. &c. to all present and to come, Health. The peace now enjoyed throughout our dominions, having afforded us leisure to apply ourselves to the regulation of commerce, the improvement of our finances, and at the same time the easing our domestic subjects in their taxes: For these causes and other good considerations us thereunto moving, we hereby make known, that, after having deliberated these affairs in our council, present our dear brothers, and other great officers of the state, members of the same, we, of our certain knowledge, full power, and authority royal, have made and issued this present Edict, viz.

"Whereas it is well known to all the world, that the first German settlements made in the island of Britain were by colonies of people, subjects to our renowned ducal ancestors, and drawn from their dominions, under the conduct of Hengist, Horsa, Hella, Uffa, Cerdicus, Ida, and others; and that the said colonies have flourished under the protection of our august house, for ages past; have never been emancipated therefrom; and yet have hitherto yielded little profit to the same: And whereas we ourself have in the last war fought for and defended the said colonies, against the power of France, and thereby enabled them to make conquests from the said power in America; for which we have not yet received adequate compensation: And whereas it is just and expedient that a revenue should be raised from the said colonies in Britain, towards our indemnification; and that those who are descendants of our ancient subjects, and thence still owe us due obedience, should contribute to the replenishing of our royal coffers, as they must have done, had their ancestors remained in the territories now to us appertaining: We do therefore hereby ordain and command, that, from and after the date of these presents, there shall be levied, and paid to our officers of the customs, on all goods, wares, and merchandizes, and on all grain and other produce of the earth, exported from the said island of Britain, and on all goods of whatever kind imported into the same, a duty of four and a half per cent. ad valorem, for the use of us and our successors. And that the said duty may more effectually be collected, we do hereby ordain, that all ships or vessels bound from Great-Britain to any other part of the world, or from any other part of the world to Great-Britain, shall in their respective voyages touch at our port of Koningsberg, there to be unladen, searched, and charged with the said duties.

"And whereas there hath been from time to time discovered in the said island of Great-Britain, by our colonists there, many mines or beds of iron stone; and sundry subjects of our ancient dominion, skilful in converting the said stone into metal, have in times past transported themselves thither, carrying with them and communicating that art; and the inhabitants of the said island, presuming that they had a natural right to make the best use they could of the natural productions of their country, for their own benefit, have not only built furnaces for smelting the said stone into iron, but have erected plating forges, slitting mills, and steel furnaces,

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Text: *Gentleman's Magazine* for October 1773 • 12 **to all . . . come.** "A tous presens et à venir. ORIGINAL." . . Franklin • 28 **Hengist, . . . Ida,** all leaders of the Germanic invasion of Britain, traditionally dated as beginning in 449 A.D. Franklin seems to have read the *History of England* (1754-1761) by his friend David Hume (1711-1776), wherein these names are mentioned in almost the same order. Hella should be Ælla, or Ella • 51 **ad valorem,** according to value • 57 **Koningsberg,** Königsberg, in East Prussia, peculiarly suitable to Franklin's purpose because of its remoteness. The hit is at the laws requiring American ships trading abroad to touch at an English port • 61 **iron stone.** See a parliamentary act of 23 George III, c. 29 (1749-1750) prohibiting ironworks in the American colonies

for the more convenient manufacturing of the same, thereby endangering a diminution of the said manufacture in our ancient dominion; we do therefore hereby farther ordain, that, from and after the date hereof, no mill or other engine for slitting or rolling of iron, or any plating forge to work with a tilt-hammer, or any furnace for making steel, shall be erected or continued in the said island of Great-Britain: And the Lord-Lieutenant of every county in the said island is hereby commanded, on information of any such erection within his county, to order and by force to cause the same to be abated and destroyed, as he shall answer the neglect thereof to us at his peril. But we are nevertheless graciously pleased to permit the inhabitants of the said island to transport their iron into Prussia, there to be manufactured, and to them returned, they paying our Prussian subjects for the workmanship, with all the costs of commission, freight, and risk, coming and returning, any thing herein contained to the contrary notwithstanding.

"We do not, however, think fit to extend this our indulgence to the article of wool; but meaning to encourage not only the manufacturing of woolen cloth, but also the raising of wool, in our ancient dominions; and to prevent both, as much as may be, in our said island, we do hereby absolutely forbid the transportation of wool from thence even to the mother-country, Prussia; And that those islanders may be farther and more effectually restrained in making any advantage of their own wool, in the way of manufacture, we command that none shall be carried out of one county into another, nor shall any worsted, bay, or woollen-yarn, cloth, says, bays, kerseys, serges, frizes, druggets, cloth-serges, shalloons, or any other drapery stuffs, or woollen manufactures whatsoever, made up or mixed with wool in any of the said counties, be carried into any other county, or be water-borne even across the smallest river or creek, on penalty of forfeiture of the same, together with the boats, carriages, horses, &c. that shall be employed in removing them. Nevertheless, our loving subjects there are hereby permitted (if they think proper) to use all their wool as manure, for the improvement of their lands.

"And whereas the art and mystery of making hats hath arrived at great perfection in Prussia; and the making of hats by our remoter subjects ought to be as much as possible restrained: And forasmuch as the islanders before mentioned, being in possession of wool, beaver and other furs, have presumptuously conceived they had a right to make some advantage thereof, by manufacturing the same into hats, to the prejudice of our domestic manufacture: We do therefore hereby strictly command and ordain, that no hats or felts whatsoever, dyed or undyed, finished or unfinished, shall be loaden or put into or upon any vessel, cart, carriage, or horse, to be transported or conveyed out of one county in the said island into another county, or to any other place whatsoever, by any person or persons whatsoever, on pain of forfeiting the same, with a penalty of five hundred pounds sterling for every offence. Nor shall any hat-maker, in any of the said counties, employ more than two apprentices, on penalty of five pounds sterling per month: we intending hereby that such hat-makers, being so restrained, both in the production and sale of their commodity, may find no advantage in continuing their business. But, lest the said islanders should suffer inconveniency by the want of hats, we are farther graciously pleased to permit them to send their beaver furs to Prussia; and we also permit hats made thereof to be exported from Prussia to Britain; the people thus favoured to pay all costs and charges of manufacturing, interest, commission to our merchants, insurance and freight going and returning, as in the case of iron.

"And lastly, being willing farther to favour our said colonies in Britain, we do hereby also ordain and command, that all the thieves, highway and street robbers, house-breakers, forgerers, murderers, s—d—tes, and villains of every denomination, who have forfeited their lives to the law in Prussia, but whom we, in our great clemency, do not think fit here to hang, shall be emptied out of our gaols into the said island of Great-Britain, for the better peopling of that country.

"We flatter ourselves, that these our royal regulations and commands will be thought just and reasonable by our much favoured colonists in England; the said regulations being copied from their own statutes, of 10 and

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22 wool. See an act of 10 and 11 William III, c. 10 (1698-1699) to prevent the exportation of wool from Ireland and the colonies • 44 making hats. See the act of 5 George II, c. 22 (1731-1732) prohibiting the conveyance of hats and felt from the colonies • 76 thieves, etc. See the act of 4 George II, c. 11 (1717-1718) relating to piracy

11 Will. III. c. 10.–5 Geo. II. c. 22–23 Geo. II c. 29–4 Geo. I. c. 11. and from other equitable laws made by their parliaments, or from instructions given by their Princes, or from resolutions of both Houses, entered into for the good government of their own colonies in Ireland and America.

"And all persons in the said island are hereby cautioned not to oppose in any wise the execution of this our Edict, or any part thereof, such opposition being high-treason; of which all who are suspected shall be transported in fetters from Britain to Prussia, there to be tried and executed according to the Prussian law.

"Such is our pleasure.

"Given at Potsdam, this twenty-fifth day of the month of August, One thousand seven hundred and seventy-three, and in the thirty-third year of our reign.

"By the King, in his Council.

"RECHTMÆSSIG, Sec."

Some take this Edict to be merely one of the King's Jeux d'Esprit: others suppose it serious, and that he means a quarrel with England; but all here think the assertion it concludes with, "that these regulations are copied from acts of the English parliament respecting their colonies," a very injurious one; it being impossible to believe, that a people distinguished for their love of liberty, a nation so wise, so liberal in its sentiments, so just and equitable towards its neighbours, should, from mean and injudicious views of petty immediate profit, treat its own children in a manner so arbitrary and tyrannical!

1773·1773

The Ephemera

An Emblem of Human Life

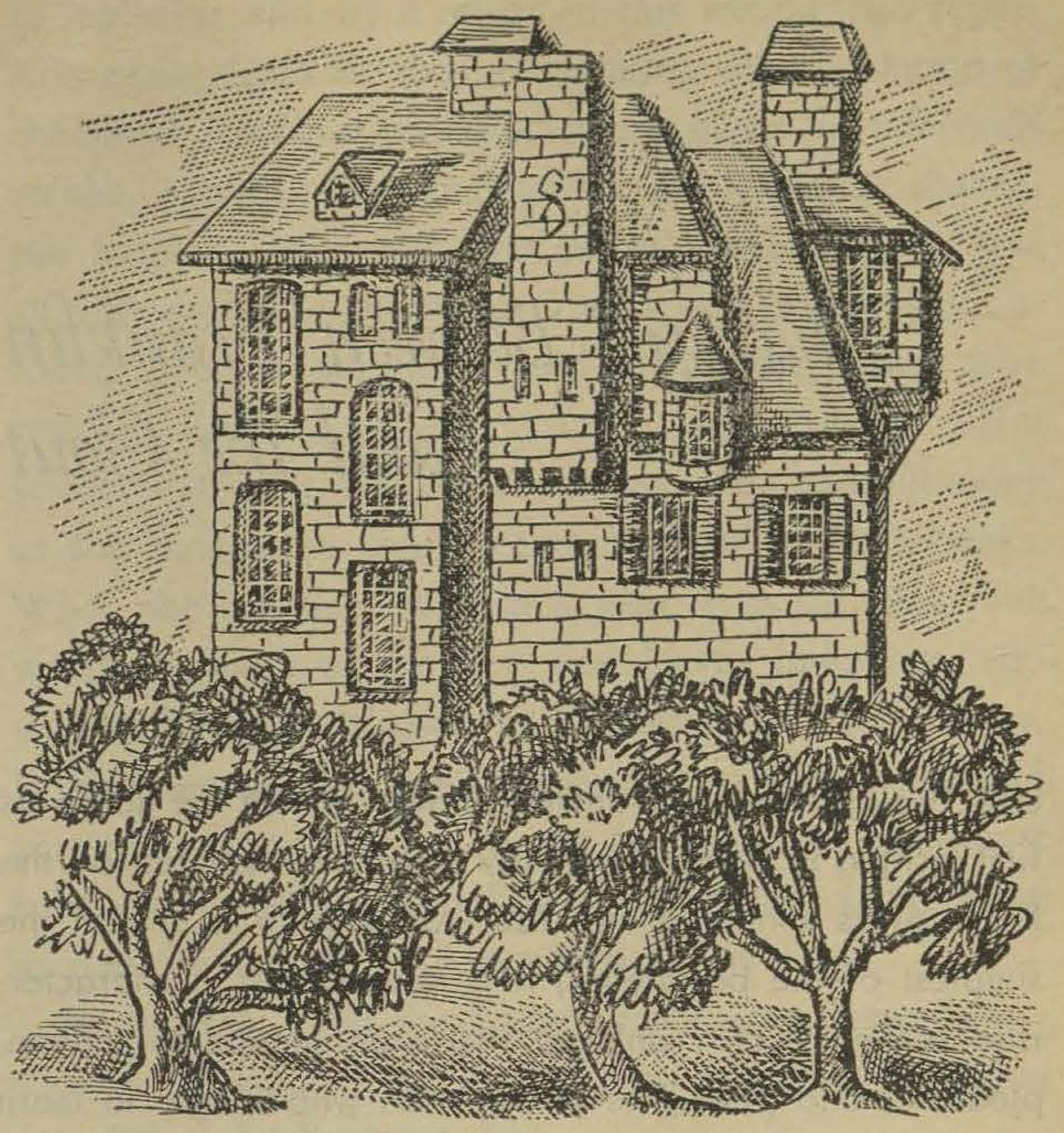
The Ephemera was originally written in French for Madame Brillon de Jouy, one of Franklin's neighbors during his residence at Passy, and is thought to have been first printed on his private press there, about September 1778. Madame Brillon, perhaps forty years Franklin's junior, was the wife of a government official, none too happy in her family responsibilities but possessed of an abundant share of that vivacity which is so common among educated Frenchwomen. She and Franklin shared a fondness for music and for chess, and they exchanged half-flirtatious, half-serious letters not unlike the more polished bagatelle which follows. The familiar piece entitled **The Whistle** was also written for Madame Brillon.

As appears from the introductory paragraph, **The Ephemera** was suggested by a visit to the Moulin Joli, a small island in the Seine which was a part of the country estate of Claude-Henri Watelet. Franklin later acknowledged that he owed something to his memory of a newspaper essay on "Human Vanity," printed in the **Pennsylvania Gazette** for December 4, 1735. What makes **The Ephemera** an unusually pointed comment on the well-worn theme of the transience of life is the reader's identification of the experienced Franklin with the insect philosopher. Pathos has seldom been more delicately sustained.

You may remember, my dear friend, that when we lately spent that happy day in the delightful garden and sweet society of the Moulin Joly, I stopt a little in one of our walks, and stayed some time behind the company. We had been shown numberless skeletons of a kind of little fly, called an ephemera, whose successive generations, we were told, were bred and expired within the day. I happened to see a living company of them on a leaf, who appeared to be engaged in conversation. You know I understand all the inferior animal tongues. My too great application to the study of them is the best excuse I can give for the little progress I have made in your charming language. I listened through curiosity to the discourse of these little creatures; but as they, in their national vivacity, spoke three or four together, I could

make but little of their conversation. I found, however, by some broken expressions that I heard now and then, they were disputing warmly on the merit of two foreign musicians, one a *cousin,* the other a *moscheto;* in which dispute they spent their time, seemingly as regardless of the shortness of life as if they had been sure of living a month. Happy people! thought I; you are certainly under a wise, just, and mild government, since you have no public grievances to complain of, nor any subject of contention but the perfections and imperfections of foreign music. I turned my head from them to an old gray-headed one, who was single on another leaf, and talking to himself. Being amused with his soliloquy, I put it down in writing, in hopes it will likewise amuse her to whom I am so much indebted for the most pleasing of all amusements, her delicious company and heavenly harmony.

"It was," said he, "the opinion of learned philosophers of our race, who lived and flourished long before my time, that this vast world, the Moulin Joly, could not itself subsist more than eighteen hours; and I think there was some foundation for that opinion, since, by the apparent motion of the great luminary that gives life to all nature, and which in my time has evidently declined considerably towards the ocean at the end of our earth, it must then finish its course, be extinguished in the waters that surround us, and leave the world in cold and darkness, necessarily producing universal death and destruction. I have lived seven of those hours, a great age, being no less than four hundred and twenty minutes of time. How very few of us continue so long! I have seen generations born, flourish, and expire. My present friends are the children and grandchildren of the friends of my youth, who are now, alas, no more! And I must soon follow them; for, by the course of nature, though still in health, I cannot expect to live above seven or eight minutes longer. What now avails all my toil and labor in amassing honey-dew on this leaf, which I cannot live to enjoy! What the political struggles I have been engaged in for the good of my compatriot inhabitants of this bush, or my philosophical studies for the benefit of our race in general! for in politics what can laws do without morals? Our present race of ephemeræ will in a course of minutes become corrupt, like those of other and older bushes, and consequently as



House in which Franklin lived at Passy.

wretched. And in philosophy how small our progress! Alas! art is long, and life is short! My friends would comfort me with the idea of a name they say I shall leave behind me; and they tell me I have lived long enough to nature and to glory. But what will fame be to an ephemera who no longer exists? And what will become of all history in the eighteenth hour, when the world itself, even the whole Moulin Joly, shall come to an end, and be buried in universal ruin?"

To me, after all my eager pursuits, no solid pleasures now remain, but the reflection of a long life spent in meaning well, the sensible conversation of a few good lady ephemeræ, and now and then a kind smile and a tune from the ever amiable *Brillante*.

B. FRANKLIN

1778·1778?

Text: Bigelow's **Complete Works**, VI, 237-239 • 4 **one . . . moscheto**, one a gnat, the other a mosquito. In a letter to William Carmichael written June 17, 1780, Franklin said that at the time he wrote **The Ephemera** "all conversations at Paris were filled with disputes about the music of Gluck and Piccini, a German and Italian musician, who divided the town into violent parties." The **Iphigénie en aulide** of C. W. Ritter von Gluck (1714-1787) was produced at Paris in 1774; Niccolo Piccini (1728-1800), the Italian composer, was invited to Paris in 1776

Dialogue Between Franklin and the Gout

Like **The Ephemera**, Franklin's dialogue with the gout was first written in French and may have been printed on the Passy press sometime in 1780. Although it is one of the simplest of the bagatelles, it is nevertheless a characteristic summary of Franklin's ideas on health, recreation, pleasure, and pain. The young man who sought to learn virtue by keeping a chart of his daily failings had come to accept the discomfort of paying for his pleasures. The numerous local allusions emphasize Franklin's real purpose, the amusement of his circle of friends, but he was a moralizer even in his lightest moments.

Midnight, 22 October, 1780

FRANKLIN. Eh! oh! eh! What have I done to merit these cruel sufferings?

GOUT. Many things; you have ate and drank too freely, and too much indulged those legs of yours in their indolence.

FRANKLIN. Who is it that accuses me?

GOUT. It is I, even I, the Gout.

FRANKLIN. What! my enemy in person?

GOUT. No, not your enemy.

FRANKLIN. I repeat it; my enemy; for you would not only torment my body to death, but ruin my good name; you reproach me as a glutton and a tippler; now all the world, that knows me, will allow that I am neither the one nor the other.

GOUT. The world may think as it pleases; it is always very complaisant to itself, and sometimes to its friends; but I very well know that the quantity of meat and drink proper for a man, who takes a reasonable degree of exercise, would be too much for another, who never takes any.

FRANKLIN. I take—eh! oh!—as much exercise—eh! —as I can, Madam Gout. You know my sedentary state, and on that account, it would seem, Madam Gout, as if you might spare me a little, seeing it is not altogether my own fault.

GOUT. Not a jot; your rhetoric and your politeness are thrown away; your apology avails nothing. If your situation in life is a sedentary one, your amusements, your recreations, at least, should be active. You ought to walk or ride; or, if the weather prevents that, play at billiards. But let us examine your course of life. While the mornings are long, and you have leisure to go abroad, what do you do? Why, instead of gaining an appetite for breakfast, by salutary exercise, you amuse yourself with books, pamphlets, or newspapers, which commonly are not worth the reading. Yet you eat an inordinate breakfast, four dishes of tea, with cream, and one or two buttered toasts, with slices of hung beef, which I fancy are not things the most easily digested. Immediately afterwards you sit down to write at your desk, or converse with persons who apply to you on business. Thus the time passes till one, without any kind of bodily exercise. But all this I could pardon, in regard, as you say, to your sedentary condition. But what is your practice after dinner? Walking in the beautiful gardens of those friends with whom you have dined would be the choice of men of sense; yours is to be fixed down to chess, where you are found engaged for two or three hours! This is your perpetual recreation, which is the least eligible of any for a sedentary man, because, instead of accelerating the motion of the fluids, the rigid attention it requires helps to retard the circulation and obstruct internal secretions. Wrapt in the speculations of this wretched game, you destroy your constitution. What can be expected from such a course of living, but a body replete with stagnant humors, ready to fall a prey to all kinds of dangerous maladies, if I, the Gout, did not occasionally bring you relief by agitating those

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49 chess, of which Franklin, in his seventies, was so fond that he is said to have once played from six in the evening until sunrise. His **Morals of Chess**, written about the same time as this dialogue, is one of the classics of the game

humors, and so purifying or dissipating them? If it was in some nook or alley in Paris, deprived of walks, that you played awhile at chess after dinner, this might be excusable; but the same taste prevails with you in Passy, Auteuil, Montmartre, or Sanoy, places where there are the finest gardens and walks, a pure air, beautiful women, and most agreeable and instructive conversation; all which you might enjoy by frequenting the walks. But these are rejected for this abominable game of chess. Fie, then Mr. Franklin! But amidst my instructions, I had almost forgot to administer my wholesome corrections; so take that twinge,—and that.

FRANKLIN. Oh! eh! oh! ohhh! As much instruction as you please, Madam Gout, and as many reproaches; but pray, Madam, a truce with your corrections!

GOUT. No, Sir, no, — I will not abate a particle of what is so much for your good, — therefore —

FRANKLIN. Oh! ehhh! — It is not fair to say I take no exercise, when I do very often, going out to dine and returning in my carriage.

GOUT. That, of all imaginable exercises, is the most slight and insignificant, if you allude to the motion of a carriage suspended on springs. By observing the degree of heat obtained by different kinds of motion, we may form an estimate of the quantity of exercise given by each. Thus, for example, if you turn out to walk in winter with cold feet, in an hour's time you will be in a glow all over; ride on horseback, the same effect will scarcely be perceived by four hours' round trotting; but if you loll in a carriage, such as you have mentioned, you may travel all day and gladly enter the last inn to warm your feet by a fire. Flatter yourself then no longer, that half an hour's airing in your carriage deserves the name of exercise. Providence has appointed few to roll in carriages, while he has given to all a pair of legs, which are machines infinitely more commodious and serviceable. Be grateful, then, and make a proper use of yours. Would you know how they forward the circulation of your fluids, in the very action of transporting you from place to place; observe when you walk, that all your weight is alternately thrown from one leg to the other; this occasions a great pressure on the vessels of the foot, and repels their contents; when relieved, by the weight being thrown on the other foot, the vessels of the first are allowed to replenish, and, by a return of this weight, this repulsion again succeeds; thus accelerating the circulation of the blood. The heat produced in any given time depends on the degree of this acceleration; the fluids are shaken, the humors attenuated, the secretions facilitated, and all goes well; the cheeks are ruddy, and health is established. Behold your fair friend at Auteuil; a lady who received from bounteous nature more really useful science than half a dozen such pretenders to philosophy as you have been able to extract from all your books. When she honors you with a visit, it is on foot. She walks all hours of the day, and leaves indolence, and its concomitant maladies, to be endured by her horses. In this, see at once the preservative of her health and personal charms. But when you go to Auteuil, you must have your carriage, though it is no further from Passy to Auteuil than from Auteuil to Passy.

FRANKLIN. Your reasonings grow very tiresome.

GOUT. I stand corrected. I will be silent and continue my office; take that, and that.

FRANKLIN. Oh! Ohh! Talk on, I pray you!

GOUT. No, no; I have a good number of twinges for you to-night, and you may be sure of some more to-morrow.

FRANKLIN. What, with such a fever! I shall go distracted! Oh! eh! Can no one bear it for me?

GOUT. Ask that of your horses; they have served you faithfully.

FRANKLIN. How can you so cruelly sport with my torments?

GOUT. Sport! I am very serious. I have here a list of offences against your own health distinctly written, and can justify every stroke inflicted on you.

FRANKLIN. Read it then.

GOUT. It is too long a detail; but I will briefly mention some particulars.

FRANKLIN. Proceed. I am all attention.

GOUT. Do you remember how often you have prom-

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5 **Auteuil, Montmartre, or Sanoy.** At the time Franklin wrote, all were suburban villages like Passy. Auteuil is a short distance down the Seine; Montmartre, a district in the northern section of the city; Sannois, still some miles north of the city limits • 52 **your fair friend,** Madame Helvétius, widow of a French philosopher, with whom Franklin was so intimate that he once addressed to her a half-serious proposal of marriage

ised yourself, the following morning, a walk in the grove of Boulogne, in the garden de la Muette, or in your own garden, and have violated your promise, alleging, at one time, it was too cold, at another too warm, too windy, too moist, or what else you pleased; when in truth it was too nothing, but your insuperable love of ease?

FRANKLIN. That I confess may have happened occasionally, probably ten times in a year.

GOUT. Your confession is very far short of the truth; the gross amount is one hundred and ninety-nine times.

FRANKLIN. Is it possible?

GOUT. So possible, that it is fact; you may rely on the accuracy of my statement. You know M. Brillon's gardens, and what fine walks they contain; you know the handsome flight of an hundred steps, which lead from the terrace above to the lawn below. You have been in the practice of visiting this amiable family twice a week, after dinner, and it is a maxim of your own, that "a man may take as much exercise in walking a mile, up and down stairs, as in ten on level ground." What an opportunity was here for you to have had exercise in both these ways! Did you embrace it, and how often?

FRANKLIN. I cannot immediately answer that question.

GOUT. I will do it for you; not once.

FRANKLIN. Not once?

GOUT. Even so. During the summer you went there at six o'clock. You found the charming lady, with her lovely children and friends, eager to walk with you, and entertain you with their agreeable conversation; and what has been your choice? Why, to sit on the terrace, satisfying yourself with the fine prospect, and passing your eye over the beauties of the garden below, without taking one step to descend and walk about in them. On the contrary, you call for tea and the chess-board; and lo! you are occupied in your seat till nine o'clock, and that besides two hours' play after dinner; and then, instead of walking home, which would have bestirred you a little, you step into your carriage. How absurd to suppose that all this carelessness can be reconcilable with health, without my interposition!

FRANKLIN. I am convinced now of the justness of poor Richard's remark, that "Our debts and our sins are always greater than we think for."

GOUT. So it is. You philosophers are sages in your maxims, and fools in your conduct.

FRANKLIN. But do you charge among my crimes, that I return in a carriage from Mr. Brillon's?

GOUT. Certainly; for, having been seated all the while, you cannot object the fatigue of the day, and cannot want therefore the relief of a carriage.

FRANKLIN. What then would you have me do with my carriage?

GOUT. Burn it if you choose; you would at least get heat out of it once in this way; or, if you dislike that proposal, here's another for you; observe the poor peasants, who work in the vineyards and grounds about the villages of Passy, Auteuil, Chaillot, etc.; you may find every day among these deserving creatures, four or five old men and women, bent and perhaps crippled by weight of years, and too long and too great labor. After a most fatiguing day, these people have to trudge a mile or two to their smoky huts. Order your coachman to set them down. This is an act that will be good for your soul; and, at the same time, after your visit to the Brillons, if you return on foot, that will be good for your body.

FRANKLIN. Ah! how tiresome you are!

GOUT. Well, then, to my office; it should not be forgotten that I am your physician. There.

FRANKLIN. Ohhh! what a devil of a physician!

GOUT. How ungrateful you are to say so! Is it not I who, in the character of your physician, have saved you from the palsy, dropsy, and apoplexy? one or other of which would have done for you long ago, but for me.

FRANKLIN. I submit, and thank you for the past, but entreat the discontinuance of your visits for the future; for, in my mind, one had better die than be cured so dolefully. Permit me just to hint, that I have also not been unfriendly to *you.* I never feed physician or quack of any kind, to enter the list against you; if then you do not leave me to my repose, it may be said you are ungrateful too.

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2 grove . . . Muette, the Bois de Boulogne, just west of Passy, now perhaps the chief public park of Paris, and the garden of a royal chateau, La Muette, now largely built over. It was in the park of La Muette that the first balloon ascension was made on November 21, 1783, Franklin being one of the spectators • 14 M. Brillon's gardens, in Passy. See The Ephemera • 59 Chaillot, a village a short distance up the Seine from Passy

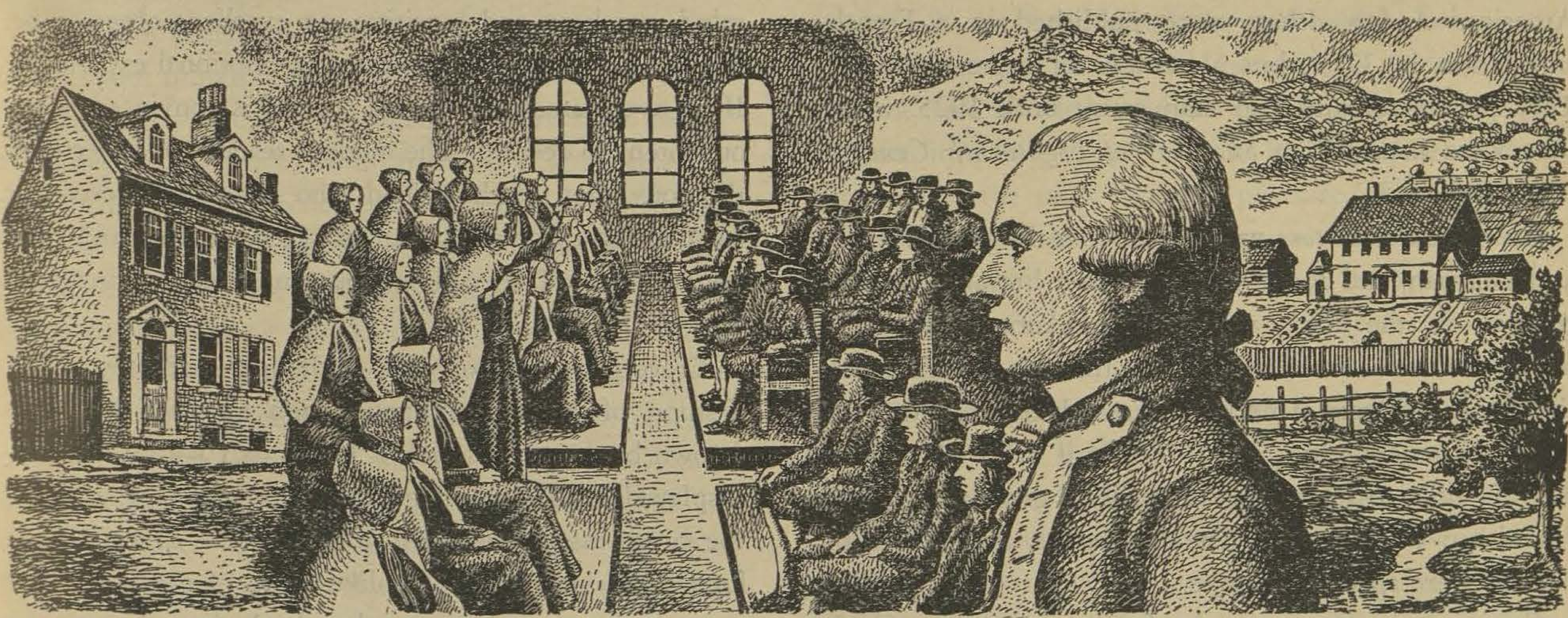
GOUT. I can scarcely acknowledge that as any objection. As to quacks, I despise them; they may kill you indeed, but cannot injure me. And, as to regular physicians, they are at last convinced that the gout, in such a subject as you are, is no disease, but a remedy; and wherefore cure a remedy? — but to our business, — there.

FRANKLIN. Oh! oh! — for Heaven's sake leave me! and I promise faithfully never more to play at chess, but to take exercise daily, and live temperately. 10

GOUT. I know you too well. You promise fair; but, after a few months of good health, you will return to your old habits; your fine promises will be forgotten like the forms of last year's clouds. Let us then finish the account, and I will go. But I leave you with an assurance of visiting you again at a proper time and place; for my object is your good, and you are sensible now that I am your *real friend.*

1780·1780?

SOCIAL COMMENTATORS: Crèvecoeur, Woolman



Michel Guillaume St. Jean de Crèvecoeur

1735 · 1813

Michel Guillaume St. Jean de Crèvecoeur was born in France, near Caen. Educated first in a Jesuit school and then in England, he took ship for Canada before he was twenty and there enlisted in the army. He rose to the rank of lieutenant, making himself particularly useful as a mapmaker in the region of the lower Great

Panel (l. to r.): John Woolman's shop • Friends' meeting • Michel Guillaume St. Jean de Crèvecoeur • Crèvecoeur's farm, Orange County

Lakes. About 1759 Crèvecoeur drifted down through the English colonies, probably working as a surveyor, and in 1764 applied for naturalization in New York. He settled on an Orange County farm, married, and for approximately fifteen years lived as a gentleman farmer in a well-established and prosperous rural community. Soon after his marriage in 1769, he appears to have begun setting down his impressions of the country; and by 1780, when he was forced to leave America because his moderate opinions had made both Whigs and Tories suspicious of him, he had a small trunk full of manuscripts. He found a publisher for some of them in London, but the publisher was a Whig and probably selected for *Letters from an American Farmer* (1782) those pieces least critical of the Revolutionary party in America. A few others were published in a French translation in 1784, but a number of more obviously Tory papers remained in manuscript until 1925, when they were included in *Sketches of Eighteenth Century America.*

Crèvecoeur's *Letters* were popular in English, French, and German, and for a time he was a literary lion, the protégé in the Paris salons of Madame d'Houdetot, whom Rousseau had loved. Partly through her influence, the "sauvage" from America was sent back to New York as consul-general, and from 1783 until 1790 Crèvecoeur did his best to keep alive American gratitude to and friendship with France. The last twenty-three years of his life were spent in Europe.

Crèvecoeur expresses many of the revolutionary ideals which operated powerfully in the eighteenth century, first in America and then in France. He was a perfectionist, although he never recognized the paradox in his admiration for social progress and his equally high regard for the primitive and simple. He was more than a believer in religious freedom; he was anticlerical, with a distrust of organized religion almost as strong as Thomas Paine's. Like Benjamin Franklin and the Frenchmen who were weary of the old order, he was a physiocrat, believing that agriculture should be left largely free of taxation because it was the basis of wealth and a healthy economic life. Like Jefferson, he envisaged an agrarian society, free of governmental restrictions; free of the dangers of cities and of great wealth concentrated in the hands of the few; free, by and large, of the influence of clergymen and of lawyers; free of sickness, intemperance, and extravagance. In his most expansive moments, Crèvecoeur was capable of seeing America as "one diffusive scene of happiness reaching from the sea-shores to the last settlements on the borders of the wilderness."

Sometimes, particularly in the pieces which remained so long in manuscript, there is brief recognition of man's inhumanity to man, as exemplified by slavery and civil disturbances and war. Nature, usually beneficent, occasionally displays its crueler aspects, when the snakes fight to the death, the hummingbirds grow irascible, and storms and insects plague the determinedly happy farmer. Crèvecoeur, however, was fundamentally an optimist, and the pastoral tone prevails in his writing. His mind was keen and sensitive; an excellent observer, he had the power to communicate his emotional experience. If he overdramatized, he did so, one is convinced, without intent to deceive. The modern reader can understand the conviction of the friend who described Crèvecoeur as "a philanthropist; a man of serene temper and pure benevolence. The milk of human kindness circulated in every vein."

Crèvecoeur wrote well, although unevenly. The fashion of his day compelled him to shape his best-known book into a series of letters, but within these he displayed considerable command of three different forms: the prose essay, the short story, and the dramatic dialogue. His ideas are not unlike those of the promotion tracts and progress reports, but he had a sense of the form appropriate to his "sentiment and susceptibility." He therefore has his place both as a social philosopher and as one of the earliest American writers to experiment with the nature essay and with fiction as a medium for expression. Whether or not he was an "emotional liar," idealizing the simple life without regard to truth, may be a question for debate; there is almost no dissent, however, from the praise of his literary grace.

Letters from an American Farmer, ed. W. P. Trent and Ludwig Lewisohn, New York, 1904 • **Sketches of Eighteenth Century America**, ed. H. L. Bourdin, R. H. Gabriel, and S. T. Williams, New Haven, 1925 • Julia P. Mitchell, **St. Jean de Crèvecoeur**, New York, 1916 • H. C. Rice, **Le Cultivateur américain: étude sur l'oeuvre de Saint John de Crèvecoeur**, Paris, 1933

From

Letters from an American Farmer

Letters from an American Farmer (London, 1782) was reprinted, in the English version, five times before 1793, and there were three editions of the French expansion and two of the German translation.

The twelve essays, or "letters," vary greatly in length, and it seems probable that the letter form was an afterthought of Crèvecoeur or his printer. The first three essays are a general and highly favorable view of American life, emphasizing the construction of a new and superior society in sharp contrast with Europe, which he regarded as decadent, stratified, and priest-dominated. The next six essays are more particular; four of them deal with Nantucket, which Crèvecoeur regarded as "inhabited merely to prove what mankind can do when happily governed," one with Martha's Vineyard and the whale fishery, and one with Charleston and the deplorable institution of slavery. A nature essay, a description of the visit of a Russian gentleman to John Bartram, and "Distresses of a Frontier Man" complete the book. The final essay is the only one which contains hints of the "desolating consequences" of the Revolution, mentioned in the Preface and described so vividly in "The American Belisarius" (see p. 289):

The organization of the **Letters** is loose; Crèvecoeur's strength lay in his paragraphs and stretches of dialogue. The selection which follows is approximately the first third of Letter III, "What Is an American?"

I wish I could be acquainted with the feelings and thoughts which must agitate the heart and present themselves to the mind of an enlightened Englishman, when he first lands on this continent. He must greatly rejoice that he lived at a time to see this fair country discovered and settled; he must necessarily feel a share of national pride, when he views the chain of settlements which embellishes these extended shores. When he says to himself, this is the work of my countrymen, who, when convulsed by factions, afflicted by a variety of miseries and wants, restless and impatient, took refuge here. They brought along with them their national genius, to which they principally owe what liberty they enjoy, and what substance they possess. Here he sees the industry of his native country displayed in a new manner, and traces in their works the embrios of all the arts, sciences, and ingenuity which flourish in Europe. Here he beholds fair cities, substantial villages, extensive fields, an immense country filled with decent houses, good roads, orchards, meadows, and bridges, where an hundred years ago all was wild, woody and uncultivated! What a train of pleasing ideas this fair spectacle must suggest; it is a prospect which must inspire a good citizen with the most heartfelt pleasure. The difficulty consists in the manner of viewing so extensive a scene. He is arrived on a new continent; a modern society offers itself to his contemplations, different from what he had hitherto scene. It is not composed, as in Europe, of great lords who possess everything, and of a herd of people who have nothing. Here are no aristocratical families, no courts, no kings, no bishops, no ecclesiastical dominion, no invisible power giving to a few a very visible one; no great manufacturers employing thousands, no great refinements of luxury. The rich and the poor are not so far removed from each other as they are in Europe. Some few towns excepted, we are all tillers of the earth, from Nova Scotia to West Florida. We are a people of cultivators, scattered over an immense territory, communicating with each other by means of good roads and navigable rivers, united by the silken bands of mild government, all respecting the laws, without dreading their power, because they are equitable. We are all animated with the spirit of an industry which is unfettered and unrestrained, because each person works for himself. If he travels through our rural districts he views not the hostile castle, and the haughty mansion, contrasted with the clay-built hut and miserable cabbin, where cattle and men help to keep each other warm, and dwell in meanness, smoke, and

indigence. A pleasing uniformity of decent competence appears throughout our habitations. The meanest of our log-houses is a dry and comfortable habitation. Lawyer or merchant are the fairest titles our towns afford; that of a farmer is the only appellation of the rural inhabitants of our country. It must take some time ere he can reconcile himself to our dictionary, which is but short in words of dignity, and names of honor. There, on a Sunday, he sees a congregation of respectable farmers and their wives, all clad in neat homespun, well mounted, or riding in their own humble waggons. There is not among them an esquire, saving the unlettered magistrate. There he sees a parson as simple as his flock, a farmer who does not riot on the labour of others. We have no princes, for whom we toil, starve, and bleed: we are the most perfect society now existing in the world. Here man is free as he ought to be; nor is this pleasing equality so transitory as many others are. Many ages will not see the shores of our great lakes replenished with inland nations, nor the unknown bounds of North America entirely peopled. Who can tell how far it extends? Who can tell the millions of men whom it will feed and contain? for no European foot has as yet travelled half the extent of this mighty continent!

The next wish of the traveller will be to know whence came all these people? they are a mixture of English, Scotch, Irish, French, Dutch, Germans, and Swedes. From this promiscuous breed, that race now called Americans have arisen. The eastern provinces must indeed be excepted, as being the unmixed descendants of Englishmen. I have heard many wish that they had been more intermixed also: for my part, I am no wisher, and think it much better as it has happened. They exhibit a most conspicuous figure in this great and variegated picture; they too enter for a great share in the pleasing perspective displayed in these thirteen provinces. I know it is fashionable to reflect on them, but I respect them for what they have done; for the accuracy and wisdom with which they have settled their territory; for the decency of their manners; for their early love of letters; their ancient college, the first in this hemisphere; for their industry; which to me who am but a farmer, is the criterion of everything. There never was a people, situated as they are, who with so ungrateful a soil have done more in so short a time. Do you think that the monarchical ingredients which are more prevalent in other governments, have purged them from all foul stains? Their histories assert the contrary.

In this great American asylum, the poor of Europe have by some means met together, and in consequence of various causes; to what purpose should they ask one another what countrymen they are? Alas, two thirds of them had no country. Can a wretch who wanders about, who works and starves, whose life is a continual scene of sore affliction or pinching penury; can that man call England or any other kingdom his country? A country that had no bread for him, whose fields procured him no harvest, who met with nothing but the frowns of the rich, the severity of the laws, with jails and punishments; who owned not a single foot of the extensive surface of this planet? No! urged by a variety of motives, here they came. Every thing has tended to regenerate them; new laws, a new mode of living, a new social system; here they are become men: in Europe they were as so many useless plants, wanting vegitative mould, and refreshing showers; they withered, and were mowed down by want, hunger, and war; but now by the power of transplantation, like all other plants they have taken root and flourished! Formerly they were not numbered in any civil lists of their country, except in those of the poor; here they rank as citizens. By what invisible power has this surprising metamorphosis been performed? By that of the laws and that of their industry. The laws, the indulgent laws, protect them as they arrive, stamping on them the symbol of adoption; they receive ample rewards for their labours; these accumulated rewards procure them lands; those lands confer on them the title of freemen, and to that title every benefit is affixed which men can possibly require. This is the great operation daily performed by our laws. From whence proceed these laws? From our government. Whence that government? It is derived from the original genius and strong desire of the people ratified and confirmed by the crown. This is the great chain which links us all, this is the picture which every province exhibits, Nova Scotia excepted.

Text: first London edition • 30 eastern provinces, New England • 42 ancient college, Harvard, founded in 1636

There the crown has done all; either there were no people who had genius, or it was not much attended to: the consequence is, that the province is very thinly inhabited indeed; the power of the crown in conjunction with the musketos has prevented men from settling there. Yet some parts of it flourished once; and it contained a mild harmless set of people. But for the fault of a few leaders, the whole were banished. The greatest political error the crown ever committed in America, was to cut off men from a country which wanted nothing but men!

What attachment can a poor European emigrant have for a country where he had nothing? The knowledge of the language, the love of a few kindred as poor as himself, were the only cords that tied him: his country is now that which gives him land, bread, protection, and consequence: *Ubi panis ibi patria,* is the motto of all emigrants. What then is the American, this new man? He is either an European, or the descendant of an European, hence that strange mixture of blood, which you will find in no other country. I could point out to you a family whose grandfather was an Englishman, whose wife was Dutch, whose son married a French woman, and whose present four sons have now four wives of different nations. *He* is an American, who leaving behind him all his ancient prejudices and manners, receives new ones from the new mode of life he has embraced, the new government he obeys, and the new rank he holds. He becomes an American by being received in the broad lap of our great *Alma Mater.* Here individuals of all nations are melted into a new race of men, whose labours and posterity will one day cause great changes in the world. Americans are the western pilgrims, who are carrying along with them that great mass of arts, sciences, vigour, and industry which began long since in the east; they will finish the great circle. The Americans were once scattered all over Europe; here they are incorporated into one of the finest systems of population which has ever appeared, and which will hereafter become distinct by the power of the different climates they inhabit. The American ought therefore to love this country much better than that wherein either he or his forefathers were born. Here the rewards of his industry follow with equal steps the progress of his labour; his labour is founded on the basis of nature, *self-interest;* can it want a stronger allurement? Wives and children, who before in vain demanded of him a morsel of bread, now, fat and frolicksome, gladly help their father to clear those fields whence exuberant crops are to arise to feed and to clothe them all; without any part being claimed, either by a despotic prince, a rich abbott, or a mighty lord. Here religion demands but little of him; a small voluntary salary to the minister, and gratitude to God; can he refuse these? The American is a new man, who acts upon new principles; he must therefore entertain new ideas, and form new opinions. From involuntary idleness, servile dependence, penury, and useless labour, he has passed to toils of a very different nature, rewarded by ample subsistence.—This is an American.

British America is divided into many provinces, forming a large association, scattered along a coast 1500 miles extent and about 200 wide. This society I would fain examine, at least such as it appears in the middle provinces; if it does not afford that variety of tinges and gradations which may be observed in Europe, we have colours peculiar to ourselves. For instance, it is natural to conceive that those who live near the sea, must be very different from those who live in the woods; the intermediate space will afford a separate and distinct class.

Men are like plants; the goodness and flavour of the fruit proceeds from the peculiar soil and exposition in which they grow. We are nothing but what we derive from the air we breathe, the climate we inhabit, the government we obey, the system of religion we profess, and the nature of our employment. Here you will find but few crimes; these have acquired as yet no root among us. I wish I were able to trace all my ideas; if my ignorance prevents me from describing them

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1 the crown . . . all. Nova Scotia, the chief part of French Acadia, was conquered by the English in 1710. The authorities found it difficult to find English settlers, and the Acadians refused to take an oath of allegiance. In 1755, about ten thousand Acadians were removed and their lands given to New England families. Both Crèvecoeur and Longfellow (in Evangeline) appear to have underestimated the difficulty of assimilation • **17 Ubi . . . patria.** One's fatherland is where there is bread • **72 Men . . . plants.** Crèvecoeur's frequent use of this analogy suggests some knowledge, at first or second hand, of Montesquieu's L'Esprit des lois (1748), sometimes regarded as the origin of modern sociology

properly, I hope I shall be able to delineate a few of the outlines, which are all I propose.

Those who live near the sea, feed more on fish than on flesh, and often encounter that boisterous element. This renders them more bold and enterprising; this leads them to neglect the confined occupations of the land. They see and converse with a variety of people; their intercourse with mankind becomes extensive. The sea inspires them with a love of traffic, a desire of transporting produce from one place to another; and leads them to a variety of resources which supply the place of labour. Those who inhabit the middle settlements, by far the most numerous, must be very different; the simple cultivation of the earth purifies them, but the indulgences of the government, the soft remonstrances of religion, the rank of independent freeholders, must necessarily inspire them with sentiments, very little known in Europe among people of the same class. What do I say? Europe has no such class of men; the early knowledge they acquire, the early bargains they make, give them a great degree of sagacity. As freemen they will be litigious; pride and obstinacy are often the cause of law suits; the nature of our laws and governments may be another. As citizens it is easy to imagine, that they will carefully read the newspapers, enter into every political disquisition, freely blame or censure governors and others. As farmers they will be careful and anxious to get as much as they can, because what they get is their own. As northern men they will love the chearful cup. As Christians, religion curbs them not in their opinions; the general indulgence leaves every one to think for themselves in spiritual matters; the laws inspect our actions, our thoughts are left to God. Industry, good living, selfishness, litigiousness, country politics, the pride of freemen, religious indifference, are their characteristics. If you recede still farther from the sea, you will come into more modern settlements; they exhibit the same strong lineaments, in a ruder appearance. Religion seems to have still less influence, and their manners are less improved.

Now we arrive near the great woods, near the last inhabited districts; there men seem to be placed still farther beyond the reach of government, which in some measure leaves them to themselves. How can it pervade every corner; as they were driven there by misfortunes, necessity of beginnings, desire of acquiring large tracks of land, idleness, frequent want of economy, ancient debts; the re-union of such people does not afford a very pleasing spectacle. When discord, want of unity and friendship; when either drunkenness or idleness prevail in such remote districts; contention, inactivity, and wretchedness must ensue. There are not the same remedies to these evils as in a long established community. The few magistrates they have, are in general little better than the rest; they are often in a perfect state of war; that of man against man, sometimes decided by blows, sometimes by means of the law; that of man against every inhabitant of these venerable woods, of which they are come to dispossess them. There men appear to be no better than carnivorous animals of a superior rank, living on the flesh of wild animals when they can catch them, and when they are not able, they subsist on grain. He who would wish to see America in its proper light, and have a true idea of its feeble beginnings and barbarous rudiments, must visit our extended line of frontiers where the last settlers dwell, and where he may see the first labours of settlement, the mode of clearing the earth, in all their different appearances; where men are wholly left dependent on their native tempers, and on the spur of uncertain industry, which often fails when not sanctified by the efficacy of a few moral rules. There, remote from the power of example, and check of shame, many families exhibit the most hideous parts of our society. They are a kind of forlorn hope, preceding by ten or twelve years the most respectable army of veterans which come after them. In that space, prosperity will polish some, vice and the law will drive off the rest, who uniting again with others like themselves will recede still farther; making room for more industrious people, who will finish their improvements, convert the loghouse into a convenient habitation, and rejoicing that the first heavy labours are finished, will change in a few years that hitherto barbarous country into a fine fertile, well regulated district. Such is our progress, such is the march of the Europeans toward the interior parts of this continent. In all societies there are off-casts; this impure part serves as our precursors or pioneers; my

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41 the last . . . districts, the frontier, noticeably unglorified in this description • 88 my father, a fictional touch, since there is no evidence that Crèvecoeur's father was ever in America

father himself was one of that class, but he came upon honest principles, and was therefore one of the few who held fast; by good conduct and temperance, he transmitted to me his fair inheritance, when not above one in fourteen of his contemporaries had the same good fortune.

Forty years ago this smiling country was thus inhabited; it is now purged, a general decency of manners prevails throughout, and such has been the fate of our best countries.

Exclusive of those general characteristics, each province has its own, founded on the government, climate, mode of husbandry, customs, and peculiarity of circumstances. Europeans submit insensibly to these great powers, and become, in the course of a few generations, not only Americans in general, but either Pennsylvanians, Virginians, or provincials under some other name. Whoever traverses the continent must easily observe those strong differences, which will grow more evident in time. The inhabitants of Canada, Massachusetts, the middle provinces, the southern ones will be as different as their climates; their only points of unity will be those of religion and language. . . .

1780?-1782

From • Sketches of Eighteenth Century America

The American Belisarius

Belisarius (505?-565) was the chief military genius in the reign of the Emperor Justinian. After a long series of brilliant victories, he was accused of conspiracy and deprived of his property; writers of a later period asserted that, his eyes put out by order of the Emperor, Belisarius became a beggar in the streets. In truth, apparently, Justinian was not thus ungrateful, but believed in his general's innocence and restored his dignities. Crèvecoeur's implication in the title of the following story is that Americans did not always appreciate their true leaders.

"The American Belisarius" is both an experiment in fiction, with so many allusions to tears that it takes its place in the tradition of sentimentalism, and an excellent expression of Crèvecoeur's Tory sympathies, which the reader of the Letters would scarcely expect. Probably written before the end of the Revolution, it remained in manuscript until 1925. Sketches of Eighteenth Century America, published more than a century after its author's death, rehabilitated Crèvecoeur's reputation, so that he now ranks as one of the major figures of eighteenth-century American literature.

Journals, memoirs, elaborate essays shall not fail hereafter to commemorate the heroes who have made their appearance on this new American stage, to the end that Europe may either lavishly praise or severely censure their virtues and their faults. It requires the inquisitive eye of an unnoticed individual mixing in crowds to find out and select for private amusement more obscure, though not less pathetic scenes. Scenes of sorrow and affliction are equally moving to the bowels of humanity. Find them where you will, there is a strange but peculiar sort of pleasure in contemplating them; it is a mournful feast for some particular souls.

A pile of ruins is always striking, but when the object of contemplation is too extensive, our divided and wearied faculties receive impressions proportionably feeble; we possess but a certain quantity of tears and compassion. But when the scale is diminished, when we descend from the destruction of an extensive government or nation to that of several individuals, to that of a once opulent, happy, virtuous family, there we pause, for it is more analogous to our own situation. We can better comprehend the woes, the distresses of a father, mother, and children immersed in the deepest

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Text: that established by H. L. Bourdin, R. H. Gabriel, and S. T. Williams, following Bourdin's discovery of the Crèvecoeur papers in 1923 • 13 A pile of ruins. This typically eighteenth-century reflection, best known, perhaps, through Shelley's "Ozymandias," found fullest expression in the Comte de Volney's "Les Ruines, ou méditations sur les révolutions des empires" (1791)

calamities imagination can conceive, than if we had observed the overthrow of kings and great rulers.

After a violent storm of northwest wind I never see even a single oak overset, once majestic and lofty, without feeling some regret at the accident. I observe the knotty roots wrenched from the ground, the broken limbs, the scattered leaves. I revolve in my mind the amazing elemental force which must have occasioned so great an overthrow. I observe the humble bushes which grew under its shade. They felt the impression of the same storm, but in a proportion so much the less, as was that of their bulk when compared to that of the oak. I acknowledge that, were I to observe a whole mountain thus divested of its trees by the impulse of the same gale, I should feel a superior degree of astonishment, but, at the same time, my observations could not be so minute nor so particular. It is not, therefore, those great and general calamities to the description of which my pencil is equal; it is the individual object as it lies lowly prostrate which I wish to describe. I can encompass it; I can view it in all situations; and the limited impressions admit within my mind a possibility of retracing them. Reserve this, therefore, for the hours, for the moments of your greatest philanthropy. The enormity may shock you. Here we are more used to it, and, having so many objects to feel for, one is able to feel so much the less for each.

The horror, the shocking details of the following tragedy, 'tis true, show mankind in the worst light possible. But what can you expect when law, government, morality are become silent and inefficacious? When men are artfully brought into a chaos, in order, as they are taught to believe, that they may be raised from their former confined line to a much preferable state of existence? To make use of a modern simile: the action of ploughing seems to be laborious and dirty; numberless worms, insects, and wise republics of ants are destroyed by the operation. Yet these scenes of unknown disasters, of unnoticed murders and ruins happily tend to produce a rich harvest in the succeeding season.

In the township of ———— lived S. K., the son of a Dutch father and of an English mother. These mixtures are very frequent in this country. From his youth he loved and delighted in hunting, and the skill he acquired confirmed his taste for that manly diversion. In one of the long excursions which he took in the mountains of ———— (which he had never before explored), mixing the amusements of the chase with those of more useful contemplation, and viewing the grounds as an expert husbandman, he found among the wilds several beautiful vales formed by Nature in her most indulgent hours; when, weary with the creation of the surrounding cliffs and precipices, she condescended to exhibit something on which Man might live and flourish,—a singular contrast which you never fail to meet with in the mountains of America: the more rocky, barren, and asperous are the surrounding ridges, the richer and more fertile are the intervales and valleys which divide them. Struck with the singular beauty and luxuriance of one of these spots, he returned home, and soon after patented it. I think it contained about one thousand acres.

With cheerfulness he quitted the paternal estate he enjoyed, and prepared to begin the world anew in the bosom of this huge wilderness, where there was not even a path to guide him. He had a road to make, some temporary bridges to make, overset trees to remove, a house to raise, swamps to convert into meadows and to fit for the scythe, upland fields to clear for the plough,—such were the labours he had to undertake, such were the difficulties he had to overcome. He surmounted every obstacle; he was young, healthy, vigorous, and strong-handed. In a few years this part of the wilderness assumed a new face and wore a smiling aspect. The most abundant crops of grass, of fruit, and grain soon succeeded to the moss, to the acorn, to the wild berry, and to all the different fruits, natives of that soil. Soon after these first successful essays the fame of his happy beginning drew abundance of inferior people to that neighbourhood. It was made a county, and in a short time grew populous, principally with poor people, whom some part of this barren soil could not render much richer. But the love of independence, that strong attachment to wives and children which is so powerful and natural, will people the tops of cliffs; and make them even prefer such settlements to the servitude of attendance, to the confinement of manufactories, or to the occupation of more menial labours.

There were in the neighbourhood two valuable pieces of land, less considerable indeed, but in point of fertility as good as his own. S. K. purchased them both and in-

vited his two brothers-in-law to remove there; generously making them an offer of the land, of his teams, and every other necessary assistance; requiring only to be paid the advanced capital whenever they should be enabled; giving up all pretensions to interest or any other compensation. This handsome overture did not pass unaccepted. They removed to the new patrimony which they had thus easily purchased and in this sequestered situation became to S. K. two valuable neighbours and friends. Their prosperity, which was his work, raised no jealousy in him. They all grew rich very fast. The virgin earth abundantly repaid them for their labours and advances; and they soon were enabled to return the borrowed capital which they had so industriously improved. This part of the scene is truly pleasing, pastoral, and edifying: three brothers, the founders of three opulent families, the creators of three valuable plantations, the promoters of the succeeding settlements that took place around them. The most plentiful crops, the fattest cattle, the greatest number of hogs and horses, raised loose in his wilderness, yearly accumulated their wealth; swelled their opulence and rendered them the most conspicuous families in this corner of the world. A perfect union prevailed not only from the ties of blood, but cemented by those of the strongest gratitude.

Among the great number of families which had taken up their residence in that vicinage it was not to be expected that they could all equally thrive. Prosperity is not the lot of every man; so many casualties occur that often prevent it. Some of them were placed, besides, on the most ungrateful soil, from which they could barely draw a subsistence. The industry of Man, the resources of a family are never tried in this cold country, never put to the proof, until they have undergone the severity of a long winter. The rigours of this season generally require among this class of people every exertion of industry, as well as every fortunate circumstance that can possibly happen. A cow, perhaps, a few sheep, a couple of poor horses must be housed, must be fed through the inclement season; and you know that it is from the labour of the summer, from collected grasses and fodder, this must proceed. If the least accident through droughts, sickness, carelessness or want of activity happens, a general calamity ensues. The death of any one of these precious animals oversets the well-being of the family. Milk is wanting for the children; wood must be hauled; the fleeces of sheep cannot be dispensed with. What providence can replace these great deficiencies?

Happily S. K. lived in the neighbourhood. His extreme munificence and generosity had hitherto, like a gem, been buried, for he had never before lived in a country where the needy and the calamitous were so numerous. In their extreme indigence, in all their unexpected disasters, they repair to this princely farmer. He opens to them his granary; he lends them hay; he assists them in whatever they want; he cheers them with good counsel; he becomes a father to the poor of this wilderness. They promise him payment; he never demands it. The fame of his goodness reaches far and near. Every winter his house becomes an Egyptian granary, where each finds a supply proportioned to his wants. Figure to yourself a rich and opulent planter situated in an admirable vale, surrounded by a variety of distressed inhabitants, giving and lending, in the midst of a severe winter, cloaks, wool, shoes, etc., to a great number of unfortunate families; relieving a mother who has not perhaps wherewithal to clothe her newborn infant; sending timely succour, medicines, victuals to a valetudinarian exhausted with fatigues and labours; giving a milch cow to a desolate father who has just lost his in a quagmire, as she went to graze the wild herbage for want of hay at home; giving employment; directing the labours and essays of these grateful but ignorant people towards a more prosperous industry. Such is the faithful picture of this man's conduct, for a series of years, to those around him. At home he was hospitable and kind, an indulgent father, a tender husband, a good master. This, one would have imagined, was an object on which the good genius of America would have constantly smiled.

Upon an extraordinary demand of wheat from abroad, the dealers in this commodity would often come to his house and solicit from him the purchase of his abundant crops. "I have no wheat," said he, "for the rich; my harvest is for the poor. What would the inhabitants of these mountains do, were I to divest myself of what superfluous grain I have?" "Consider, sir, you will

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28 vicinage, neighborhood • 62 an Egyptian granary. See the story of Joseph, Genesis 47:12

receive your money in a lump, and God knows when you are to expect it from these needy people, whose indolence you rather encourage by your extreme bounty."

"Some do pay me very punctually. The rest wish and try to do it, but they find it impossible; and pray, must they starve because they raise less grain than I do?"

Would to God I were acquainted with the sequel of this humane conversation! I would recapitulate every phrase; I would dwell on every syllable. If Mercy herself could by the direction of the Supreme Being assume a visible appearance, such are the words which this celestial Being would probably utter for the example, for the edification of mankind. 'Tis really a necessary relief and a great comfort to find in human society some such beings, lest in the crowd, which through experience we find so different, we should wholly lose sight of that beautiful original and of those heavenly dispositions, with which the heart of Man was once adorned.

One day as he was riding through his fields, he saw a poor man carrying a bushel of wheat on his back. "Where now, neighbour?"

"To mill, sir."

"Pray, how long since you are become a beast of burthen?"

"Since I had the misfortune of losing my jade."

"Have you neither spirit nor activity enough to catch one of my wild horses?"

"I dare not without your leave."

"Hark ye, friend, the first time I see you in that servile employment whilst I have so many useless ones about my farm, you shall receive from me a severe reprimand." The honest countryman took the hint, borrowed a little salt and a halter, and soon after appeared mounted on a spirited mare, which carried him where he wanted to go, and performed for him his necessary services at home.

In the fall of the year it was his usual custom to invite his neighbours in, helping him to hunt and to gather together the numerous heads of swine which were bred in his woods, that he might fat them with corn which he raised in the summer. He made it a rule to treat them handsomely, and to send them home each with a good hog, as a reward for their trouble and attendance. In harvest and haying he neither hired nor sent for any man, but, trusting to the gratitude of the neighbourhood, always found his company of reapers and hay-makers more numerous than he wanted. It was truly a patriarchal harvest gathered for the benefit of his little world. Yet, notwithstanding his generosity, this man grew richer every crop; every agricultural scheme succeeded. What he gave did not appear to diminish his stores; it seemed but a mite, and immediately to be replaced by the hand of Providence. I have known Quakers in Pennsylvania who gave annually the tenth part of their income, and that was very great; but this man never counted, calculated, nor compared. The wants of the year, the calamities of his neighbourhood were the measure by which he proportioned his bounty. The luxuriance of his meadows surpassed all belief; I have heard many people say, since his misfortunes, that they have often cut and cured three tons and half per acre. The produce of his grain was in proportion; the blessings of heaven prospered his labours and showered fertility over all his lands. Equally vigilant and industrious, he spared neither activity nor perseverance to accomplish his schemes of agriculture. Thus he lived for a great number of years, the father of the poor and the example of this part of the world. He aimed at no popular promotion, for he was a stranger to pride and arrogance. A simple commission as a militia-captain was all that distinguished him from his equals.

Unfortunate times came at last. What opinion he embraced in the beginning remains unknown. His brothers-in-law had long envied his great popularity, of which, however, he had never made the least abuse. They began to ridicule his generosity, and, from a contempt of his manner of living, they secretly passed to extreme hatred; but hitherto they had taken care to conceal their rancour and resentment. At the dawn of this new revolution, they blazed forth. Fanned by the general impunity of the times, they, in an underhanded manner, endeavoured to represent him as inimical. They prevailed upon the leaders to deprive him of his commission (though fifty-six years of age), and even made him submit to the duties of a simple militiaman. They harassed his son by all the means which false zeal and uncontrollable power—[all] too unhappily—suggested to them. In short, they made themselves so obnoxious as to expose them to every contumely devised by the rage of party and the madness of the times.

As he was a great lover of peace and repose, he obeyed their commands and went forth, as well as his son,

whenever ordered. This unexpected compliance became a severe mortification and an insupportable disappointment to his enemies. They became, therefore, more openly outrageous. They began by causing his son to be deprived of a favourite rifle, a rifle that had constantly and successfully contributed to his father's youthful amusements. This outrage the old gentleman could not patiently endure. He seized on the house of the officer who had committed this act of violence. A great dispute ensued, in consequence of which he was cast (into prison) and severely fined. Innumerable other insults were offered to the youth, who, young, bold, and courageous, preferred at last a voluntary exile to so much insult and vexation. He joined the King's troops. This was what had been forseen, and [was] a part of that plan which had been previously concerted by his brothers-in-law and his other enemies. Thus these people, from the wild fury of the times, contrived the means of S. K.'s destruction, which was to ensure them the possession of his fine estate. This elopement with the doubtful confirmed the preceding suspicions; realized the conjectures of his enemies. Among the more irascible the torch now blazed with redoubled heat. His life was immediately demanded by the fanatical, and his estate secured by the detestable devisers of his ruin.

What a situation for an honest, generous man! Despised, shunned, hated, calumniated, and reviled in the midst of a county of which he was the founder, in the midst of a people the poorest of which he had so often assisted and relieved; pursued and overtaken by his brothers-in-law, whom he had raised from indigence! Gracious God, why permit so many virtues to be blasted in their greatest refulgency? Why permit the radiance of so many heavenly attributes to be eclipsed by men who impiously affix to their new, fictitious zeal the sacred name of liberty on purpose to blind the unwary, whilst, ignorant of Thee, they worship no deity but self-interest, and to that idol sacrilegiously sacrifice so many virtues? If it is to reward him with never-fading happiness, condescend to manifest some faint ray of Thy design proportioned to the weakness of the comprehension of us, frail mortals and fellow-sufferers, that we may not despair, nor impious men may arraign Thy eternal justice. Yes, it is virtue Thou meanest to reward and to crown. The struggle, the contest, the ignominy to which it is now exposed, the greater disasters which will soon terminate this scene have some distant affinity with the suffering of Thy Son, the Moral Legislator, the Pattern of Mankind.

S. K. bore his misfortunes with a manly constancy. However, the absence of his son impaired his industry, and almost put an entire stop to his designs of improvement. He saw but neglected his farm, his fields, his pastures, and his meadows; the ruinous and deplorable state in which the country was involved. His house, once the mansion of hospitality and kindness, was entered now but by secret emissaries, enemies, committeemen, etc. The few friends he had left dared not visit him, for they, too, were struggling with their difficulties; they dared not expose themselves to a declaration of their sentiments by soothing his oppressed mind, and comforting him in his adversity. He was taken ill. Nevertheless, militia-duty was demanded and required of him. He was fined forty pounds for every fortnight he had been absent. He recovered and resolved either to cease to be, or else to exist with more ease. He went towards New York, but the guards and other obstacles he met with prevented him from accomplishing his design. He returned, but ere he reached his house, he heard the melancholy tidings that it had been plundered, and that there was a general order for the militia to hunt him through the woods. For a great number of days he had to escape their pursuit from hill to hill, from rocks to rocks, often wanting bread, and uncertain where to hide himself. By means of the mediation of some friends he was at last permitted to return home and remain there on bail. A dejected, melancholy wife, a desolated house, a half-ruined farm, a scarcity of everything struck him to the heart at his first coming, but his sorrow and affliction were all passive. These impressions, however, soon wore away; he insensibly grew more reconciled to his situation. His advanced age, his late sickness, his fatigues had wearied him down; and his mind, partaking of the debility of his body, did no longer view these disagreeable images in the same keenness of light.

This happened in the fall. The following winter some poor people repaired to his house for relief and supplies as usual. "Alas, my friends, committees and rulers have made such a havoc here that I have no longer the means to relieve you. A little hay, perhaps, I may spare, for they have stolen all my horses. Pray, were not you one of those who hunted me whilst I was wild?"

"Yes, sir, I was unfortunately one of them, but I was compelled. I was driven to do it. You know as well as I the severity with which we poor militiamen are treated; exorbitant and arbitrary fines, corporal punishments. Every kind of terror is held out to us. What could I do?"

"I know it, and am far from blaming you, though I greatly lament and pity your situation. Pray, have you been paid for your services against me?"

"No, sir."

"How many days have you been out?"

"Two."

"What! Two days in the woods and you have received no wages? Have neither committees nor captains ever settled that matter yet?"

"No, sir, our services are gratis, and we must, besides, find our victuals, our blankets, and the very ammunition we expend,—we must pay for it."

"I hate, and always did, to see poor men employed for nothing. Take two loads of hay for your two days' work. Will that satisfy you?"

"You were always a good man. God loves you yet though some men are dreadfully set against you."

"Do tell me, would you really have killed me as you were ordered, if you had met me in the woods?" Here the poor man, hiding his face with his hat, shed tears and made no other answer.

The patience, the resignation with which he seemed now to bear his fate, greatly alarmed his enemies. They reproached themselves with the facility with which they suffered him to return and to procure bail; new devices, therefore, were made use of to push him to a final extremity. His determination of thus remaining at home, quiet and inoffensive, might abate that popular rage and malice which were the foundations of their hopes. The keen edge of popular clamour might become blunted; there was a possibility of their being frustrated in their most favourite expectations. They, therefore, secretly propagated a report that he had harboured Indians on their way to New York. No sooner said than believed. Imprisonment, hanging were denounced against him by the voice of the public. This new clamour was principally encouraged by his brothers-in-law, the one now become a magistrate, and the other a captain of the militia.

Finding himself surrounded with new perils, without one friend either to advise or to comfort him; threatened with his final doom; accused of that which, though they could not prove, he could only deny; knowing of no power he could appeal to, either for justice or relief; seeing none but prejudiced enemies in his accusers, judges, and neighbours; he at last determined to join the Indians who were nearest to him, not so much with the design of inciting them to blood and slaughter, as [of finding] a place of refuge and repose. This was what his enemies expected. His house, his farm,—all were seized, even the scanty remains of what had escaped their former avidity and plunder. All was sold, and the house and farm were rented to a variety of tenants until laws should be made to sell the lands.

> Such a house broke!
> So noble a master fallen! All gone! and not
> One friend to take his fortune by the arm,
> And go along with him.

It has been said since that this famed farm has ceased this year to bear as plentifully as usual; that the meadows have brought but little hay; that the grain has been scanty and poor. This is at least the tradition of the neighbourhood. It may be that these inconsiderate tenants neither plough nor cultivate it as it was formerly; that the meadows, late-fed and ill-fenced, have no time to bear a crop; and that in the short space of their lease they refuse the necessary manures and usual care, without which the best land produces nothing.

His wife, alas! has been hitherto overlooked and unnoticed, though you may be sure she has not been passive through these affecting scenes. In all these various calamities which have befallen her family she has borne the part of a tender mother, an affectionate wife. Judge of her situation at this particular and critical moment! The repeated shocks which she has sustained within these three years have impaired the tone of her nerves,—you know the delicacy of the female frame. Though her cheerfulness was gone, the gleamings of hope, the presence of her husband still supported her. This sudden and unexpected blow completed the horrid catastrophe. Soon after his elopement, when the armed men came to seize him, she fainted, and though she has since recovered the use of her limbs, her reason has never returned but in a few lucid intervals. She is now confined to a small room, her servants sold and gone; she is reduced

to penury; she is become a poor tenant of that very house which in the better days of her husband's prosperous industry had glowed with the cheerful beams of benevolence. She is now an object of pity without exciting any. When her reason returns, it is only to hear herself and family reviled. "You yourselves have driven my son, my husband away," is all she can say. Could tears, could wishes, could prayers relieve her, I'd shed a flood, I'd form a thousand, I'd proffer the most ardent ones to heaven. But who can stem the tide of Fate? It is the arbiter of kings and subjects; in spite of every impediment it will rise to its preordained height. She lives, happily unknown to herself, an example of the last degree of desolation which can overtake a once prosperous family, the object of raillery to those who are witnesses of her delirium. It would have been a miracle indeed, had her senses remained unimpaired amidst the jars, the shocks of so many perturbations. A Stoic himself would have required the spirit of Zeno to have withstood, placid and composed, the convulsions of so great a ruin.

One stroke of fortune is still wanting. S. K. in his flight met with a party of Indians coming towards ———, which they intended to destroy. He accompanied them, never ceasing to beg of them that they would shed no blood and spare the lives of poor innocent farmers. The deaths of three or four, to which he was witness, shocked his humane soul. He quitted them and returned once more towards home, choosing rather to meet his final doom in his own country than be any longer a witness to the further mischiefs meditated by these incensed people. On his return he was soon informed of the deplorable state to which his wife was reduced and of the destruction of his property. He balanced what to do, as if amidst so much evil there was still a possibility of choice. Sad, however, was the alternative: whether to venture and deliver himself up at all hazards, and thus end the suspense; or whether to live a vagrant, a fugitive in these woods and mountains, with the paths and intricate ways of which he was so well-acquainted. But whence was he to procure subsistence? It could not be by the chase. Was he then to turn plunderer? Weary of life, he at last found means to inform the rulers of his return and repentance; but he received no other answer than what was soon afterwards delivered by the mouths of the dogs and by the noise of the militia which was ordered out to search the woods for him. He luckily escaped their pursuit, but hunger, his greatest enemy, at last overtook him. He ventured towards a cabin, the tenants of which he had often relieved in their adversity. They gave him some bread and advised him to fly. Soon afterwards, by means of the indiscretion of a child, this mystery of generosity and gratitude was revealed. The aged couple were severely whipped, being too poor to be fined. For a long time he skulked from tree to tree, from rock to rock; now hid on the tops of cliffs, seeing his pursuers below him; now creeping through the impervious ways of marshes and swamps, the receptacle of bears less cruel than his enemies.

Ye angels of peace, ye genii of placid benevolence, ye invisible beings who are appointed to preside over the good, the unjustly persecuted, is there no invisible ægis in the high armouries of heaven? Gently cause one to descend, in order to shield this mortal man, your image, from the muskets of his ancient friends and dependants, —all aimed towards him. Whichsoever way he steers, he has to dread the smell of dogs, now become his enemies. Where can he go to escape and live? But if he lives, what life will it be? The goaded mind incessantly represents to itself and compares the ancient days of ease, felicity, tranquillity, and wealth, with the present hours of hunger, persecution, and general hatred; once the master and proprietor of a good house, now reduced to the shelter of the woods and rocks; once surrounded with servants and friends, now isolated and alone, afraid of the very animal which used to be his companion in the chase. Such, however, was the fate of this man for a long time, until, abandoning himself to despair, overpowered by the excess of fatigue, debility, and hunger, he suffered himself to be taken. He was conducted to gaol, where he expected he should not long languish. Mercy was now become useless to him. What good could it procure him, now that his wife was delirious, his son gone, and all his property destroyed? His only remaining felicity was the remembrance of his ancient humane deeds which like a sweet ethereal dew must

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19 **Zeno** (fl. 300 B.C.), founder of the Stoic school of philosophy, held that the wise man should always be indifferent to external circumstances • 63 **ægis**, the storm cloud or shield of Zeus; hence any powerful protection

cast a mist over the horrors of his confinement, and imperceptibly prepare him to appear in that world which blesses the good, the merciful without measure, and has no bitterness for such tenants.

The day of trial soon came; and to his great surprise, as well as to the astonishment of all, he was released on bail and permitted to go to work for his bread. Like Belisarius of old, he is returned to live in that small part of his own house which is allotted him for his habitation; there to behold once more the extensive havoc which surrounds him; and to contemplate in gloomy despair the overthrow of his wife's reason and the reunion of all the physical evil that could possibly befall him, without resources and without hope.

Yet he lives; yet he bears it without murmuring. Life seems still to be precious to him; 'tis a gift he has no thought of parting with. Strange! What is it good for when thus embittered, when thus accompanied with so much acrimony, such irretrievable accidents? 'Tis a perpetual state of agony. Better part with it in a heavy, final groan and trust to Nature for the consequence than to drag so ponderous a chain. How much happier the felon, the murderer who at one fortunate blow ends the remembrance of his life and his crimes, and is delivered from chains, putrid holes, and all the other wants of Nature!

Compare now the fate of this man with that of his more fortunate persecutors. I appeal to the enlightened tribunals of Europe, to the casuistical doctors of the colleges of science, to the Divan, to the synods, to the presbyteries, and to all bodies and conventions of men reunited to judge of the various cases which the combined malice of men exhibit on the stage of the world, as well as of the various preventives and punishments designed to check malice and evil deeds. I appeal to the American tribunals on that day when the mist of these times shall be dissipated. I ask them all on what principles can this man be punished? What has he done that can deserve so much severity? The graft, by the virulence of these times, is made to poison the parent stock; the vine is made to corrode the tutelar elm which has so long supported its entwined limbs and branches. 'Tis the jealousy, the avarice, the secret thirst of plunder, sanctified under new and deceiving names, which have found means to vilify this generous citizen, and have set the aspic tongues reviling this innocent man. Can it be? Can this be the reflected work of three years? Yes, it is. But for their demoniacal fury he might have remained at home passive and inoffensive. The produce of his fertile farm might have served to support the cause. But this was not sufficient to satisfy the rage, the malice of an ignorant, prejudiced public.

Are ye not afraid, ye modern rulers, to attract the wrath of heaven, the vindictive fires of its eternal justice in thus trampling under, in thus disregarding the most essential laws of humanity, in thus neglecting the most indispensable ones contained in that code which ought to reign supreme, exclusive of all parties, factions, and revolutions? Is not the deplorable state into which this man and all his family are reduced more than sufficient to atone for the popular offences he is supposed to have been guilty of? Must poverty, languor, and disease terminate in want, penury, and ignominy a life hitherto pursued on the most generous principles, a life which, contrary to the tenor of yours, has been so useful, so edifying?

But I am not pleading his cause; I am no biographer. I give way to an exuberance of thoughts which involuntarily crowd on my mind, unknown to all the world but its Ruler and yourself. I don't presume that this man was matchless, devoid of vices and faults. Like all other men, his cup was no doubt mixed with those ingredients which enter into the beverage of mortals. It is not the minutiæ of his life into which I want to descend. This unfortunate epoch is *that* alone which I want to select and to describe as a proof of his hard destiny, and as one of the characteristics of the times in which we live. Yet I am persuaded that there are several members in Congress and in every province who, moved into compassion at this relation, would shed tears over the ashes of this ruin; but these men at a great distance direct the revolution of the new orb. It is the inferior satellites who crush, who dispel, and make such a havoc in the paths which it is to follow.

Yet his enemies exult, triumph, and rule. They bear sway, are applauded, gather every harvest, and receive every incense which the world can give, whilst he bemoans his fate, and is obliged to support himself and

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30 the Divan, the highest council of state among the Turks

his wife. His enemies, now become his masters, were before these times, mostly poor, obscure, and unnoticed; great psalm-singers, zealous religionists who would not have cracked a nut on the Sabbath,—no, not for any worldly consideration. They were meek, lowly Christians, always referring every accident to God's divine providence and peculiar appointment; humble in their deportment, composed in their carriage, prudent in their outward actions, careful of uttering offensive words; men of plausible countenances, sleek-haired, but possessed at the same time of great duplicity of heart; sly in their common social intercourse, callous,—pushing, with an affected charitable language, from their doors the poor, the orphan, the widow.

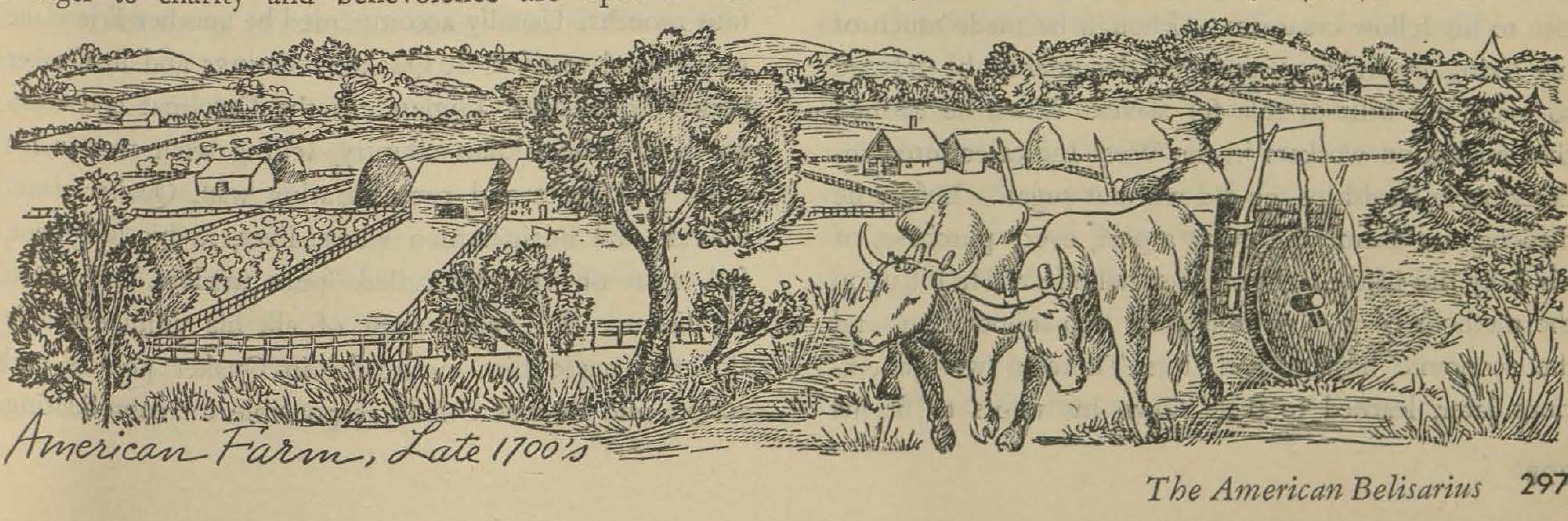
I have known some of these country saints to tenaciously detain in gaol some debtors for twelve pounds, which S. K., unknown to everybody, would privately cause to be paid. These are the people who before these times were ostentatiously devout, laboriously exact in their morning prayers, reading, expoundings, etc. These are the men who now in the obscure parts of this country have assumed the iron sceptre and from religious hypocrites are become political tyrants. That affected meekness, that delusive softeness of manners are now gone; they are discarded as useless. They were formerly the high road to popularity, applause, and public respect, but this new zeal for their new cause must not, like the ancient one, moulder under the ashes and be afraid of sunshine and of air. It must burn, it must conflagrate; the more violent the flames, the thicker the smoke, the more meritorious. Whilst the unaffected good man, the sincere Christian, who proved his principles by his actions more than by his vain words and his disputations, is reprobated, shunned, despised, and punished, the secret liar, the hidden fornicator, the nocturnal drunkard, the stranger to charity and benevolence are uplifted on modern wings, and obtain the applause of the world which should be the reward of merit, of benefits conferred, of useful actions done.

Surely this points out the absolute necessity of future rewards and punishments. Were not I convinced of it, I would not suffer the rebukes, the taunts, the daily infamy, to which I have conscientiously exposed myself. I'd turn Manichean like so many others. I'd worship the demon of the times, trample on every law, break every duty, neglect every bond, overlook every obligation to which no punishment was annexed. I'd set myself calumniating my rich neighbours. I'd call all passive, inoffensive men by the name of inimical. I'd plunder or detain the entrusted deposits. I'd trade on public moneys, though contrary to my oath. Oath! Chaff for good Whigs, and only fit to bind a few conscientious Royalists! I'd build my new fortune on the depreciation of the money. I'd inform against every man who would make any difference betwixt it and silver, whilst I, secure from any discovery or suspicion by my good name, would privately exchange ten for one. I'd pocket the fines of poor militiamen extracted from their heart's blood. I'd become obdurate, merciless, and unjust. I'd grow rich, *"fas vel nefas."* I'd send others a-fighting, whilst I stayed at home to trade and to rule. I'd become a clamorous American, a modern Whig, and offer every night incense to the god Arimanes.

1780?·1925

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1 **His enemies.** The passage which follows suggests something of the class conflict which underlay the Revolution • 44 **Manichean.** Manichaeism was a religion originating in Babylonia in the third century, with Mani or Manes. Long regarded as dangerous by the Christian church, it was often misrepresented. To Crèvecoeur, Manichaeism apparently meant the same thing as materialism, a definition which it did not deserve • 60 "**fas vel nefas,**" right or wrong • 63 **the god Arimanes,** Ahriman, the Persian name for the Devil, or principle of evil



John Woolman

1720 · 1772

The *Journal* of John Woolman has found enthusiastic readers ever since its first publication in 1774. Among those who have been charmed by its revelation of a man who for honesty, simplicity, and sweetness of temper merits comparison with St. Francis of Assisi and Jesus Christ must be counted Charles Lamb, the English essayist, Lamb's friend Crabb Robinson, diarist-historian of the Romantic era, William Ellery Channing (p. 416), and John Greenleaf Whittier. To many, Woolman has come to represent American Quakerism at its splendid best, a mystic faith whose outward starkness and lack of pomp accentuate great inward richness. More recently Woolman has been much admired for his unique grasp of the social and economic implications of the concept of the Society of Friends that the human race is one great family.

The brotherhood of man was to Woolman not an ideal but a reality, and as he grew older he sought to divorce himself, quietly but firmly, from all actions and institutions which even indirectly involved injustice to his fellow creatures. Although he made much of his living by drawing up legal documents, he refused to make out bills of sale for slaves. When he learned that plantation workers in the West Indies endured indescribable hardships, he did without sugar. Before he died he was examining every aspect, every purchase, of his daily life in the light of its social effect. He hit upon the methods of passive resistance, non-coöperation, and the economic boycott and, like Thoreau two generations later, learned to scale down his wants to fit his principles. Woolman did not reform society, but he tried to deal honestly with the exceedingly complicated problem of an individual's just relation to his fellow men. On occasion his methods have proved to be tremendously effective.

Woolman was born on a farm on Rancocas Creek, midway between Burlington and Mount Holly, New Jersey. There he lived until he was twenty, learning to love the Quaker way of life in his family, the village school, and the weekly Meeting. He then went into a shop in Mount Holly, five miles away, and in his spare time learned the tailor's trade. Diligent and thrifty, he might easily have grown wealthy, but his social conscience was obviously far greater than that of most of his associates. Soon he felt the call to visit other Meetings, as was the custom of those Friends who wished to become ministers and elders in a sect which had no professional clergy. During the last half of his life, except when he was ill, he made at least one journey a year, sometimes being away from home for as long as four months. Usually accompanied by another Friend, he visited and testified at Quaker meetings and in Quaker homes from New England to the Carolinas and westward into the Indian country, telling what was in his mind and heart and remonstrating with Quaker slaveholders and businessmen whose lives, in his judgment, fell short of what he called "pure wisdom." His tact, his literary skill, and, most of all, his unimpeachable sincerity made him successful in Quaker politics and action, and he was chiefly responsible for consolidating

Quaker sentiment for the emancipation of Negro slaves. His inclination to help arouse the English Quakers to the importance of this cause sent him to England in 1772. He arrived in London in June, visited Friends there and in the neighborhood, and then, wishing to go to the North, chose characteristically to walk rather than have any part in the oppression of postboys and horses. He got as far as York, where he died of smallpox in September.

In the course of his life Woolman wrote more than a dozen essays on matters which he thought ought to be more fully considered by the Quakers. Some of them were published during his lifetime, usually by the Overseers of the Press of the Philadelphia Meeting, so that they were distributed among Quakers with some degree of authority. The *Essay on Some Considerations on the Keeping of Negroes* (Part I, 1754; Part II, 1762) and *Considerations on Pure Wisdom and Human Policy* (1758) are the most important. A few of the more radical essays and the *Journal* did not appear until after Woolman's death.

Woolman's writing is far from being as artless as it may seem at first glance. He gained precisely the effect of unpretentious directness that he wanted, and he revised some of his manuscripts with considerable care. His Quaker readers were suspicious of learning, of dependence upon close-knit logic or rhetorical devices. The sweet reasonableness of Woolman's tone and the apparent carelessness in organization clothe a keen and penetrating intellect, stored with the rich wisdom of the Bible and of personal experience and directed by convictions which are often revolutionary.

The Journal and Essays of John Woolman, ed. Amelia M. Gummere, New York, 1922 • Janet Whitney, John Woolman, American Quaker, Boston, 1942

From

The Journal and Essays of John Woolman

Woolman tells us that he began his journal when he was thirty-six. Presumably he kept some kind of day-by-day diary, but so far as is known none is extant. The Journal has come down to us in two manuscripts, one of which includes a number of Woolman's essays and is the manuscript which he himself prepared for the publication committee of the Philadelphia Meeting before he left for England. The Journal consists of eleven chapters; all of Chapter I and a part of the latter portion of Chapter III follow. Mrs. Whitney has shown in her recent biography, by reference to manuscript account books, that Woolman's dating of events, probably from memory, is not always to be relied upon. His account of his gradual progress toward spiritual enlightenment, "until I felt that rise which prepares the creature to stand like a Trumpet, through which the Lord speaks to his flock," is possibly the clearest exposition of the Quaker faith in our literature.

CHAPTER I

I have often felt a motion of Love to leave some hints of my experience of the Goodness of God: and pursuant thereto, in the 36 year of my age, I begin this work.

I was Born in Northampton, in Burlington county, in West Jersey, in the year of our Lord 1720 & before I was seven years old, I began to be acquainted with the operations of Divine Love. Through the care of my Parents, I was taught to Read as soon as I was capable of it, and as I went from School one seventh-day, I remember, while my companions went to play by the way, I went forward out of sight, and seting down, I read the twenty second chapter of the Revelations: "He showed me a pure River of Water of Life, clear as Crystal, proceeding out of the Throne of God and of the Lamb," &c. and in the reading of it, my mind was drawn to seek after that Pure Habitation, which I then believed God had prepared for his servants. The place where I sat, and

the sweetness that attended my soul, remain fresh in my memory.

This, and the like Gracious Visitations, had that effect upon me, that when boys used ill language, it troubled me, & through the continued Mercies of God, I was preserved from it. The pious instructions of my Parents were often fresh in my mind when I happened to be among wicked children, and were of use to me.

My Parents haveing a large family of children, used frequently on first-days after meeting, to put us to read in the Holy Scriptures, or some religious books, one after another, the rest sitting by without much conversation, which I have since often thought was a good practice. From what I had read, I believed there had been in past ages, people who Walked in Uprightness before God in a degree exceeding any that I knew, or heard of, now living: & the Apprehension of their being less Steadiness and firmness amongst people in this age than in past ages, often Troubled me while I was still young.

I had a Dream about the ninth year of my age as follows: I saw the Moon rise near the West, & run a regular course Eastward, so swift that in about a quarter of an hour, she reached our Meridian, when there descended from her a small Cloud on the Direct line to the Earth, which lighted on a pleasant Green about twenty yards from the Door of my Father's House (in which I thought I stood) and was immediately turned into a Beautiful green Tree. The Moon appeared to run on with Equal swiftness, and soon set in the East, at which time the Sun arose at the place where it commonly doth in the Sumer, and Shineing with full Radiance in a Serene air, it appeared as plesant a morning as ever I saw.

All this time I stood still in the door, in an Awfull frame of mind, and I observed that as heat increased by the Riseing Sun, it wrought so powerfully on the little green Tree, that the leaves gradually withered, and before Noon it appear'd dry & dead. There then appeared a Being, Small of Size, moving Swift from the North Southward, called a "*Sun Worm.*"

Tho' I was A Child, this dream was instructive to me.

Another thing remarkable in my childhood was, that once as I went to a neighbour's house, I saw, on the way, a Robbin sitting on her nest, and as I came near she went off, but having young ones, flew about, and with many cries expressed her Concern for them. I stood and threw stones at her, till one striking her, she fell down dead. At first I was pleas'd with the Exploit, but after a few minutes was seized with Horror, as haveing in a sportive way kild an Innocent Creature while she was carefull for her young. I beheld her lying dead, & thought those young ones for which she was so carefull must now perish for want of their dam to nourish them; and after some painfull considerations on the subject, I climbed up the Tree, took all the young birds, and killed them supposing that better than to leave them to pine away and die miserably; and believ'd in this case, that scripture proverb was fulfilled, "The tender mercies of the wicked are Cruel." I then went on my errand, but, for some hours, could think of little else but the Cruelties I had committed, and was much troubled.

Thus He whose tender Mercies are over all his works, hath placed that in the Human mind which incites to exercise goodness towards every liveing creature and This being singly attended to, people become tender-hearted and sympathizing; but being frequently & totally rejected, the mind shuts itself up in a Contrary disposition.

About the twelfth year of my age, my Father being abroad, my Mother reproved me for some misconduct, to which I made an Undutifull reply & the next first-day, as I was with my Father returning from Meeting, He told me he understood I had behaved amis to my Mother, and Advised me to be more carefull in future. I knew myself blameable, and in shame and confusion remained silent. Being thus awakened to a sense of my Wickedness, I felt remorse in my mind, and geting home, I retired and prayed to the Lord to forgive me; and I do not remember that I ever after that, spoke unhandsomely to either of my Parents, however foolish in some other things.

Having attained the age of Sixteen, I began to love wanton company: and though I was preserved from profane language or Scandalous conduct, Still I perceived a plant in me which produced much wild grapes. Yet my Merciful Father forsook me not utterly, but at

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9 large family. John Woolman was the fourth child and eldest son in a family of six girls and seven boys • 21 a Dream. The symbolism of Woolman's dream is obscure, but presumably has something to do with his knowledge of good and evil • 59 scripture proverb, Proverbs 10:12

times through his grace I was brought seriously to consider my ways, and the sight of my backsliding affected me with sorrow: but for want of rightly attending to the reproofs of Instruction, Vanity was added to Vanity, and Repentance. Upon the whole my mind was more and more Alienated from the Truth, and I hastened towards Destruction. While I meditate on the Gulf towards which I traveled, and reflect on my youthful Disobedience, my heart is affected with Sorrow.

Advancing in age, the number of my Acquaintance increased, and thereby my way grew more difficult. Though I had heretofore found comfort in reading the Holy Scriptures, and thinking on heavenly things, I was now Estranged therefrom. I knew I was going from the flock of Christ, and had no resolution to return, hence serious reflections were uneasie to me, and Youthfull Vanities and Diversions my greatest pleasure. Runing in this Road I found many like myself, and we associated in that which is reverse to true Friendship: but in this swift race it pleased God to visit me with Sickness, so that I doubted of recovering: and then did Darkness, Horror and Amazement, with full force seize me, even when my pain and distress of body was verry great: I thought it would have been better for me never to have had a being, than to see the day which I now saw. I was filled with Confusion, & in great affliction both of mind & body, I lay and bewailed myself. I had not confidence to lift up my cries to God, whom I had thus offended; but in a deep sense of my great folly I was humbled before Him, & at length that Word which is as a Fire and a Hamer, broke and dissolved my rebellious heart, and then my Cries were put up in contrition, and in the multitude of His mercies I found inward relief, and felt a close Engagement, that if he was pleased to Restore my health, I might walk Humbly before Him.

After my Recovery, this Exercise remained with me a considerable time, but, by degrees, giving way to youthfull vanities, they gained strength, and geting with wanton young people I lost ground. The Lord had been verry Gracious, and Spoke peace to me in the time of my distress, and I now most ungratefully turned again to folly, on which account, at times, I felt sharp reproof, but did not get low enough to Cry for help. I was not so hardy as to commit things scandalous, but to Exceed in Vanity, and promote myrth, was my chief study. Still I retained a love and esteem for pious people, and their company brought an Awe upon me. My Dear Parents several times Admonished me in the fear of the Lord, and their admonition entered into my heart, & had a good effect for a season, but not geting deep enough to pray rightly, the tempter when he came found entrance. I remember once having spent a part of a day in wantonness, as I went to bed at night, there lay in a window near my bed a Bible, which I opened, and first cast my eye on the Text, "we lie down in our shame, and our confusion covers us." This I knew to be my case, and meeting with so unexpected a reproof, I was somewhat Affected with it, and went to bed under remorse of conscience, which I soon cast off again.

Thus time passed on, my heart was replenished with myrth and wantonness, while pleasing scenes of Vanity were presented to my Imagination, till I attain'd the age of Eighteen years, near which time I felt the Judgments of God in my soul like a consuming fire, and looking over my past life, the prospect was moveing. I was often sad, and longed to be deliver'd from those vanities; then again my heart was Strongly Inclined to them, and there was in me a sore conflict. At times I turned to folly, and then again sorrow and confusion took hold of me. In a while I resolved totally to leave off some of my vanities, but there was a secret reserve in my heart, of the more refined part of them, and I was not low enough to find true peace. Thus for some months, I had great troubles and disquiet, there remaining in me an unsubjected will, which rendered my labours fruitless, till at length, through the Mercifull continuance of Heavenly Visitations, I was made to bow down in Spirit before the Most High. I remember one evening I had spent some time in reading a pious author, and walking out a lone, I humbly prayed to the Lord for his help, that I might be delivered from those vanities which so ensnared me. Thus being brought low he helped me, and as I learned to bear the Cross, I felt refreshment to come from his Presence: but not keeping in that Strength which gave victory I lost ground again, The sense of which greatly afflicted me and I sought Desarts and lonely places, and there with tears did confess my Sins to God, and humbly craved help of HIM, and I may

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56 the Text, Jeremiah 3:25

say with Reverence he was near to me in my troubles, and in those times of Humiliation opened my ear to Discipline.

I was now led to look seriously at the means by which I was drawn from the pure Truth, and I learned this. That if I would live in the life which the Faithful servants of God lived in, I must not go into company as heretofore in my own will, but all the cravings of Sense must be governed by a Divine principle. In times of sorrow and abasement these Instructions were sealed upon me, and I felt the power of Christ prevail over all selfish desires, so that I was preserved in a good degree of steadiness, and being young and believing at that time that a single life was best for me, I was strengthened to keep from such company as had often been a snare to me.

I kept steady to meetings, spent first-days in the afternoon chiefly in reading the scriptures and other good Books, and was early convinced in my mind that true Religion consisted in an inward life, wherein the Heart doth Love and Reverence God the Creator, and learn to Exercise true Justice and Goodness, not only toward all men, but allso toward the Brute Creatures. That as the mind was moved by an inward Principle to Love God as an invisible, Incomprehensible Being, by the same principle it was moved to love him in all his manifestations in the Visible world. That as by his breath the flame of life was kindled in all Animal and Sensible creatures, to say we Love God as unseen, and at the same time Exercise cruelty toward the least creature moving by his life, or by life derived from Him, was a Contradiction in itself.

I found no narrowness respecting Sects and Opinions, but believe that sincere upright-hearted people, in Every society who truly love God were accepted of HIM.

As I lived under the Cross, and simply followed the openings of Truth, my mind from day to day was more Enlightened, my former acquaintance were left to judge of me as they would, for I found it safest for me to live in private and keep these things sealed up in my own breast. While I silently ponder on that change which was wrought in me, I find no language equal to it, nor any means to convey a clear idea of it. I looked upon the works of God in this Visible Creation, and an awfullness covered me: my heart was tender and often contrite, and a universal Love to my fellow Creatures increased in me. This will be understood by such who have troden in the same path.

Some glances of Real beauty is percieveble in their faces, who dwell in true meekness. Some tincture of true Harmony in the sound of that voice to which Divine Love gives utterance, & Some appearance of right order in their temper and Conduct, whose passions are fully regulated, yet all these do not fully show forth that inward life to such who have not felt it; but this white stone and new name is known rightly to such only who have it.

Now tho' I had been thus Strengthened to bear the Cross, I still found myself in great danger, having many weaknesses Attending me, and strong Temptations to wrestle with, in the feeling whereof I frequently withdrew into private places, and often with tears besought the Lord to help me, whose gracious ear was open to my cry.

All this time I lived with my Parents, and wrought on the plantation, and having had schooling pretty well for a planter, I used to improve winter evenings, and other leisure times, and being now in the Twenty first year of my age, a man in much business at Shopkeeping and Baking, asked me if I would hire with him to tend Shop and keep books. I acquainted my Father with the proposal, and, after some deliberation it was agreed for me to go. I had for a considerable time found my mind less given to Husbandry than heretofore, having often in view some other way of living.

At home I had lived retired, and now having a prospect of being much in the way of company, I felt frequent and fervent Cries in my heart to God the Father of Mercies, that he would preserve me from all Taint & Corruption. That in this more public Employ, I might serve Him my Gracious Redeemer, in that Humility and self Denial with which I had been in a small degree exercised in a verry private life.

The man who employed me furnished a Shop in Mountholly, about five miles from my Father's house & Six from his own and there I lived alone, & tended his Shop. Shortly after my settlement here, I was visited by several young people, my former acquaintances, who knew not but vanities would be as agreeable to me now as ever, and at these times I cryed unto the Lord in Secret for wisdom and Strength, for I felt myself Encompassed with difficulties, and had fresh Ocasion to bewail the follies of time past, in contracting a familiar-

ity with a Libertine people. And as I had now left my Fathers house outwardly, I found my Heavenly Father to be mercifull to me beyond what I can express.

By day I was much among people, and had many tryals to go through, but in evenings I was mostly alone, and may with thankfulness acknowledge, that in those times the Spirit of Supplication was often poured upon me, under which I was frequently exercised, and felt my Strength renewed.

In a few months after I came here, my Master bought several Scotch men-servants, from on board a Vessel, and brought them to Mountholly to sell & having sold several the rest were left with me, one of which was taken sick, & died. The latter part of his sickness, he, being delirious, used to curse and Swear most sorrowfully, and after he was buried, I was left to sleep alone the next night in the same chamber where he died. I perceived in me a Timorousness: I knew however I had not injured the man, but had assisted in taking care of him according to my capacity, and I was not free to ask any one, on that occasion, to sleep with me: nature was feble, but every tryal was a fresh incitement to give myself up wholly to the service of God, for I found no helper like Him in times of Trouble.

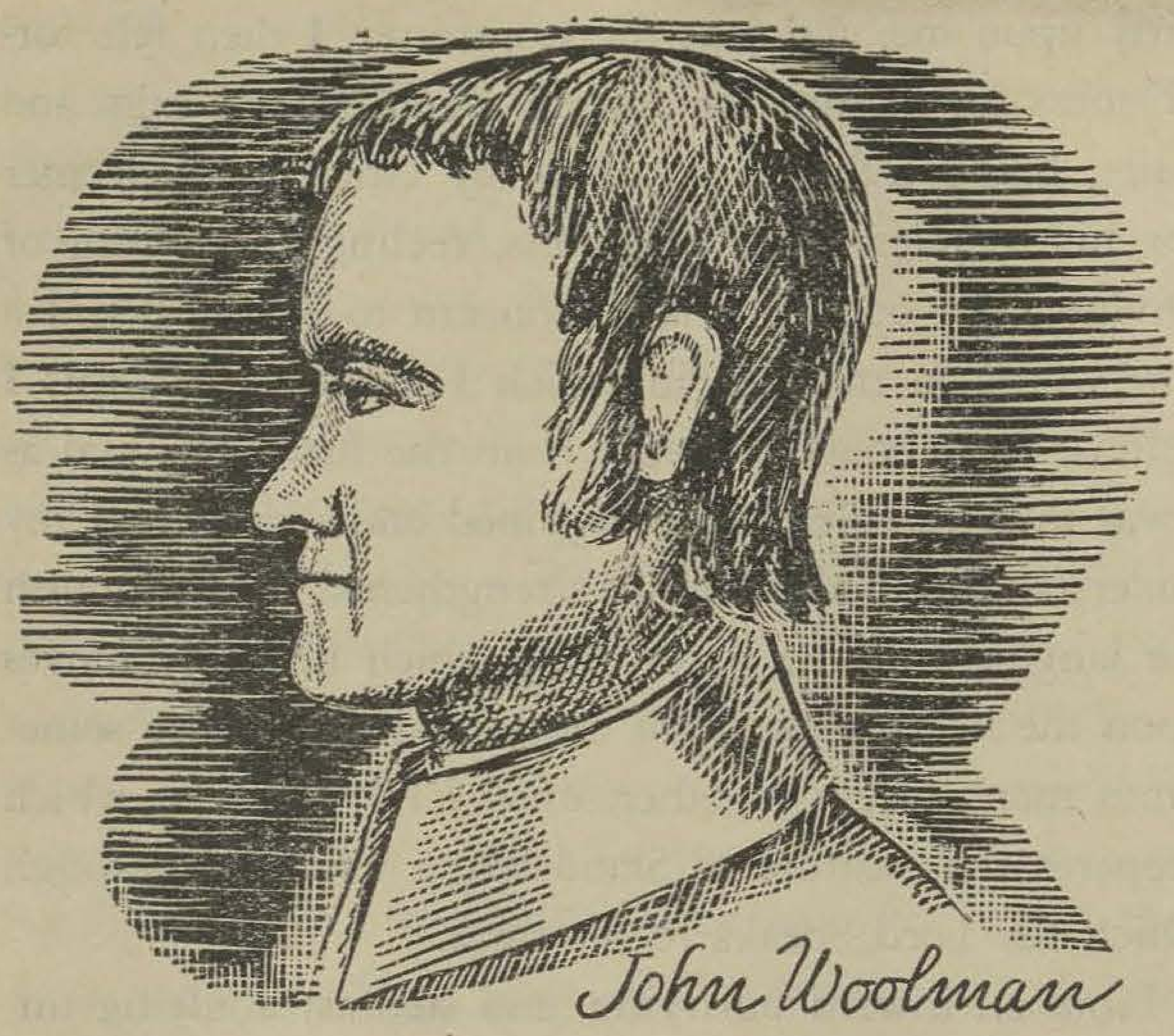
After a while my former Acquaintance gave over Expecting me as one of their company, and I began to be known to some whose conversation was helpful to me. And now, as I had Experienced the Love of God, through Jesus Christ, to Redeem me from many polutions, and to be a constant succour to me through a Sea of conflicts, with which no person was fully acquainted, and as my heart was often enlarged in this Heavenly Principle, so I felt a tender compassion for the youth who remain'd entangled in the same snares which had entangled me. From one month to another, this Love & tenderness increased, and my mind was more strongly engaged for the good of my fellow-creatures. I went to meetings in an awfull frame of mind, and endeavoured to be inwardly acquainted with the language of the True Shephered, and one day being under a Strong Exercise of Spirit, I stood up, and said some words in a meeting, but not keeping close to the Divine opening, I said more than was required of me & being soon sencible of my error, I was afflicted in mind some weeks, without any light or comfort, even to that degree that I could take satisfaction in nothing. I remembered God, and was troubled and in the depth of my distress he had pitty upon me, and sent the Comforter. I then felt forgiveness for my offence, and my mind became calm and quiet, being truly thankfull to my Gracious Redeemer for his mercies. And after this, feeling the spring of Divine Love opened, and a Concern to Speak, I said a few words in meeting in which I found peace; this I believe was about six weeks from the first time, and as I was thus humbled and disciplined under the Cross, my understanding became more strengthened to distinguish the language of the pure Spirit which inwardly moves upon the heart, and taught me to wait in Silence sometimes many weeks together, until I felt that rise which prepares the creature to Stand like a Trumpet, through which the Lord Speaks to his flock.

From an inward purifying, and stedfast abideing under it, springs a lively operative desire for the good of others. All faithful people are not called to the publick ministry but whoever are called to it, are called to minister of that which they have taisted and handled spiritually. The outward modes of worship are various, but wheresoever [men] are true Ministers of Jesus Christ, it is from the operation of his Spirit upon their hearts, first purifying them, and thus giving them a [feeling] sense of the conditions of others. This truth was early fixed in my mind, and I was taught to watch the pure opening, and to take heed least while I was standing to speak, my own will should get upermost, and cause me to utter words from worldly wisdom, and depart from the Chanel of the true Gospel Ministry.

In the management of my outward affairs I may say with thankfulness I found Truth to be my Support, and I was respected in my Masters Family who came to live in Mountholly within two years after my going there [1742.]

About the twenty third year of my age I had many fresh and heavenly openings, in respect to the care and providence of the Almighty over his creatures in general, and over man as the most noble amongst those which are visible, and Being clearly convinced in my Judgmt that to place my whole trust in God was best for me, I felt renewed engagements that in all things I might act on an inward principle of Virtue, and pursue worldly business no further than as Truth open'd my way therein.

About the time called Christmas I observed many people from the Country, and dwellers in Town, who resorting to publick houses, spent their time in drink-



ing and vain sports, tending to corrupt one another, on which account I was much troubled. At one house in particular there was much disorder, and I believed it was a duty laid on me to go and speak to the master of that house. I considered I was young, and that several Elderly friends in Town had opportunity to See these things, and though I would gladly have been excused, yet I could not feel my mind clear. The Exercise was heavy, and as I was Reading what the Almighty Said to Ezekiel, respecting his duty as a watchman, the matter was set home more clearly, and then with prayer and tears, I besought the Lord for his Assistance, who in loving kindness gave me a Resigned heart. Then at a sutable Opportunity, I went to the publick house, and Seeing the man amongst a company, I went to him and told him I wanted to speak with him, so we went aside, and there in the Fear and dread of the Almighty I Exprest to him what rested on my mind, which he took kindly, and afterward showed more regard to me than before. In a few years after he died, midle-aged, and I often thought that had I neglected my duty in that case, it would have given me great trouble and I was humbly thankfull to my Gracious Father, who had supported me therein.

My Employer having a Negro woman sold her, and directed me to write a bill of Sale, The man being waiting who had bought her. The thing was Sudden, and though the thoughts of writing an Instrument of Slavery for one of my fellow creatures felt uneasie, yet I remembered I was hired by the year; that it was my master who directed me to do it, and that it was an Elderly man, a member of our society who bought her, so through weakness I gave way, and wrote it, but at the Executing it I was so Afflicted in my mind, that I said before my Master and the friend, that I believed Slavekeeping to be a practice inconsistent with the Christian Religion: this in some degree abated my uneasiness, yet as often as I reflected seriously upon it I thought I should have been clearer, if I had desired to be Excused from it, as a thing against my conscience, for such it was. [And] some time after this a young man of our Society, spake to me to write [an instrument of Slavery], he having taken a Negro into his house. I told him I was not easie to write it, for though many [people] kept slaves in our society as in others, I still believed the practice was not right, and desired to be excused from doing the writing. I spoke to him in good will, and he told me, that keeping slaves was not altogether agreable to his mind, but that the slave being a gift made to his wife, he had accepted of her.

CHAPTER III

. . . Until the year 1756, I continued to retail goods, besides following my trade as a Taylor; about which time I grew uneasy on account of my business growing too cumbersome. I began with selling timings for garments, and from thence proceeded to Sell cloaths and linens, and at length having got a considerable shop of goods, my trade increased every year, and the road to large business appeared open: but I felt a Stop in my mind.

Through the Mercies of the Almighty I had in a good degree learned to be content with a plain way of living. I had but a small family my outward Affairs had been prosperous and, on serious reflection I believed Truth did not require me to engage in much cumbering affairs. It had generally been my practice to buy and sell things realy usefull. Things that served chiefly to please the vain mind in people, I was not easie to trade in; seldom did it, and whenever I did, I found it weaken me as a Christian.

The increase of business became my burthen, for though my natural inclination was towards merchandize, yet I believed Truth required me to live more free from outward cumbers. There was now a strife in my mind betwixt the two, and in this exercise my prayers were

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9 Ezekiel. See Ezekiel 3:17-19

put up to the Lord, who Graciously heard me, and gave me a heart resigned to his Holy will; I then lessened my outward business; and as I had opportunity told my customers of my intention that they might consider what shop to turn to: and so in a while, wholly laid down merchandize, following my trade as a Taylor, myself only, having no prentice. I also had a nursery of Apple trees, in which I spent a good deal of time, howing, grafting, trim̃ing & Inoculating.

In merchandize it is the custom, where I lived, to sell chiefly on credit; and poor people often get in debt, & when payment is expected haveing not wherewith to pay, & so their creditors often sue for it at Law: having often observed occurrences of this kind, I found it good for me to advise poor people to take such as were most useful & not costly.

In the time of trading I had an op̃ortunity of seeing that a too liberal use of Spirituous liquors, and the Custom of wearing too costly apparrel, led some people into great inconveniences: and these two things appear to be often connected one with the other; for by not attending to that use of things which is consistent with Universal Righteousness, there is a [necessary] increase of Labour which extends beyond what our Heavenly Father intends for us: and by great labour, and often by much sweting in the heat there is, even among such who are not drunkards, a craving of some liquor to revive the spirits: That partly by the wanton, Luxurious drinking of some, and partly by the drinking of others, led to it through immoderate labour, verry great quantities of Rum are annually expended in our Colonies, of which we should have no need, did we steadily Attend to pure Wisdom.

Where men take pleasure in feeling their minds elevated with strong drink, and so indulge this appetite as to disorder their understanding, neglect their duty as members in a family or civil society, and cast off all pretence to Religion, their case is much to be pittied; And where such whose lives are for the most part regular, and whose Examples have a strong influence on the minds of others, Adhere to some customs which powerfully draw toward the use of More strong liquor than pure wisdom [directeth the Use of,] this allso, as it hinders the spreading of the Spirit of meekness, and Strengthens the hands of the more Excessive drinkers, is a case to be lamented.

As [the least] degree of luxury hath some connection with evil, for those who profess to be disciples of Christ, and are looked upon as leaders of the people, to have that mind in them which was also in Him, & so stand separate from every wrong way, is a means of help to the weaker. As I have sometimes been much spent in the heat, and taken spirits to revive me. I have found by Experience that the mind is not so calm in such circumstances, nor so fitly disposed for Divine meditation, as when all such extreams are avoided; and I have felt an increasing Care to attend to that Holy Spirit which sets right bounds to our desires, and leads those who faithfully follow it to apply all the gifts of Divine Providence to the purposes for which they were intended. Did such who have the care of great Estates, attend with singleness of heart to this Heavenly Instructor, which so opens and enlarges the mind that Men love their neighbours as themselves, They would have wisdom given them to manage, without ever finding occasion to employ some people in the Luxuries of life, or to make it necessary for others to labour too hard: But for want of regarding steadily this Principle of Divine love, a selfish Spirit takes place in the minds of people, which is attended with darkness & manifold confusions in the world.

In the Course of my Tradeing, being somewhat affected at the Various Law Suits about collecting Money which I saw going forward; On aplying to a Constable, he gave me a List of his proceedings for one year as follows; to wit.

Served 267 Warrants, 103 Summonses, and 17 Executions! As to Writs Served by the Sheriff, I got no account of them.

I once had a Warrant for an Idle Man, who I believed was about to run away, which was the only time I applied to the Law to recover Money.

Through trading in things Usefull is an honest employ, yet through the great number of Superfluities which are commonly bought and sold, and through the corruptions of the times, they who apply to merchandize for a living, have great need to be well experienced in that precept which the prophet Jeremiah laid down for Baruc, his scribe: "Seekest thou great things for thyself? seek them not." . . .

1772?-1774

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88 precept. See Jeremiah 45:5

From

A Plea for the Poor

A Word of Remembrance and Caution to the Rich (Dublin, 1793) first appeared under Woolman's simpler title in 1837. It was probably written during the winter of 1763-1764. None of Woolman's essays has attracted more attention recently; none shows more clearly the amazing breadth of his humanitarianism. Abridged and published as Fabian Tract No. 79 (January 1898), it eventually had wide circulation in England, the editor remarking that it contains "the most connected account" of Woolman's views on social questions. The same editor described Woolman as "the voice in the wilderness, the John the Baptist of the Gospel of Socialism." In its entirety, the essay consists of sixteen chapters. The first two, reprinted here, give Woolman's general position; in the others he discusses the responsibilities of the wealthy, the dangers of overwork and avarice, the economic origin of war, the injustice of primogeniture, the proper education of children, and the duties of masters to their servants and slaves.

CHAPTER I

Wealth desired for its own sake Obstructs the increase of Virtue, and large possessions in the hands of selfish men have a bad tendency, for by their means too small a number of people are employed in things usefull, and therefore some of them are necessitated to labour too hard, while others would want business to earn their Bread, were not employments invented, which having no real use, serve only to please the vain mind.

Rents set on lands are often so high, that persons who have but small substance are straitened in hiring a plantation and while Tenants are healthy, and prosperous in business, they often find Occasion to labour harder than was intended by our Gracious Creator.

Oxen & Horses are often seen at work, when through Heat & too much labour, their eyes, and the emotion of their Bodies manifest that they are oppressed. Their loads in Wagons are frequently so heavy, that when weary with halling it far, their drivers find occasion in going up Hills, or through mire, to raise their spirits by whiping to get forward. Many poor people are so thronged in their business, that it is difficult for them to provide Shelter sutable for their animals, in great storms. These things are common when in health; but through Sickness and inability to labour through loss of Creatures, and miscarriage in business, many are straitened; & much of their increase goes to pay rent or Interest, that they have not wherewith to hire so much as their case requires. Hence one poor woman in attending on her Children, providing for her family, & helping the sick, does as much business as would for the time be Sutable Employment for two or three, and honest persons are often straitened to give their children sutable learning.

The mony which the wealthy receive from the poor, who do more than a proper share of business in raising it, is frequently paid to other poor people for doing business which is foreign to the true use of things.

Men who have large possessions, & live in the spirit of Charity, who carefully inspect the circumstance of those who occupy their Estates, and, regardless of the Customs of the times, regulate their demands agreeably to Universal Love: these by being Righteous on a principle, do good to the poor without placing it as an act of bounty. Their Example in avoiding superfluities tends to incite others to moderation; their goodness, in not exacting what the Laws or Customs would support them in, tends to open the Channel to moderate Labour in useful Affairs, and to discourage those branches of business which have not their foundation in true wisdom.

To be busied in that which is but vanity, & serves only to please the unstable mind, tends to an alliance with those who promote that vanity, and is a snare in which many poor tradesmen are entangled.

To be employed in things connected with Virtue, is most agreeable with the Character and Inclination of an honest man.

Text: Mrs. Gummere's edition • 7 having . . . use. The objection to luxury, frequent in Woolman's writings, and a characteristic eighteenth-century notion, should be compared with that by Timothy Dwight, p. 452

While industrious frugal people are borne down with poverty, and op̃ressed with too much labour in useful things, the way to apply mony, without promoting pride and Vanity, remains open to such who truly Sympathize with them in their various Difficulties.

CHAPTER II

The Creator of the earth is the owner of it. He gave us being thereon, and our nature requires nourishment, which is the produce of it. As he is kind and merciful we, as his creatures, while we live answerable to the design of our creation, are so far Entitled to a convenient Subsistence, that no man may justly deprive us of it.

By the agreements and Contracts of Our Fathers and predecessors, and by doings and proceedings of our own, some claim a much greater share of this world than others: and while those possessions are Faithfully Improved to the good of the whole, it consists with Equity. But he who with a view to self-exaltation, causeth some with their domestick Animals to labour immoderately, and, with the monys arising to him therefrom, employs others in the Luxuries of Life, Acts, contrary to the Gracious designs of Him who is the true owner of the Earth, nor can any possessions, either acquired or derived from Ancestors, justify such conduct.

Goodness Remains to be goodness, and the direction of pure wisdom is obligatory on all Reasonable Creatures: that Laws and Customs are no further a Standard for our proceedings than as their Foundation is on Universal Righteousness.

Though the poor Occupy our Estates by a bargain, to which they in their poor Circumstances agreed, and we ask even less than a punctual fulfilling of their agreement; yet if our views are to lay up riches, or to live in conformity to customs which have not their Foundation in the Truth, and our demands are such as requires greater Toyl, or application to business in them, than is Consistent with pure Love, we invade their rights as Inhabitants of that World, of which a good and gracious God is proprietor, under whom we are Tennants.

Were all superfluities, and the desire of outward greatness laid aside, and the right use of things universally attended to, Such a number of people might be employed in things usefull, as that moderate labour, with the Blessing of Heaven, would answer all good purposes relating to people and their Animals, and a Sufficient number have time to attend to proper Affairs of Civil Society.

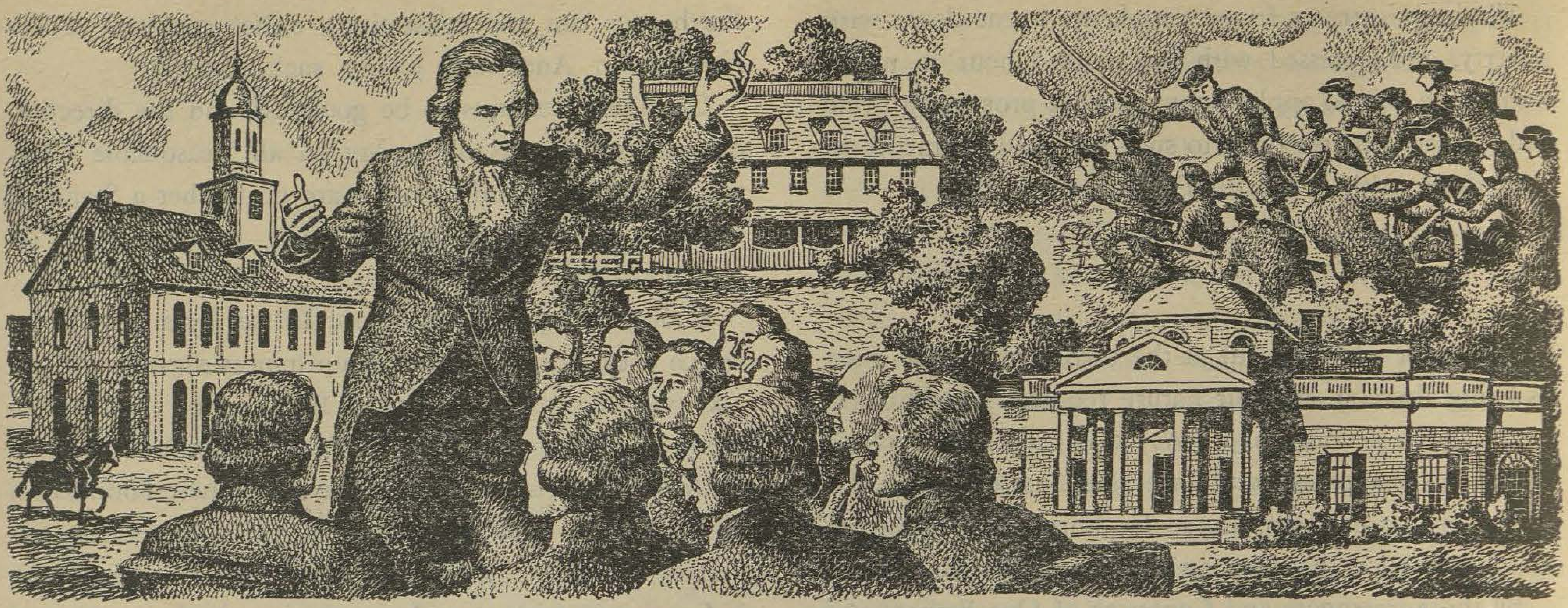
1763-1764?·1793

THE REVOLUTION: Adams, Boucher, Singers of the Revolution, Paine, Jefferson

John Adams

1735 · 1826

No man, not even Washington, served the cause of American independence and political stability longer or more faithfully than John Adams. Because he was tactless and sometimes ungracious, especially when he was out of reach of his wife, the sprightly Abigail, he was not a very good political strategist or diplomat and never rivaled Washington or Jefferson in the hearts of his countrymen. Even his enemies, however, respected his honest devotion to what he conceived to be the best interests of the nation. His reward he probably thought unequal to his merit, for his invaluable labors as a public servant culminated in a single stormy term as second President of the United States, to which post he was elected by the slender margin of three electoral votes.



Adams was born in 1735, at Braintree, Massachusetts, to an old New England farming family. He went to Harvard with one eye on the ministry, and after his graduation actually read theology while teaching a school, as was the custom of studious products of that institution. He soon turned, however, to the law, and at thirty was an assured success, a popular leader in the agitation for the repeal of the Stamp Act. At forty, as a member of the Continental Congress, he was instrumental in the appointment of Washington as commander in chief of the army. With Jefferson and Franklin, he was on the committee to draft the Declaration of Independence. At home and in France he worked tirelessly to supply the American troops with the matériel of war, although his distrust of the military, and especially of the officer caste, was so great that it is said to have been a contributing cause of Benedict Arnold's treason. He sat at the peace table in Paris and stayed abroad for a time thereafter as minister to England. His two terms as vice-president under Washington and the years of his own presidency were followed by a full quarter century in retirement. During this time he read, wrote, and observed none too happily the continuing struggle between the forces of aristocracy and of democracy for control of the government which he had played a large part in creating. He died on the same day as Thomas Jefferson, the Fourth of July, 1826.

As a writer, Adams is remembered for his letters, those to his wife forming a particularly readable series; for his diary, an important source document for the social historians; for an autobiography; and for a series of works on government, most of them in the form of essays. His *Dissertation on the Canon and Feudal Law* (1765) and *Novanglus: or, a History of the Dispute with America* (1775), which appeared periodically in the *Boston Gazette,* display the fear of "ecclesiastical and civil tyranny" that characterized most of the Whig literature during the years before the Declaration of Independence. *A Defence of the Constitutions of Government of the United States of America* (1787-1788) and *Discourses on Davila* (1790) expound the unpopular conviction of the Federalists that a stable government requires such restraint on the hasty execution of the will of majorities as is provided by an aristocratic senate, elected either for life or for long terms.

"Honest John Adams," as one biographer has called him, remains an object lesson for any student of politics. Sure of his own opinions and of the integrity of his own motives, he had little talent for compromise and flattery and the undercover manipulation of forces, activities which are likely to absorb the attention of the "practical" politician. As the party system took shape in the early days of the republic, the unbending Adams failed to work amicably with Alexander Hamilton, a political realist who was Washington's chief confidant and the actual head of the Federalists. Honesty and adminis-

Panel (l. to r.): Faneuil Hall • ". . . liberty, or . . . death!" • John Adams' home • American advance, the Battle of Lexington • Monticello

trative ability Adams had, but they were not enough to bring him genuine leadership. Partly because of disappointment and partly because of his temperament and conviction, Adams grew more conservative as he grew older—a not uncommon pattern of development among revolutionaries who succeed. His growing fear of the masses estranged him temporarily from his friend Jefferson, who shared his love for the classics and for philosophy. In their retirement the two men were reconciled and exchanged lengthy letters on their common interests, but fundamentally they were far apart. Jefferson never lost his faith in the common man; John Adams came more and more to place his hope in carefully planned institutions.

The Works of John Adams, ed. C. F. Adams, 10 vols., Boston, 1850-1856 • **Familiar Letters of John Adams and His Wife, Abigail Adams, During the Revolution**, ed. C. F. Adams, New York, 1876 • J. Q. and C. F. Adams, **The Life of John Adams**, Revised Edition, 2 vols., Philadelphia, 1871 • Gilbert Chinard, **Honest John Adams**, Boston, 1933

From

Novanglus

Between December 1774 and April 1775 seventeen papers over the signature of "Massachusettensis" ("A Massachusetts Man") appeared in the **Massachusetts Gazette and Post Boy**. They are regarded as the best exposition of the Tory arguments. As Adams says in his autobiography, they were "well written, abounded in wit, discovered good information, and were conducted with a subtlety of art and address wonderfully calculated to keep up the spirits of their party, to depress ours, to spread intimidation, and to make proselytes among those whose principles and judgments give way to their fears; and these compose at least one third of mankind." He tells us in the same paragraph that as week after week went by without an answer to them he "began at length to think seriously of the consequences"; elsewhere he remarks that he "instantly resolved to enter the lists." The result, in any case, was the series signed "Novanglus" ("A New Englander") in the **Boston Gazette**. At this period in his life, Adams was a skillful debater rather than a polished political essayist, and he combined legalistic argument with the usual appeals to the anti-Catholic and antimonarchical prejudices of his New England audience. In the revelation of these antipathies and in the citation of historical precedents and analogies, Adams' papers are typical of the great mass of Whig writing. "Coarse and rough as they are, like everything else that has ever been published by me, who never had time to polish, correct, or transcribe any thing," they were reprinted almost at once in Boston, New York, and London. Unquestionably they contributed mightily to the determination of the patriots to resist the encroachment on their liberties.

ADDRESSED TO THE INHABITANTS OF THE COLONY OF MASSACHUSETTS BAY, JANUARY 23, 1775

My Friends,

A writer, under the signature of Massachusettensis, has addressed you, in a series of papers, on the great national subject of the present quarrel between the British administration and the Colonies. As I have not in my possession more than one of his Essays, and that is in the Gazette of December 26, I will take the liberty, in the spirit of candor and decency, to bespeak your attention upon the same subject.

There may be occasion to say very severe things, before I shall have finished what I propose, in opposition to this writer, but there ought to be no reviling. *Rem ipsam dic, mitte male loqui,* which may be justly

Text: the edition of Novanglus and Massachusettensis, published at Boston in 1819, but the punctuation has been simplified and a few typographical errors corrected by reference to the text printed in Vol. IV of the Works • 2 Massachusettensis, Daniel Leonard (1740-1829), a prominent lawyer of Boston, who left with the British army in 1776. Until 1821, Adams believed that his opponent was Jonathan Sewall, a close friend

translated, speak out the whole truth boldly, but use no bad language.

It is not very material to enquire, as others have done, who is the author of the speculations in question. If he is a disinterested writer, and has nothing to gain or to lose, to hope or to fear, for himself more than other individuals of your community; but engages in this controversy from the purest principles, the noblest motives of benevolence to men, and of love to his country, he ought to have no influence with you, further than truth and justice will support his argument. On the other hand, if he hopes to acquire or preserve a lucrative employment, to screen himself from the just detestation of his countrymen, or whatever other sinister inducement he may have, as far as the truth of facts and the weight of argument are in his favor, he ought to be duly regarded.

He tells you "that the temporal salvation of this province depends upon an entire and speedy change of measures, which must depend upon a change of sentiments respecting our own conduct and the justice of the British nation."

The task, of effecting these great changes, this courageous writer has undertaken in a course of publications in a newspaper. *Nil desperandum* is a good motto, and *Nil admirari,* is another. He is welcome to the first, and I hope will be willing that I should assume the last. The public, if they are not mistaken in their conjecture, have been so long acquainted with this gentleman, and have seen him so often disappointed, that if they were not habituated to strange things, they would wonder at his hopes, at this time to accomplish the most unpromising project of his whole life. In the character of Philanthrop, he attempted to reconcile you to Mr. Bernard. But the only fruit of his labor was, to expose his client to more general examination, and consequently to more general resentment and aversion. In the character of Philalethes, he essayed to prove Mr. Hutchinson a patriot and his letters not only innocent, but meritorious. But the more you read and considered, the more you were convinced of the ambition and avarice, the simulation and dissimulation, the hypocricy and perfidy of that destroying angel.

This illfated and unsuccessful, though persevering writer, still hopes to change your sentiments and conduct—by which it is supposed that he means to convince you that the system of Colony administration, which has been pursued for these ten or twelve years past, is a wise, righteous and humane plan; that Sir Francis Bernard and Mr. Hutchinson, with their connections, who have been the principal instruments of it, are your best friends;—and that those gentlemen in this province, and in all the other Colonies, who have been in opposition to it, are from ignorance, error, or from worse and baser causes, your worst enemies.

This is certainly an inquiry that is worthy of you; and I promise to accompany this writer, in his ingenious labours to assist you in it. And I earnestly intreat you, as the result of all shall be, to change your sentiments or persevere in them, as the evidence shall appear to you, upon the most dispassionate and impartial consideration, without regard to his opinion or mine.

He promises to avoid personal reflections, but to penetrate the arcana, and expose the wretched policy of the whigs. The cause of the whigs is not conducted by intrigues at a distant court, but by constant appeals to a sensible and virtuous people; it depends intirely on their good will, and cannot be pursued a single step without their concurrence, to obtain which, all designs, measures and means, are constantly published to the collective body. The whigs therefore can have no arcana; but if they had, I dare say, they were never so left, as to communicate them to this writer; you will therefore be disappointed if you expect from him any thing which is true, but what has been as public as records and newspapers could make it.

I, on my part, may perhaps in a course of papers, penetrate arcana too. Shew the wicked policy of the tories—trace their plan from its first rude sketches to its present complete draught. Shew that it has been much longer in contemplation, than is generally known,—who were the first in it—their views, motives and secret springs of action—and the means they have employed. This will necessarily bring before your eyes many characters, living and dead. From such a research and detail of facts, it will clearly appear, who were the aggressors —and who have acted on the defensive from first to

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23 Nil desperandum, never despair • 24 Nil admirari, wonder at nothing • 32 Mr. Bernard. See note, p. 272 • 36 Philalethes, lover of secrecy • 36 Mr. Hutchinson, Thomas Hutchinson (1711-1780), lieutenant governor, 1758-1771, and last royal governor of Massachusetts, 1769-1773. A native Bostonian, Tory by position and conviction, he bore the brunt of popular opposition to the Stamp and Tea Acts. His "letters," written in confidence to a British administrator, and proposing strong measures to suppress colonial discontent, came into Franklin's hands and were published in 1772, intensifying Hutchinson's difficulties. Later generations have admired his carefully written history of Massachusetts

last—who are still struggling, at the expense of their ease, health, peace, wealth and preferment, against the encroachments of the tories on their country—and who are determined to continue struggling, at much greater hazards still, and, like the Prince of Orange, resolve never to see its entire subjection to arbitrary power, but rather to die fighting against it, in the last ditch.

It is true, as this writer observes, "that the bulk of the people are generally, but little versed in the affairs of State; that they left the affairs of government where accident has placed them." If this had not been true, the designs of the tories had been many years ago entirely defeated. It was clearly seen, by a few, more than ten years since, that they were planning and pursuing the very measures, we now see executing. The people were informed of it, and warned of their danger: But they had been accustomed to confide in certain persons, and could never be persuaded to believe, until prophecy became history. Now they see and feel, that the horrible calamities are come upon them, which were foretold so many years ago, and they now sufficiently execrate the men who have brought these things upon them. Now alas! when perhaps it is too late. If they had withdrawn their confidence from them in season, they would have wholly disarmed them.

The same game, with the same success, has been played in all ages and countries, as Massachusettensis observes. When a favourable conjuncture has presented, some of the most intrigueing and powerful citizens have conceived the design of enslaving their country, and building their own greatness on its ruins. Philip and Alexander, are examples of this in Greece—Cæsar in Rome—Charles the fifth in Spain—Louis the eleventh in France—and ten thousand others.

"There is a latent spark in the breasts of the people capable of being kindled into a flame, and to do this has always been the employment of the disaffected." What is this latent spark? The love of Liberty? *a Deo hominis est indita naturæ.* Human nature itself is evermore an advocate for liberty. There is also in human nature, a resentment of injury, and indignation against wrong. A love of truth and a veneration for virtue.

These amiable passions, are the "latent spark" to which those whom this writer calls the "disaffected" apply. If the people are capable of understanding, seeing and feeling the difference between true and false, right and wrong, virtue and vice, to what better principle can the friends of mankind apply, than to the sense of this difference.

Is it better to apply, as this writer and his friends do, to the basest passions in the human breast—to their fear, their vanity, their avarice, ambition, and every kind of corruption? I appeal to all experience, and to universal history, if it has ever been in the power of popular leaders, uninvested with other authority than what is conferred by the popular suffrage, to persuade a large people, for any length of time together, to think themselves wronged, injured, and oppressed, unless they really were, and saw and felt it to be so.

"They," the popular leaders, "begin by reminding the people of the elevated rank they hold in the universe as men; that all men by nature are equal; that kings are but the ministers of the people, that their authority is delegated to them by the people; for their good, and they have a right to resume it, and place it in other hands, or keep it themselves, whenever it is made use of to oppress them. Doubtless there have been instances, when these principles have been inculcated to obtain a redress of real grievances, but they have been much oftener perverted to the worst of purposes."

These are what are called revolution principles. They are the principles of Aristotle and Plato, of Livy and Cicero, and Sydney, Harrington and Locke. The principles of nature and eternal reason. The principles on which the whole government over us, now stands. It is therefore astonishing, if any thing can be so, that writers, who call themselves friends of government, should in this age and country, be so inconsistent with themselves, so indiscreet, so immodest, as to insinuate a doubt concerning them.

Yet we find that these principles stand in the way of Massachusettensis, and all the writers of his class. The veteran, in his letter to the officers of the army, allows to be

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5 the Prince of Orange, William I of Orange (1533-1584), deliverer of the Netherlands from Spanish rule. His "justification" for rebellion was issued in 1568 • **38 a Deo . . . naturæ,** [it] is instilled in the nature of man by God • **71 Aristotle . . . Locke.** Aristotle, Plato, Cicero, and John Locke hold important places in the history of political philosophy. Locke's **Treatises on Government** (1690) were the chief source of the natural-rights theory which was used to justify the Revolution. Algernon Sidney (1622-1682) and James Harrington (1611-1677) were English republicans, authors of **Discourses on Government** (1698) and **Oceana** (1656), respectively. The Roman historian Livy (59 B.C.-17 A.D.) described the downfall of the Roman republic • **81 The veteran.** Adams alludes to an anonymous pamphlet of 1774: "A Letter from a Veteran to the Officers of the Army, Encamped at Boston"

noble, and true, but says the application of them to particular cases is wild and utopian. How they can be in general true, and not applicable to particular cases, I cannot comprehend. I thought their being true in general, was because they were applicable in most particular cases.

Gravity is a principle in nature. Why? because all particular bodies are found to gravitate. How would it sound to say, that bodies in general are heavy; yet to apply this to particular bodies and say, that a guinea, or a ball is heavy, is wild, &c.—"Adopted in private life," says the honest amiable veteran, "they would introduce perpetual discord." This I deny, and I think it plain, that there never was an happy private family where they were not adopted. "In the State perpetual discord." This I deny, and affirm that order, concord and stability in this State, never was or can be preserved without them. "The least failure in the reciprocal duties of worship and obedience in the matrimonial contract would justify a divorce." This is no consequence from those principles,—a total departure from the ends and designs of the contract it is true, as elopement and adultery, would by these principles justify a divorce, but not the least failure, or many smaller failures in the reciprocal duties, &c. "In the political compact, the smallest defect in the Prince a revolution"—By no means. But a manifest design in the Prince, to annul the contract on his part, will annul it on the part of the people. A settled plan to deprive the people of all the benefits, blessings and ends of the contract, to subvert the fundamentals of the constitution, to deprive them of all share in making and executing laws, will justify a revolution.

The author of a *"Friendly Address to all reasonable Americans,"* discovers his rancour against these principles in a more explicit manner, and makes no scruples to advance the principles of Hobbs and Filmer, boldly, and to pronounce damnation, *ore rotundo,* on all who do not practice implicit passive obedience to an established government, of whatever character it may be. It is not reviling, it is not bad language, it is strictly decent to say, that this angry bigot, this ignorant dogmatist, this foul mouthed scold, deserves no other answer than silent contempt. Massachusettensis and the veteran, I admire, the first for his art, the last for his honesty.

Massachusettensis is more discreet than either of the others; sensible that these principles would be very troublesome to him, yet conscious of their truth, he has neither admitted nor denied them. But we have a right to his opinion of them, before we dispute with him. He finds fault with the application of them. They have been invariably applied in support of the revolution and the present establishment—against the Stuart's, the Charles' and the James',—in support of the reformation and the Protestant religion, against the worst tyranny that the genius of toryism has ever yet invented, I mean the Roman superstition. Does this writer rank the revolution and present establishment, the reformation and Protestant religion among his worst of purposes? What "worse purpose" is there than established tyranny? Were these principles ever inculcated in favor of such tyranny? Have they not always been used against such tyrannies, when the people have had knowledge enough to be apprized of them, and courage to assert them? Do not those who aim at depriving the people of their liberties, always inculcate opposite principles, or discredit these.

"A small mistake in point of policy," says he, "often furnishes a pretence to libel government and persuade the people that their rulers are tyrants, and the whole government, a system of oppression." This is not only untrue, but inconsistent with what he said before. The people are in their nature so gentle, that there never was a government yet, in which thousands of mistakes were not overlooked. The most sensible and jealous people are so little attentive to government, that there are no instances of resistance, until repeated, multiplied oppressions have placed it beyond a doubt, that their rulers had formed settled plans to deprive them of their liberties; not to oppress an individual or a few, but to break down the fences of a free constitution, and deprive the people at large of all share in the government and all the checks by which it is limited. Even Machiavel

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6 **Gravity . . . nature.** The context here suggests Adams' knowledge of Newtonian physics. He was not the only thinker of his time who saw an analogy between the laws of attraction and the proper balance of powers in government • 32 **"Friendly Address . . .,"** a pamphlet published in 1774, by Myles Cooper (1735-1785), Loyalist president of King's College (now Columbia University) • 35 **Hobbs and Filmer,** the chief English exponents of political absolutism. The **Leviathan** (1650) of Thomas Hobbes (1588-1679) was a powerful argument for monarchy as a political necessity; the **Patriarcha** (1680) of Sir Robert Filmer (d. 1653) advocated the divine right of kings. See the arguments of Jonathan Boucher, pp. 314-320 • 36 **ore rotundo,** with well-turned speech • 80 **Machiavel,** Niccolò Machiavelli (1469-1527), author of **Il Principe (The Prince),** a plea for a strong nation with a powerful ruler guided only by political expediency. He gave the English language the adjective **machiavellian,** meaning cunning, crafty, guileful, deceitful

himself allows, that not ingratitude to their rulers, but much love is the constant fault of the people.

This writer is equally mistaken, when he says, the people are sure to be losers in the end. They can hardly be losers, if unsuccessful; because, if they live, they can but be slaves, after an unfortunate effort, and slaves they would have been, if they had not resisted. So that nothing is lost. If they die, they cannot be said to lose, for death is better than slavery. If they succeed, their gains are immense. They preserve their liberties. The instances in antiquity, which this writer alludes to, are not mentioned, and therefore cannot be answered, but that in the country from whence we are derived, is the most unfortunate for his purpose that could have been chosen. The resistance to Charles the First and the case of Cromwell, no doubt he means. But the people of England, and the cause of liberty, truth, virtue and humanity, gained infinite advantages by that resistance. In all human probability, liberty civil and religious, not only in England but in all Europe, would have been lost. Charles would undoubtedly have established the Romish religion and a despotism as wild as any in the world. And as England had been a principal bulwark, from that period to this, of civil liberty and the Protestant religion in all Europe, if Charles' schemes had succeeded, there is great reason to apprehend that the light of science would have been extinguished, and mankind drawn back to a state of darkness and misery like that which prevailed from the fourth to the fourteenth century. It is true and to be lamented that Cromwell did not establish a government as free, as he might and ought; but his government was infinately more glorious and happy to the people than Charles'. Did not the people gain by the resistance to James the second. Did not the Romans gain by the resistance to Tarquin? Without that resistance and the liberty that was restored by it, would the great Roman orators, poets and historians, the great teachers of humanity and politeness, the pride of human nature, and the delight and glory of mankind for seventeen hundred years, ever have existed? Did not the Romans gain by resistance to the Decemvirs? Did not the English gain by resistance to John, when Magna Charta was obtained? Did not the seven united provinces gain by resistance to Philip, Alva, and Granvell? Did not the Swiss Cantons, the Genevans and Grissons, gain by resistance to Albert and Grisler?

NOVANGLUS

1775

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35 **Tarquin**, the Proud (d. 495 B.C.), deposed by the Roman people, supposedly because of his son's rape of Lucretia (see Shakespeare's "The Rape of Lucrece") • 42 **Decemvirs**, commissioners appointed (451 B.C.) to frame a code of laws for Rome. When they sought to establish an oligarchy, the people rose and restored the old form of government • 44 **Philip . . . Granvell**, Philip II (1527-1598), King of Spain; the Duke of Alva (1508-1582); and Antoine de Perrenot, Cardinal de Granvelle (1517-1586). Their combined efforts to stamp out Protestant heretics resulted in the formation of the Dutch republic • 46 **Grissons**, Grisons, inhabitants of the large eastern canton of Switzerland • 46 **Albert and Grisler**, Albert I (1248-1308), Duke of Austria, and (probably) Herman Gessler, the tyrannical Austrian governor or bailiff of Uri, who supposedly ordered William Tell to shoot the famous apple from his son's head. The history of the origins of the Swiss confederation is largely legendary

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Jonathan Boucher

1738 · 1804

In August 1775, about to leave America for England, Jonathan Boucher broke off his friendship with George Washington, whose stepson he had taught. "We have now each of us," he wrote, "taken and avowed our side, and with such ardour as becomes men who feel themselves to be in earnest with their convictions. That we

should both be in the right is impossible, but that we both think we are we must in common candour allow. . . . There cannot be anything named, of which I am more strongly convinced than I am that all those who are promoting the present apparently popular measures are the true enemies of their country." Boucher was, in other words, a Tory of strong convictions; because he was also outspoken he preached for more than six months in Maryland with two loaded pistols close at hand for protection from his Whig congregation. He remains perhaps the most colorful representative of his party.

Boucher arrived in Virginia in 1759, when he was twenty-one. He had had a rather haphazard education for schoolmastering, but served as a private tutor for a time at Port Royal on the Rappahannock, and for most of his sixteen years in America taught the sons of well-to-do gentlemen. In 1762, however, he returned briefly to England for ordination to the ministry of the established church, and thereafter held livings in Hanover and Carolina Counties in Virginia and at Annapolis and in Prince George's County in Maryland. He found Annapolis "the genteelest town in North America" and won fame there as a wit and clubman. The parish in the western part of the province was more lucrative, however, and Boucher, who had married a wealthy woman in 1772, settled on a large plantation on the Potomac in 1774, prepared to become a patriarchal vicar and slaveholder.

Almost at once he was in trouble, partly because of his aristocratic life and views, partly because of his stubborn refusal to compromise with his principles. He stood for the King, right or wrong; he declined to preach in behalf of the people of Boston, when contributions were sought for their relief; he was charged with hostility to the interests of America, and tried by a provincial committee which he regarded as illegal even though it acquitted him. Arrogant and opinionated, he was convinced that nine out of ten Americans were against separation from England and that the disturbances were the work of lawyers, Presbyterians, and blackguards.

After his return to England he was given a government pension as partial compensation for his loss of property in America. With this, and some income as curate, teacher, and miscellaneous writer, he eked out a living until he became vicar of Epsom in Surrey in 1785. He died there nineteen years later.

Reminiscences of an American Loyalist, 1738-1789: Being the Autobiography of the Revd. Jonathan Boucher, ed. Jonathan Bouchier, Boston, 1925

From

A View of the Causes and Consequences of the American Revolution

A View of the Causes and Consequences of the American Revolution: in Thirteen Discourses, Preached in North America Between the Years 1763 and 1775 (London, 1797) is probably the fullest defense of absolutism by an American Tory. It was dedicated to George Washington, and its thirteen sermons, accompanied by voluminous and digressive notes, were preceded by a ninety-page "historical" Preface in which Boucher defended slavery, deplored schism, urged an American episcopate, attacked proponents of disestablishment, and in general complained of the degeneracy of modern times. Although Boucher by the time of publication recognized the eclipse of his political convictions and was moderately willing to let bygones be bygones, he evidently hoped to demonstrate the fallacy of republican principles. His Preface recommended a federal union, based on consanguinity and mutual interest, among Great Britain, the United States, and the British settlements in India and Australia. "That towering prospect of universal Monarchy," he wrote, "for the sake of which France, for centuries past, has convulsed all Europe, and for which she too probably will continue to convulse

it for centuries to come, may thus be realized; and this not only without injury or danger to the rest of the world, but without exciting the apprehension of any. For such an universal Monarchy would be the sure harbinger of an universal Peace. It's strength would be so far beyond all possibility of competition, that it could have nothing to dread from any assailants."

Three of the sermons in the volume were preached in Virginia between 1763 and 1771; the others, in Maryland. The one from which the following selection is taken was an answer to Jacob Duché's **The Duty of Standing Fast in Our Spiritual and Temporal Liberties** (Philadelphia, 1775) and is the twelfth of the series. Boucher entitled it "On Civil Liberty; Passive Obedience, and Non-Resistance." The presentation of political philosophy from the pulpit was not extraordinary in the Revolutionary period, but few preachers printed their sermons with such lengthy notes as Boucher's. Not all of them have been included here.

[*Galatians, ch. v. ver. 1. Stand fast, therefore, in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free.*]

In the infancy of Christianity, it would seem that some rumour had been spread (probably by Judas of Galilee, who is mentioned in the Acts that the Gospel was designed to undermine kingdoms and commonwealths; as if the intention of our Saviour's first coming had been the same with that which is reserved for the second, viz. to *put down all rule, and all authority, and all power,* On this supposition the apparent solicitude of our Saviour and his Apostles, in their frequent and earnest recommendation of submission to *the higher powers,* is easily and naturally accounted for. Obedience to Government is every man's duty, because it is every man's interest: but it is particularly incumbent on Christians, because (in addition to it's moral fitness) it is enjoined by the positive commands of God: and therefore, when Christians are disobedient to human ordinances, they are also disobedient to God. If the form of government under which the good providence of God has been pleased to place us be mild and free, it is our duty to enjoy it with gratitude and with thankfulness; and, in particular, to be careful not to abuse it by licentiousness. If it be less indulgent and less liberal than in reason it ought to be, still it is our duty not to disturb and destroy the peace of the community, by becoming refractory and rebellious subjects, and *resisting the ordinances of God.* However humiliating such acquiescence may seem to men of warm and eager minds, the wisdom of God in having made it our duty is manifest. For, as it is the natural temper and bias of the human mind to be impatient under restraint, it was wise and merciful in the blessed Author of our religion not to add any new impulse to the natural force of this prevailing propensity, but, with the whole weight of his authority, altogether to discountenance every tendency to disobedience.

If it were necessary to vindicate the Scriptures for this their total unconcern about a principle which so many other writings seem to regard as the first of all human considerations, it might be observed, that, avoiding the vague and declamatory manner of such writings, and avoiding also the useless and impracticable subleties of metaphysical definitions, these Scriptures have better consulted the great general interests of mankind, by summarily recommending, and enjoining a conscientious reverence for law whether human or divine. To respect the laws, is to respect liberty in the only rational sense in which the term can be used; for liberty consists in a subserviency to law. "Where there is no law," says Mr. Locke, "there is no freedom." The mere man of nature (if such an one there ever was) has no freedom: *all his lifetime he is subject to bondage.* It is by being included within the pale of civil polity and government that he takes his rank in society as a free man.

Hence it follows, that we are free, or otherwise, as we are governed by law, or by the mere arbitrary will, or wills, of any individual, or any number of individuals. And liberty is not the setting at nought and despising established laws—much less the making of our own wills the rule of our own actions, or the actions of others—

Text: the first and only edition (London, 1797) • 1 **In the infancy.** The exegesis of the text is omitted • 3 **Acts,** "Ch. v. ver. 37."—Boucher • 47 **subserviency to law.** A footnote quoting Cicero's oration in defense of Aulus Cluentius is omitted • 48 **Mr. Locke,** in the second of his **Treatises on Government** (1690), Chap. 6. For Locke, see note, p. 311

and not bearing (whilst yet we dictate to others) the being dictated to, even by the laws of the land; but it is the being governed by laws, and by law only. The Greeks described Eleutheria, or Liberty, as the daughter of Jupiter, the supreme fountain of power and law. And the Romans, in like manner, always drew her with the Pretor's wand, (the emblem of legal power and authority,) as well as with the cap. Their idea, no doubt, was, that liberty was the fair fruit of just authority, and that it consisted in men's being subjected to law. The more carefully well-devised restraints of law are enacted, and the more rigorously they are executed in any country, the greater degree of civil liberty does that country enjoy. To pursue liberty, then, in a manner not warranted by law, whatever the pretence may be, is clearly to be hostile to liberty: and those persons who thus *promise you liberty,* are themselves *the servants of corruption. . . .*

True liberty, then, is a liberty to do every thing that is right, and the being restrained from doing any thing that is wrong. So far from our having a right to do every thing that we please, under a notion of liberty, liberty itself is limited and confined—but limited and confined only by laws which are at the same time both it's foundation and it's support. It can, however, hardly be necessary to inform you, that ideas and notions respecting liberty, very different from these, are daily suggested in the speeches and the writings of the times; and also that some opinions on the subject of government at large, which appear to me to be particularly loose and dangerous, are advanced in the sermon now under consideration; and that, therefore, you will acknowledge the propriety of my bestowing some farther notice on them both.

It is laid down in this sermon, as a settled maxim, that the end of government is "the common good of mankind." I am not sure that the position itself is indisputable but, if it were, it would by no means follow that, "this common good being matter of common feeling, government must therefore have been instituted by common consent." There is an appearance of logical accuracy and precision in this statement; but it is only an appearance. The position is vague and loose; and the assertion is made without an attempt to prove it. If by men's "common feelings" we are to understand that principle in the human mind called common sense, the assertion is either unmeaning and insignificant, or it is false. In no instance have mankind ever yet agreed as to what is, or is not, "the common good." A form or mode of government cannot be named, which these "common feelings" and "common consent," the sole arbiters, as it seems, of "common good," have not, at one time or another, set up and established, and again pulled down and reprobated. What one people in one age have concurred in establishing as the "common good," another in another age have voted to be mischievous and big with ruin. The premises, therefore, that "the common good is matter of common feeling," being false, the consequence drawn from it, viz. that government was instituted by "common consent," is of course equally false.

This popular notion, that government was originally formed by the consent or by a compact of the people, rests on, and is supported by, another similar notion, not less popular, nor better founded. This other notion is, that the whole human race is born equal; and that no man is naturally inferior, or, in any respect, subjected to another; and that he can be made subject to another only by his own consent. The position is equally ill-founded and false both in it's premises and conclusions. In hardly any sense that can be imagined is the position strictly true; but, as applied to the case under consideration, it is demonstrably not true. Man differs from man in every thing that can be supposed to lead to supremacy and subjection, *as one star differs from another star in glory.* It was the purpose of the Creator, that man should

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4 **Eleutheria.** This information may be found in the popular **Cyclopaedia of Ephraim Chambers**, first published in 1728. More recent scholars give Eleutheria as the name for Jupiter in his political aspect • 7 **Pretor's wand,** the fasces, a bundle of rods bound together with an ax, its blade protruding, symbol of authority of the praetor and other Roman magistrates. It survives in American official heraldry on the dime, for example • 17 **corruption. . . .** A paragraph on civil liberty, quoted from a sermon preached before the House of Lords, January 30, 1740, by Joseph Butler (1692-1752), bishop of Bristol and Durham, is omitted • 30 **sermon . . . consideration.** Jacob Duché (1738-1798), Boucher's opponent, was chaplain of the Continental Congress, and a vociferous Whig. After the Declaration of Independence and the capture of Philadelphia by the British, Duché changed his opinions, and in a letter to Washington predicted defeat and urged a negotiated peace. Although he died in Philadelphia, he lived in exile in England from 1777 to 1792 • 36 **indisputable.** A long footnote, here omitted, quotes the opinions of Lancelot Andrewes (1555-1626), bishop of Winchester, John Selden (1584-1654), the jurist, and Robert Sanderson (1587-1663), bishop of Lincoln, to the effect that the good of the people is not the sole purpose or supreme law of government

be social: but, without government, there can be no society; nor, without some relative inferiority and superiority, can there be any government. A musical instrument composed of chords, keys, or pipes, all perfectly equal in size and power, might as well be expected to produce harmony, as a society composed of members all perfectly equal to be productive of order and peace. If (according to the idea of the advocates of this chimerical scheme of equality) no man could rightfully *be compelled to come in* and be a member even of a government to be formed by a regular compact, but by his own individual consent; it clearly follows, from the same principles, that neither could he rightfully be made or compelled to submit to the ordinances of any government already formed, to which he has not individually or actually consented. On the principle of equality, neither his parents, nor even the vote of a majority of that society, (however virtuously and honourably that vote might be obtained,) can have any such authority over any man. Neither can it be maintained the acquiescence implies consent; because acquiescence may have been extorted from impotence or incapacity. Even an explicit consent can bind a man no longer than he chooses to be bound. The same principle of equality that exempts him from being governed without his own consent, clearly entitles him to recall and resume that consent whenever he sees fit; and he alone has a right to judge when and for what reasons it may be resumed.

Any attempt, therefore, to introduce this fantastic system into practice, would reduce the whole business of social life to the wearisome, confused, and useless task of mankind's first expressing, and then withdrawing, their consent to an endless succession of schemes of government. Governments, though always forming, would never be completely formed: for, the majority to-day, might be the minority to-morrow; and, of course, that which is now fixed might and would be soon unfixed. Mr. Locke indeed says, that, "by consenting with others to make one body-politic under government, a man puts himself under an obligation to every one of that society to submit to the determination of the majority, and to be concluded by it." For the sake of the peace of society, it is undoubtedly reasonable and necessary that this should be the case: but, on the principles of the system now under consideration, before Mr. Locke or any of his followers can have authority to say, that it actually is the case, it must be stated and proved that every individual man, on entering into the social compact, did first consent, and declare his consent, to be concluded and bound in all cases by the vote of the majority. In making such a declaration, he would certainly consult both his interest and his duty; but at the same time he would also completely relinquish the principle of equality, and eventually subject himself to the possibility of being governed by ignorant and corrupt tyrants. Mr. Locke himself afterwards disproves his own position respecting this supposed obligation to submit to the "determination of the majority," when he argues that a right of resistance still exists in the governed: for, what is resistance but a recalling and resuming the consent heretofore supposed to have been given, and in fact refusing to submit to the "determination of the majority?" It does not clearly appear what Mr. Locke exactly meant by what he calls "the determination of the majority:" but the only rational and practical public manner of declaring "the determination of the majority," is by law: the laws, therefore, in all countries, even in those that are despotically governed, are to be regarded as the declared "determination of a majority" of the members of that community; because, in such cases, even acquiescence only must be looked upon as equivalent to a declaration. A right of resistance, therefore, for which Mr. Locke contends, is incompatible with the duty of submitting to the determination of "the majority," for which he also contends.

It is indeed impossible to carry into effect any government which, even by compact, might be framed with this reserved right of resistance. Accordingly there is no

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9 be compelled . . . in, Luke 14:23, a favorite sermon text in eighteenth-century America • **55 tyrants.** "The present government of France, having largely experienced the folly and danger of being consistent in pursuing this system of equality to it's full extent, have now abandoned it; but so, however, as still to make a shew of it's being retained. They now, very justly, thus define their principle: 'L'égalité consiste en ce que la loi est la même pour tous, soit qu'elle protège, soit qu'elle punisse.' [Equality consists in this that the law is the same for all, whether it protects, or whether it punishes.] Art. 3. Droits. But, after all the pomp and parade they have made about the liberality of their reforms, what is there in this more liberal than all mankind, in all ages, have thought and said, when they drew Justice blind, and balancing her even-poised scales; or indeed more liberal than we find pointedly expressed in the well-known clause of our own Magna Charta?"—Boucher. [A quotation from the Magna Charta is omitted]

record that any such government ever was so formed. If there had, it must have carried the seeds of it's decay in it's very constitution. For, as those men who make a government (certain that they have the power) can have no hesitation to vote that they also have the right to unmake it; and as the people, in all circumstances, but more especially when trained to make and unmake governments, are at least as well disposed to do the latter as the former, it is morally impossible that there should be any thing like permanency or stability in a government so formed. Such a system, therefore, can produce only perpetual dissensions and contests, and bring back mankind to a supposed state of nature; arming every man's hand, like Ishmael's, against every man, and rendering the world an *aceldama,* or field of blood.—Such theories of government seem to give something like plausibility to the notions of those other modern theorists, who regard all governments as invasions of the natural rights of men, usurpations, and tyranny. On this principle it would follow, and could not be denied, that government was indeed fundamentally, as our people are sedulously taught it still is, an evil. Yet it is to government that mankind owe their having, after their fall and corruption, been again reclaimed, from a state of barbarity and war, to the conveniency and the safety of the social state: and it is by means of government that society is still preserved, the weak protected from the strong, and the artless and innocent from the wrongs of proud oppressors. It was not without reason, then, that Mr. Locke asserted, that a greater wrong cannot be done to prince and people, than is done by "propagating wrong notions concerning government."

Ashamed of this shallow device, that government originated in superior strength and violence, another party, hardly less numerous, and certainly not less confident than the former, fondly deduce it from some imaginary compact. They suppose that, in the decline perhaps of some fabulous age of gold, a multitude of human beings, who, like their brother beasts, had hitherto ranged the forests, *without guide, overseer, or ruler*—at length convinced, by experience, of the impossibility of living either alone with any degree of comfort or security, or together in society, with peace, without government, had (in some lucid interval of reason and reflection) met together in a spacious plain, for the express purpose of framing a government. Their first step must have been the transferring to some individual, or individuals, some of those rights which are supposed to have been inherent in each of them: of these it is essential to government that they should be divested; yet can they not, rightfully, be deprived of them, otherwise than by their own consent. No, admitting this whole supposed assembly to be perfectly equal as to rights, yet all agreed as to the propriety of ceding some of them, on what principles of equality is it possible to determine, either who shall relinquish such a portion of his rights, or who shall be invested with such new accessory rights? By asking another to exercise jurisdiction over me, I clearly confess that I do not think myself his equal; and by his consenting to exercise such authority, he also virtually declares that he thinks himself superior. And, to establish this hypothesis of a compact, it is farther necessary that the whole assembly should concur in this opinion—a concurrence so extremely improbable, that it seems to be barely possible. The supposition that a large concourse of people, in a rude and imperfect state of society, or even a majority of them, should thus rationally and unanimously concur to subject themselves to various restrictions, many of them irksome and unpleasant, and all of them contrary to all their former habits, is to suppose them possessed of more wisdom and virtue than multitudes in any instance in real life have ever shewn. Another difficulty respecting this notion may yet be mentioned. Without a power of life and death, it will, I presume, be readily admitted that there could be no government. Now, admitting it to be possible that men, from motives of public and private utility, may be induced to submit to many heavy penalties, and even to corporal punishment, inflicted by the sentence of the law, there is an insuperable objection to any man's giving to another a power over his life: this objection is, that no man has such a power over his own life; and cannot therefore transfer to another, or to others, be they few or many, on any conditions, a right which he does not himself possess. He only who gave life, can give the authority to take it away: and as such authority is essential to government, this argument seems very

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14 Ishmael's, an allusion to Ishmael, the son of Nethaniah (Jeremiah 41), slayer of men by the scores • 15 aceldama, the field purchased by Judas with the thirty pieces of silver he received for betraying Christ, and perhaps the scene of Judas' suicide (see Acts 1:18)

decidedly to prove, not only that government did not originate in any compact, but also that it was originally from God.

This visionary idea of a government by compact was, as Filmer says, "first hatched in the schools; and hath, ever since, been fostered by Papists, for good divinity." For some time, the world seemed to regard it merely as another Utopian fiction; and it was long confined to the disciples of Rome and Geneva, who, agreeing in nothing else, yet agreed in this. In an evil hour it gained admittance into the Church of England; being first patronized by her during the civil wars, by "a few miscreants, who were as far from being true Protestants, as true Subjects." Mankind have listened, and continue to listen to it with a predilection and partiality, just as they do to various other exceptionable notions, which are unfavourable to true religion and sound morals; merely from imagining, that if such doctrines be true, they shall no longer be subjected to sundry restraints, which, however wholesome and proper, are too often unpalatable to our corrupt natures. What we wish to be true, we easily persuade ourselves is true. On this principle it is not difficult to account for our thus eagerly following these *ignes fatui* of our own fancies or "feelings," rather than the sober steady light of the word of God; which, (in this instance as well as in others) lies under this single disadvantage, that it proposes no doctrines which may conciliate our regards by flattering our pride.

If, however, we can even resolve no longer to be bewildered by these vain imaginations, still the interesting question presses on us, "Where," in the words of Plato, "where shall we look for the origin of government?" Let Plato himself instruct us. Taught then by this oracle of Heathen wisdom, "we will take our stations there, where the prospect of it is most easy and most beautiful." Of all the theories respecting the origin of government with which the world has ever been either puzzled, amused, or instructed, that of the Scriptures alone is accompanied by no insuperable difficulties.

It was not to be expected from an all-wise and all-merciful Creator, that, having formed creatures capable of order and rule, he should turn them loose into the world under the guidance only of their own unruly wills; that, like so many wild beasts, they might tear and worry one another in their mad contests for pre-eminence. His purpose from the first, no doubt, was, that men should *live godly and sober lives.* But, such is the sad estate of our corrupted nature, that, ever since the Fall, we have been averse from good, and prone to evil. We are, indeed, so disorderly and unmanageable, that, were it not for the restraints and the terrors of human laws, it would not be possible for us to dwell together. But as men were clearly formed for society, and to dwell together, which yet they cannot do without the restraints of law, or, in other words, without government, it is fair to infer that government was also the original intention of God, who never decrees the end, without also decreeing the means. Accordingly, when man was made, his Maker did not turn him adrift into a shoreless ocean, without star or compass to steer by. As soon as there were some to be governed, there were also some to govern: and the first man, by virtue of that paternal claim, on which all subsequent governments have been founded, was first invested with the power of government. For, we are not to judge of the Scriptures of God, as we do of some other writings; and so, where no express precept appears, hastily to conclude that none was given. On the contrary, in commenting on the Scriptures, we are frequently called upon to find out the precept from the practice. Taking this rule, then, for our direction in the present instance, we find, that, copying after the fair model of heaven itself, wherein there was government even among the angels, the families of the earth were subjected to rulers, at first set over them by God: *for, there is no power, but of God; the powers that be are ordained of God.* The first father was the first king: and if (according to the rule just laid down) the law may be inferred from the practice, it was thus that all government originated; and monarchy is it's most ancient form.

Little risque is run in affirming, that this idea of the patriarchal origin of government has not only the most and best authority of history, as far as history goes, to

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2 originally from God. A long footnote citing Grotius is omitted. Boucher was evidently familiar with **De Juri Belli et Pacis** (1623), Bk. I, Chap. 3, wherein the Dutch legal philosopher expounded this doctrine • 5 **Filmer,** Sir Robert Filmer. See citation by John Adams, p. 312 • 23 **ignes fatui,** lights over swampy grounds, supposedly caused by the combustion of marsh gas. Travelers lost at night were sometimes beguiled off their road by such lights; hence the figurative use • 31 Plato, "of Laws, book iii."—Boucher • 56 **intention of God.** A footnote quoting the **Convocation Book** (1690) of John Overall (1560-1619), bishop of Norwich, is omitted

support it; but that it is also by far the most natural, most consistent, and most rational idea. Had it pleased God not to have interfered at all in the case, neither directly nor indirectly, and to have left mankind to be guided only by their own uninfluenced judgments, they would naturally have been led to the government of a community, or a nation, from the natural and obvious precedent of the government of a family. In confirmation of this opinion, it may be observed, that the patriarchal scheme is that which always has prevailed, and still does prevail, among the most enlightened people and (what is no slight attestation of it's truth) it has also prevailed, and still does prevail, among the most unenlightened. According to Vitruvius, the rudiments of architecture are to be found in the cottage: and, according to Aristotle, the first principles of government are to be traced to private families. Kingdoms and empires are but so many larger families: and hence it is that our Church, in perfect conformity with the doctrine here inculcated, in her explication of the fifth commandment, from the obedience due to parents, wisely derives the congenial duty of *honouring the king and all that are put in authority under him. . . .*

1775? · 1797

11 **most enlightened people.** In a footnote here omitted, Boucher quotes the **Ecclesiasticall Politie** (1592) of Richard Hooker (1554?-1600), foremost Anglican theologian, the **History of Greece** (1784-1790) of William Mitford (1744-1827), and Filmer's **Patriarcha** • 13 **the most unenlightened.** A footnote several pages long is omitted; in it Boucher reviews the points at issue between Filmer and Locke, and quotes the **Description de la Chine** (1777-1784) by the Abbé Grosier (1743-1823), the **Voyage to Sierra Leone** (1788) by John Matthews, and the **History of America** (1777) by William Robertson (1721-1793) • 14 **Vitruvius** (fl. 46 B.C.), author of the only surviving Roman treatise on architecture • 16 **Aristotle.** The allusion is to the **Politics**, Bk. I • 23 **under him.** In the remainder of the sermon, Boucher preaches passive obedience to the royal authority

Singers of the Revolution

Both Tories and Continentals used songs and poems to urge their forces to victory, voice their arguments, and celebrate their heroes. Beginning with the passage of the Stamp Act, the verses showed more and more clearly the growth of unrest, then defiance, and finally hatred.

There was a contrast in the sentiments expressed, but not much difference in the forms employed by the opposing songsters. The reason is suggested by Professor Boynton in *Literature and American Life* when he says, "The most popular songs were all set to melodies then current in old England, sometimes occurring in sequence: the first a parody of the English song, the next the parody of a parody, and so on." He cites the fortunes of the tune of David Garrick's "Hearts of Oak," first sung on the stage in 1759. Seven years later, in America, the tune was outfitted with words of a conciliatory sort urging both loyalty and liberty. Then came a series of versions whose first lines show the alternating use of the tune by the two parties:

July 1768: "Come, join hand in hand, brave Americans all."
January 1769: "Come, cheer up, my lads, like a true British band."
1775: "Come, rouse up, my lads, and join the great cause."

These represent only a fraction of the songs which, down to 1812, made use of the Garrick tune.

Despite such typical resemblances the songs of the Revolution have many elements of interest. They vividly tell the story of the war and the feelings of the people about it. Further, like balladry in general—although many of them have an eighteenth-century polish not typical of the older ballads—they forcefully display human emotions and human character in times of stress.

Songs and Ballads of the American Revolution, ed. Frank Moore, New York, 1856 • J. T. Howard, The Music of George Washington's Time, New York, 1931

Yankee Doodle

Anonymous

"The Yankee's Return from Camp" was the title first given to this song, later generally known by its present title. Since it is an authentic ballad, there is no way of determining just who wrote it, when it was written, and what the original words were. The tune was known in the colonies as early as 1767, but the words—which varied in different versions—were composed later, probably by British soldiers or Tory sympathizers who wanted to ridicule the crude Yankees. The contrary Yankees in time apparently used it as a battle song of their own. It is interesting not only for its wartime history and for its lasting appeal to Americans but also for the way it created an American bumpkin by letting him talk his own dialect, later to be a very important procedure in the humor and fiction of the United States.

Father and I went down to camp,
  Along with Captain Gooding,
And there we see the men and boys,
  As thick as hasty pudding.

Chorus

Yankee Doodle, keep it up,
  Yankee Doodle, dandy,
Mind the music and the step,
  And with the girls be handy.

And there we see a thousand men,
  As rich as 'Squire David;
And what they wasted every day,
  I wish it could be saved.

The 'lasses they eat every day,
  Would keep a house a winter;
They have so much that, I'll be bound,
  They eat it when they're a mind to.

And there we see a swamping gun,
  Large as a log of maple,
Upon a deuced little cart,
  A load for father's cattle.

And every time they shoot it off,
  It takes a horn of powder,
And makes a noise like father's gun,
  Only a nation louder.

I went as nigh to one myself,
  As Siah's underpinning;
And father went as nigh again,
  I thought the deuce was in him.

Cousin Simon grew so bold,
  I thought he would have cock'd it;
It scar'd me so, I shrink'd it off,
  And hung by father's pocket.

And Captain Davis had a gun,
  He kind of clapped his hand on't,
And stuck a crooked stabbing iron
  Upon the little end on't.

And there I see a pumpkin shell
  As big as mother's basin;
And every time they touch'd it off,
  They scamper'd like the nation.

I see a little barrel too,
The heads were made of leather,
They knock'd upon't with little clubs,
And call'd the folks together.

And there was Captain Washington,
And gentlefolks about him,
They say he's grown so tarnal proud,
He will not ride without 'em.

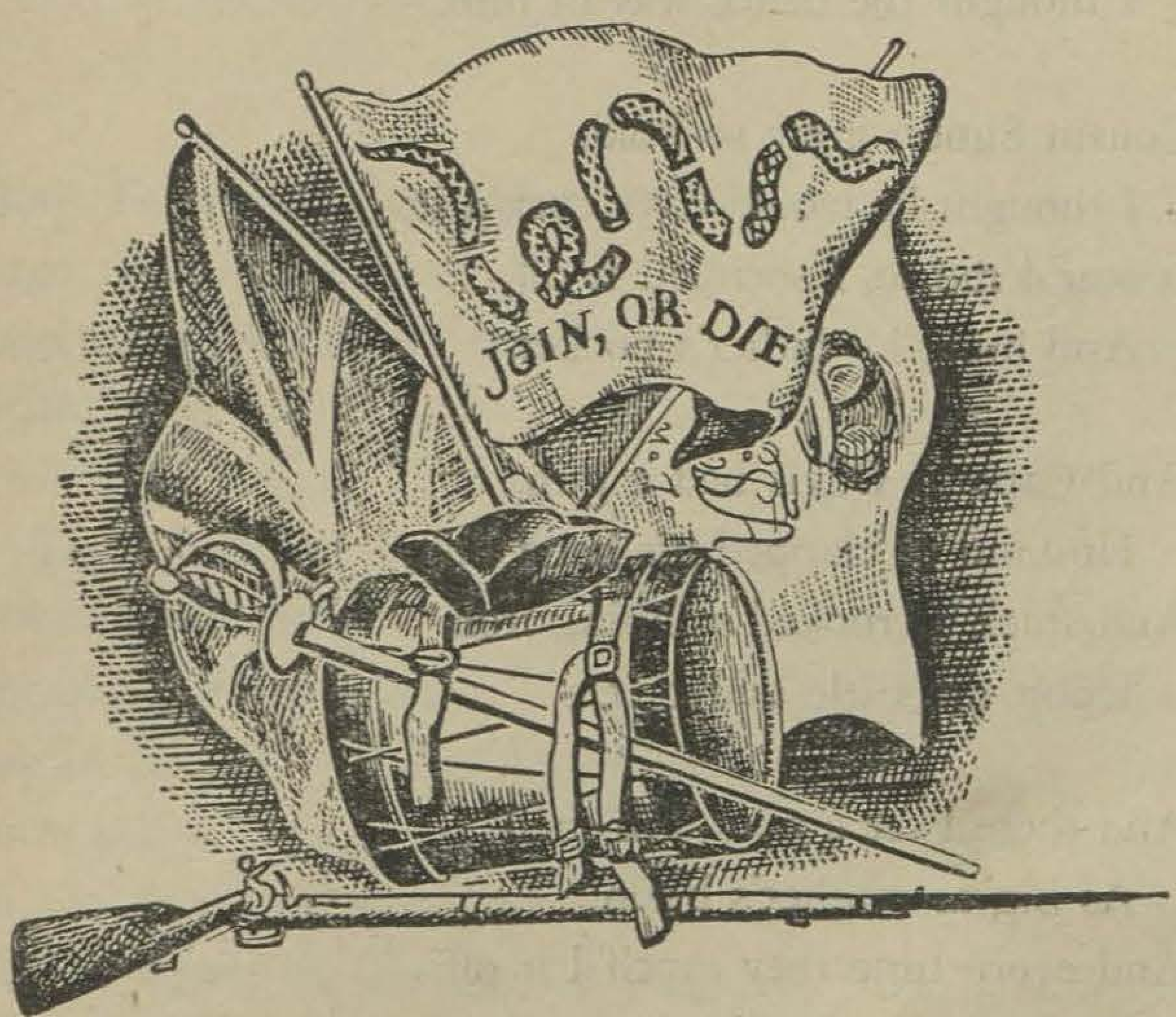
He got him on his meeting clothes,
Upon a slapping stallion,
He set the world along in rows,
In hundreds and in millions.

The flaming ribbons in his hat,
They look'd so tearing fine ah,
I wanted pockily to get,
To give to my Jemimah.

I see another snarl of men
A digging graves, they told me,
So tarnal long, so tarnal deep,
They 'tended they should hold me.

It scar'd me so, I hook'd it off,
Nor stopp'd, as I remember,
Nor turned about, till I got home,
Lock'd up in mother's chamber.

1775



Nathan Hale

Anonymous

After the retreat from Long Island in 1776, Washington tried to find among his men a "discreet and enterprising person to penetrate the enemy's camp" as a spy. Young Captain Nathan Hale, three years out of Yale College, undertook the mission. He went through the British lines, secured the information he wanted, and started to return. He was captured, however, and executed as a spy. The excellent ballad which tells of the event does not, surprisingly, make use of his reputed last words ("I regret that I have but one life to give for my country") or the alleged statement of the provost marshal that Hale's letters were destroyed "that the rebels should not know that they had a man in their army who could die with so much firmness." But the author perhaps saw that such details did not harmonize well with the rather elegiac account of the execution. Repetition, a typical ballad device, is notably used in this song.

The breezes went steadily thro' the tall pines,
A saying "Oh hu-ush!" a saying "Oh hu-ush!"
As stilly stole by a bold legion of horse,
For Hale in the bush, for Hale in the bush.

"Keep still!" said the thrush as she nestled her young,
In a nest by the road, in a nest by the road;
"For the tyrants are near, and with them appear
What bodes us no good, what bodes us no good."

The brave captain heard it and thought of his home,
In a cot by the brook, in a cot by the brook,
With mother and sister and memories dear,
He so gaily forsook, he so gaily forsook.

Cooling shades of the night were coming apace,
The tattoo had beat, the tattoo had beat:
The noble one sprang from his dark lurking-place
To make his retreat, to make his retreat.

He warily trod on the dry rustling leaves,
As he pass'd thro' the wood, as he pass'd thro' the wood,
And silently gain'd his rude launch on the shore,
As she play'd with the flood, as she play'd with the flood.

The guards of the camp, on that dark, dreary night,
Had a murderous will, had a murderous will:
They took him and bore him afar from the shore,
To a hut on the hill, to a hut on the hill.

No mother was there, nor a friend who could cheer,
In that little stone cell, in that little stone cell.
But he trusted in love from his Father above;
In his heart all was well, in his heart all was well.

An ominous owl with his solemn bass voice
Sat moaning hard by, sat moaning hard by:
"The tyrant's proud minions most gladly rejoice,
For he must soon die, for he must soon die."

The brave fellow told them, no thing he restrain'd,
The cruel gen'ral, the cruel gen'ral;
His errand from camp, of the ends to be gain'd;
And said that was all, and said that was all.

They took him and bound him and bore him away,
Down the hill's grassy side, down the hill's grassy side.
'Twas there the base hirelings, in royal array,
His cause did deride, his cause did deride.

Five minutes were given, short moments, no more,
For him to repent, for him to repent.
He pray'd for his mother, he ask'd not another;
To Heaven he went, to Heaven he went.

The faith of a martyr the tragedy shew'd,
As he trod the last stage, as he trod the last stage;
And Britons will shudder at gallant Hale's blood,
As his words do presage, as his words do presage:

"Thou pale king of terrors, thou life's gloomy foe,
Go frighten the slave, go frighten the slave;
Tell tyrants to you their allegiance they owe;
No fears for the brave, no fears for the brave."

1776

The Battle of the Kegs

Francis Hopkinson 1737 • 1791

The first floating mines ever to be launched against an enemy fleet were tried out by the Americans in January 1778. These mines were kegs of powder which exploded upon coming into contact with other objects. A number of mines sent down the Delaware failed to do much damage to the British ships because the British had drawn them up to docks, out of the way of floating ice. One keg did explode, however, and the colonists claimed that the British became so disturbed that for a while they fearfully fired at every keg floating along the river, including a keg of butter.

Francis Hopkinson, a young Philadelphian and author of many pamphlets and poems in behalf of the Continentals, saw a chance to show the British in a ridiculous light by writing a poem about the incident. His ballad, published in the **Pennsylvania Packet** for March 4, became one of the most popular songs of the Revolution. It was set to music, perhaps by the author himself, and was sung by the American soldiers.

G. E. Hastings, **The Life and Works of Francis Hopkinson**, Chicago, 1926

Gallants attend, and hear a friend,
Trill forth harmonious ditty,
Strange things I'll tell, which late befell,
In Philadelphia city.

'Twas early day, as poets say,
Just when the sun was rising,
A soldier stood, on a log of wood,
And saw a thing surprising.

As in amaze he stood to gaze,
The truth can't be denied, sir,
He spied a score of kegs or more,
Come floating down the tide, sir.

A sailor, too, in jerkin blue,
  This strange appearance viewing,
First damn'd his eyes, in great surprise,
  Then said, "some mischief's brewing.

"These kegs, I'm told, the rebels hold,
  Packed up like pickled herring,
And they're come down, t' attack the town,
  In this new way of ferrying."

The soldier flew, the sailor too,
  And scared almost to death, sir,
Wore out their shoes to spread the news,
  And ran till out of breath, sir.

Now up and down, throughout the town,
  Most frantic scenes were acted;
And some ran here, and others there,
  Like men almost distracted.

Some fire cried, which some denied,
  But said the earth had quakèd;
And girls and boys, with hideous noise,
  Ran through the streets half naked.

Sir William, he, snug as a flea,
  Lay all this time a snoring;
Nor dreamed of harm, as he lay warm,
  In bed with Mrs. L. . . . g.

Now in a fright, he starts upright,
  Awak'd by such a clatter;
He rubs his eyes, and boldly cries,
  "For God's sake, what's the matter?"

At his bedside he then espied,
  Sir Erskine at command, sir,
Upon one foot he had one boot,
  And t'other in his hand, sir.

"Arise! arise, Sir Erskine cries,
  The rebels—more's the pity—
Without a boat, are all afloat,
  And rang'd before the city.

"The motley crew, in vessels new,
  With Satan for their guide, sir,
Packed up in bags, or wooden kegs,
  Come driving down the tide, sir.

"Therefore prepare for bloody war;
  The kegs must all be routed,
Or surely we despis'd shall be,
  And British courage doubted."

The royal band, now ready stand,
  All ranged in dread array, sir,
With stomachs stout, to see it out,
  And make a bloody day, sir.

The cannons roar from shore to shore,
  The small arms make a rattle;
Since wars began, I'm sure no man
  Ere saw so strange a battle.

The rebel dales, the rebel vales,
  With rebel trees surrounded,
The distant woods, the hills and floods,
  With rebel echoes sounded.

The fish below swam to and fro,
  Attack'd from every quarter;
Why sure, thought they, the devil's to pay,
  'Mongst folks above the water.

The kegs, 'tis said, though strongly made
  Of rebel staves and hoops, sir,
Could not oppose their powerful foes,
  The conquering British troops, sir.

From morn till night, these men of might
  Display'd amazing courage;
And when the sun was fairly down,
  Retir'd to sup their porridge.

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33 **Sir William,** Sir William Howe (1729-1814), the commander of the British army, much hated by the Americans • 36 **Mrs. L . . . . g,** the wife of Joshua Loring, a Loyalist refugee from Boston • 42 **Sir Erskine,** Sir William Erskine, a general in the British army

An hundred men, with each a pen,
Or more, upon my word, sir,
It is most true would be too few,
Their valor to record, sir.

Such feats did they perform that day,
Against those wicked kegs, sir,
That years to come, if they get home,
They'll make their boasts and brags, sir.

1778

The Epilogue

Anonymous

In October 1778, when the British had possession of Philadelphia and the Continental Congress was meeting in Yorktown, Virginia, "The Epilogue," a Tory song, was published in a ballad sheet and posted in the streets of New York and Philadelphia.

Said a foreword: "There was lately exhibited in the city of Philadelphia, an admirable farce called **Independence.** Who the author was is not positively known, but some are of the opinion that it is the work of a certain quack doctor called Franklin. Others assert that it is the joint production of the strolling company by whom it was acted; it is, however, generally allowed, that one Adams gave the first hint, contrived the plot, and cast the parts. It appeared in the exhibition so tragi-comical, that the audience were at a loss whether to laugh or cry. They were, however, well pleased with the catastrophe, and joined heartily in the following chorus. As the renowned Voltaire somewhere relates, that a song was the cause of the French reformation, the excellent actor who performed the part of the President took upon himself the plain song."

Our farce is now finish'd, your sport's at an end,
But ere you depart, let the voice of a friend
By way of a chorus, the evening crown
With a song to the tune of a hey derry down,
Derry down, down, hey derry down.

Old Shakspeare, a poet, who should not be spit on,
Altho' he was born in the island called Britain,
Hath said that mankind are all players at best,
A truth we'll admit of, for sake of the jest.

On this puny stage we've strutted our hour,
And have acted our parts to the best of our power;
That the farce hath concluded not perfectly well,
Was surely the fault of the devil in hell.

This devil, you know, out of spleen to the church,
Will oftentimes leave his best friends in the lurch,
And turn them adrift in the midst of their joy;
'Tis a difficult matter to cheat the Old Boy.

Since this is the case, we must e'en make the best
Of a game that is lost; let us turn it to jest;
We'll smile, nay, we'll laugh, we'll carouse and we'll sing,
And cheerfully drink life and health to the king.

Let Washington now from his mountains descend,
Who knows but in George he may still find a friend;
A Briton, altho' he loves bottle and wench,
Is an honester fellow than parle vous French.

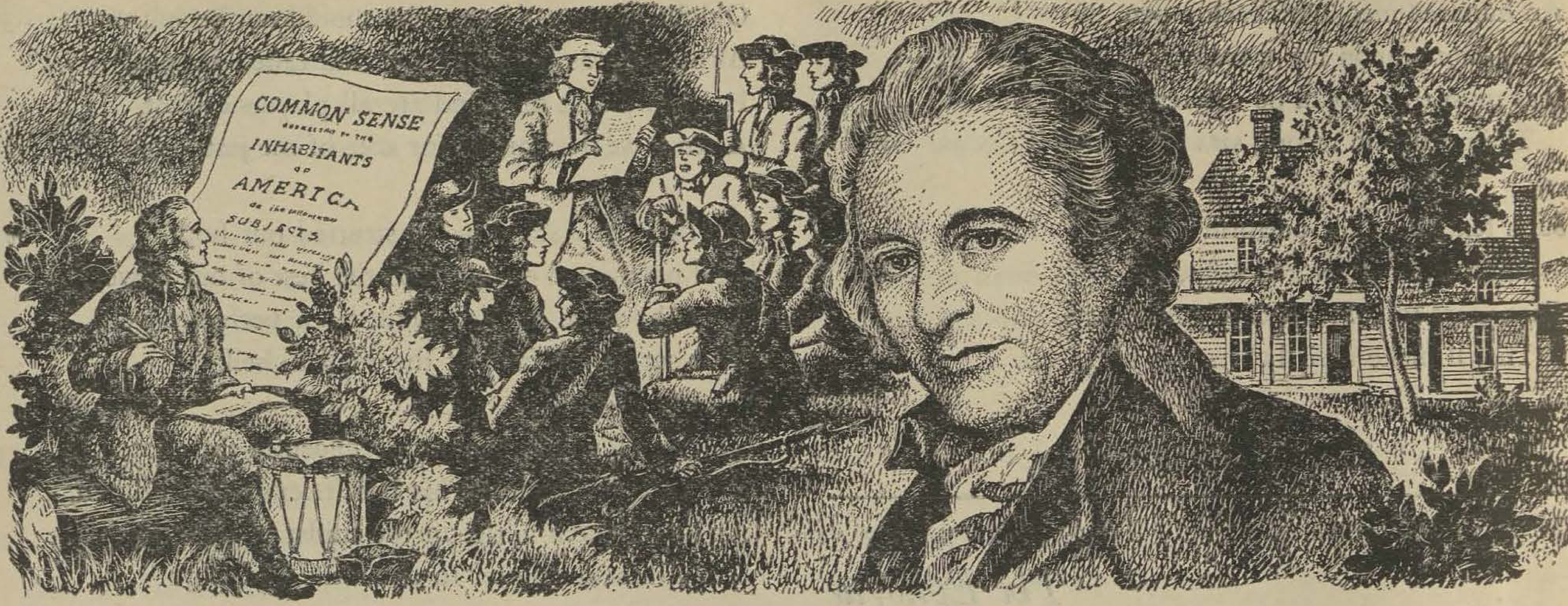
Our great Independence we give to the wind,
And pray that Great Britain may once more be kind.
In this jovial song all hostility ends,
And Britons and we will for ever be friends.

Boys fill me a bumper! now join in the chorus!
There is happiness still in the prospect before us,
In this sparkling glass, all hostility ends,
And Britons and we will for ever be friends.

Good night! my good people, retire to your houses,
Fair ladies, I beg you, convince your dear spouses
That Britons and we are united in bliss,
And ratify all with a conjugal kiss.

Once more, here's a health to the king and queen!
Confusion to him, who in rancor and spleen,
Refuses to drink with an English friend,
Immutable amity to the world's end.

1778



Thomas Paine

1737 · 1809

The career and reputation of Thomas Paine are tragic evidence of human frailty. His private hells of physical and mental torture were paved with the most altruistic of intentions, and those who have judged him saint or devil have usually been passionately sincere. He emerged from failure and obscurity to become the most powerful single voice of revolutionary thought in British America; pursuing the line of his principles a little farther, he was driven out of England, jailed in France, and insulted and ostracized in the United States. Down through the years his name has called forth more diverse and violent comment than any other in literary history, not excepting Poe and Shelley.

Paine was born at Thetford in Norfolk, England, in 1737. His father was a Quaker farmer and staymaker; his mother a Church of England woman, older than her husband, a shade higher in the social scale, and discontented. Their son's childhood was unhappy, his early manhood scarcely less so. Leaving school at thirteen, he searched fruitlessly for a quarter of a century before he found an agreeable occupation. As sailor, corset-maker, collector of the excise, schoolteacher, tobacconist, he was never quite fitted to his task. At twenty-two he married, only to have his wife die in childbirth within a year. A second marriage, at thirty-four, ended three years later in a legal separation. All that Paine had found at thirty-seven were an interest in science and a sympathy for the underdog in society, the result of his private reading

Panel (l. to r.): Composition of The Crisis • Title page of Common Sense, 1776 • Reading the Crisis papers to the army • Thomas Paine at about 55 • His home in New Rochelle, New York

and his futile championship of the plea of his fellow-excisemen for more pay from Parliament.

Penniless and unknown, Paine encountered Benjamin Franklin, who apparently encouraged him to try America, giving him a letter of introduction as an "ingenious worthy young man" who might well be employed as "clerk, or assistant tutor in a school, or assistant surveyor." Late in 1774, seriously ill, Paine was carried off a ship in Pennsylvania.

Within a year he had readied himself for a new profession by a series of contributions to the *Pennsylvania Magazine.* As "Atlanticus," "Vox Populi," "Æsop," and "An Englishman," Paine learned to shape his humanitarian sympathies into persuasive essays on dueling, marriage, the rights of women, the need of copyright, kindness to animals, and the injustice of slavery. Meanwhile he had to make up his mind about the Battle of Lexington and the events which swiftly followed. That was not difficult, despite his Quaker predilections. What reason had he to love England? In the autumn of 1775 he was writing *Common Sense* to convince his adopted countrymen that "nothing can settle our affairs so expeditiously as an open and determined *Declaration for Independence.*" The pamphlet's appearance and success demonstrated that the colonies had welcomed no mere bankrupt staymaker, but a propagandist of genius, whose skill in moving men to action has seldom been rivaled.

Common Sense, however, was only a beginning. The *Declaration* achieved, Paine joined the army in time to share the disheartening retreat across New Jersey in the fall of 1776. In the face of disaster, he wrote the first of a series of letter-pamphlets now known as *The American Crisis.* Published just before Christmas, its ringing denunciation of the "summer soldier and the sunshine patriot" was read to the troops who crossed the Delaware to surprise the Hessians at Trenton and thereby preserved the morale of the Americans during the first crucial winter of the war. Fifteen times thereafter, in the space of the next seven years, the need arose for a *Crisis* paper to hold the nation together or to arouse the support required for decisive action. Each of the sixteen numbers circulated in the tens of thousands. Finally, in 1783, Paine could write, "'The times that tried men's souls' are over—and the greatest and completest revolution the world ever knew, gloriously and happily accomplished."

Paine's contributions had included various kinds of work for the Continental Congress, such as a quick but valuable trip to France in 1781. The end of the war, however, found him as poor as at the beginning, and not without his enemies. Washington, remembering the effect of his propaganda pieces, was able to suggest a few rewards: a confiscated estate from New York, a gift of money from Pennsylvania, and $3000 from the Congress itself. Paine's pamphlets had been his freewill offering to the cause; he had never wished to profit from their sale. No place appearing for him in the public service, he devoted what funds he had to promoting one of his inventions—a single-span iron bridge which, he argued, would be more practicable for American rivers than arches on piers, against which ice could jam in the spring. In April 1787 he sailed for France to display his model to the engineering experts and investors there. He was not, however, to succeed as a promoter of his own fortunes.

To follow in detail Paine's fifteen years in Europe would require many pages describing the intricate events of the French Revolution and the conservative reaction in England. Paine was not content to busy himself with bridges. *The Rights of Man* (Part I, 1791; Part II, 1792), his answer to Edmund Burke's *Reflections on the Revolution in France,* is the fullest expression of his political convictions: that the best form of government is a representative republic, with universal manhood suffrage; and that the "natural rights" of men should be protected by written constitutions and legislation to prevent the development of aristocratic and hereditary privileges. For these views, and for his free prediction of coming revolution, he was found guilty of libel and exiled from an England he had already left. English mobs hanged and burned his effigy.

If, as has been said, Paine's views were too French for the English, they were soon to prove too English for the French. As honorary citizen and member of the National Convention, he opposed the execution of Louis XVI; and by December 1793, no longer a hero, he was imprisoned as a foreigner. Gouverneur Morris, the American ambassador, failed to help him (some biographers, in fact, believe that Morris was in part responsible for Paine's imprisonment, because of personal enmity), and Paine was not released until ten months later, after Morris had been succeeded by James Monroe. Broken

in health, his faith in political rationalism seriously damaged, Paine had still to meet the bitterest antagonisms of his career.

The Age of Reason (Part I, 1794; Part II, 1795) was written as Paine's "last offering" to mankind, to provide a religion compatible with the new political and social order which he believed was at hand despite the excesses of the Reign of Terror. Mankind was not only unappreciative; it was so shocked by the apparent blasphemy of his application of reason to religion that a goodly part of it was willing to burn Paine at the stake. To the masses, swayed by newspapers and pulpit pronouncements, Paine's name became a synonym for atheism and infidelity. His English publisher was prosecuted for blasphemy; he himself, after his return to the United States in 1802, was shot at through his window, insulted in the streets, and humiliated on his deathbed by clergymen who forced their way into his room. Even the Quakers refused to permit burial in their cemetery. Ten years later his body was exhumed and taken to England, where William Cobbett hoped to exhibit it as part of a scheme to reform society there. Forbidden this final gruesome means of swaying men's minds, Paine's bones were, it is said, nearly sold at auction to satisfy the creditors of Cobbett's son before they finally disappeared.

Men still find moderation virtually impossible when evaluating Thomas Paine. He wrote always for a purpose, and some of his purposes are still anathema to large groups of people. Of his merits as a writer, however, there can be little disagreement. No man of his time was better able to express, simply and clearly, the views which effected vast changes in the political, social, and religious constitution of Western civilization. The force, directness, and variety of his appeals to reason and emotion made him the foremost propagandist-agitator of his time. A master of persuasion rather than a profound or original thinker, he will be studied as long as there are men who seek to understand the social functions of language and literature.

Selections from the Works of Thomas Paine, ed. A. W. Peach, New York, 1928 • **Thomas Paine: Representative Selections**, ed. H. H. Clark, Cincinnati, 1944 • M. D. Conway, **The Life of Thomas Paine**, 2 vols., New York, 1892 • Hesketh Pearson, **Tom Paine, Friend of Mankind**, New York, 1937 • Frank Smith, **Thomas Paine, Liberator**, New York, 1938

Common Sense

Addressed to the
Inhabitants of America,
On the following Interesting Subjects, viz.:

I. Of the Origin and Design of Government in General; with Concise Remarks on the English Constitution.
II. Of Monarchy and Hereditary Succession.
III. Thoughts on the Present State of American Affairs.
IV. Of the Present Ability of America; with some Miscellaneous Reflections.

A pamphlet of seventy-nine pages, **Common Sense** was published at Philadelphia in January 1776. The first open appeal for a declaration of independence, it achieved a sale estimated at 125,000 copies within three months and by the end of the year had appeared in fifteen or more editions.

George Washington, commanding the army besieging Boston, wrote on January 31 of the "sound doctrine and unanswerable reasoning" of Paine's pamphlet, and it was unquestionably the greatest single force in convincing Americans of the wisdom of separation from England. Its shrewd analyses and arguments are punctuated by bursts of emotion-laden rhetoric, all bound together by a constant reiteration of the theme of "continental" destiny. In one way or another Paine appealed to almost every interest, selfish or benevolent, which could help to draw the colonists together.

The "sound doctrine" which Washington admired will be found upon examination to be largely that of John Locke (1632-1704), the English philosopher whose **Two Treatises on Government** (1689-1690) formed a classic justification of the Glorious Revolution of 1688. It is not profitable, however, to trace the origins of Paine's political thought. He did not claim that it was original, and he did not intend that **Common Sense** should be read for its abstract principles. It was designed to bring action, and in achieving

that end it was supremely successful. Independence was declared, and Paine had every reason to feel, as he did, that the inscription on his tombstone should read simply "Thomas Paine, Author of Common Sense."

INTRODUCTION

Perhaps the sentiments contained in the following pages, are not *yet* sufficiently fashionable to procure them general favor; a long habit of not thinking a Thing *wrong,* gives it a superficial appearance of being *right,* and raises at first a formidable outcry in defence of Custom. But the tumult soon subsides. Time makes more converts than Reason.

As a long and violent abuse of Power is generally the means of calling the right of it in question, (and in matters too which might never have been thought of, had not the Sufferers been aggravated into the inquiry,) and as the king of England hath undertaken in his *own right,* to support the Parliament in what he calls *theirs,* and as the good People of this country are grievously oppressed by the combination, they have an undoubted privilege to inquire into the pretensions of both, and equally to reject the usurpation of *either.*

In the following Sheets, the Author has studiously avoided every thing which is personal among ourselves. Compliments as well as Censure to individuals make no part thereof. The wise and the worthy need not the triumph of a pamphlet; and those whose sentiments are injudicious or unfriendly will cease of themselves, unless too much pains is bestowed upon their conversions.

The cause of America is in a great measure the cause of all mankind. Many circumstances have, and will arise, which are not local, but universal, and through which the principles of all lovers of mankind are affected, and in the event of which their affections are interested. The laying a country desolate with fire and sword, declaring war against the natural rights of all mankind, and extirpating the defenders thereof from the face of the earth, is the concern of every man to whom nature hath given the power of feeling; of which class, regardless of party censure, is

THE AUTHOR

ON THE ORIGIN AND DESIGN OF GOVERNMENT IN GENERAL, WITH CONCISE REMARKS ON THE ENGLISH CONSTITUTION

Some Writers have so confounded Society with government, as to leave little or no distinction between them; whereas they are not only different, but have different origins. Society is produced by our wants and government by our wickedness; the former promotes our happiness *positively* by uniting our affections, the latter *negatively* by restraining our vices. The one encourages intercourse, the other creates distinctions. The first is a patron, the last a punisher.

Society in every state is a blessing, but government, even in its best state, is but a necessary evil, in its worst state an intolerable one: for when we suffer, or are exposed to the same miseries *by a government,* which we might expect in a country *without Government,* our calamity is heightened by reflecting that we furnish the means by which we suffer. Government, like dress, is the badge of lost innocence; the palaces of kings are built upon the ruins of the bowers of paradise. For were the impulses of conscience clear, uniform and irresistibly obeyed, man would need no other law-giver; but that not being the case, he finds it necessary to surrender up a part of his property to furnish means for the protection of the rest; and this he is induced to do by the same prudence which in every other case advises him, out of two evils to choose the least. *Wherefore,* security being the true design and end of government, it unanswerably follows that whatever *form* thereof appears most likely to ensure it to us, with the least expense and greatest benefit, is preferable to all others.

In order to gain a clear and just idea of the design and end of government, let us suppose a small number of persons settled in some sequestered part of the earth, unconnected with the rest; they will then represent the first peopling of any country, or of the world. In this state of natural liberty, society will be their first thought. A thousand motives will excite them thereto; the strength of

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Text: Professor Peach's version of the first edition, which eliminated "such typographical errors as were clearly destructive of the sense" • **Introduction,** dated in some editions as late as February 1776 • **71 natural liberty.** Paine's phrase, like his account of the origin of society, shows his general agreement with John Locke's idea of presocial society

one man is so unequal to his wants, and his mind so unfitted for perpetual solitude, that he is soon obliged to seek assistance and relief of another, who in his turn requires the same. Four or five united would be able to raise a tolerable dwelling in the midst of a wilderness, but *one* man might labor out the common period of life without accomplishing any thing; when he had felled his timber he could not remove it, nor erect it after it was removed; hunger in the mean time would urge him to quit his work, and every different want would call him a different way. Disease, nay even misfortune, would be death; for though neither might be mortal, yet either would disable him from living, and reduce him to a state in which he might rather be said to perish than to die.

Thus necessity, like a gravitating power, would soon form our newly arrived emigrants into society, the reciprocal blessings of which would supersede, and render the obligations of law and government unnecessary while they remained perfectly just to each other; but as nothing but Heaven is impregnable to vice, it will unavoidable happen that in proportion as they surmount the first difficulties of emigration, which bound them together in a common cause, they will begin to relax in their duty and attachment to each other: and this remissness will point out the necessity of establishing some form of government to supply the defect of moral virtue.

Some convenient tree will afford them a State-House, under the branches of which the whole Colony may assemble to deliberate on public matters. It is more than probable that their first laws will have the title only of *Regulations* and be enforced by no other penalty than public disesteem. In this first parliament every man by natural right will have a seat.

But as the colony increases, the public concerns will increase likewise, and the distance at which the members may be separated, will render it too inconvenient for all of them to meet on every occasion as at first, when their number was small, their habitations near, and the public concerns few and trifling. This will point out the convenience of their consenting to leave the legislative part to be managed by a select number chosen from the whole body, who are supposed to have the same concerns at stake which those have who appointed them, and who will act in the same manner as the whole body would act were they present. If the colony continue encreasing, it will become necessary to augment the number of representatives, and that the interest of every part of the colony may be attended to, it will be found best to divide the whole into convenient parts, each part sending its proper number: and that the *elected* might never form to themselves an interest separate from the *electors,* prudence will point out the propriety of having elections often: because as the *elected* might by that means return and mix again with the general body of the *electors* in a few months, their fidelity to the public will be secured by the prudent reflection of not making a rod for themselves. And as this frequent interchange will establish a common interest with every part of the community, they will mutually and naturally support each other, and on this, (not on the unmeaning name of king,) depends the *strength of Government, and the happiness of the governed.*

Here then is the origin and rise of government; namely, a mode rendered necessary by the inability of moral virtue to govern the world; here too is the design and end of government, viz. freedom and security. And however our eyes may be dazzled with show, or our ears deceived by sound; however prejudice may warp our wills, or interest darken our understanding, the simple voice of nature and reason will say, 'tis right.

I draw my idea of the form of government from a principle in nature which no art can overturn, viz. that the more simple any thing is, the less liable it is to be disordered, and the easier repaired when disordered; and with this maxim in view I offer a few remarks on the so much boasted Constitution of England. That it was noble for the dark and slavish times in which it was erected, is granted. When the world was overrun with tyranny the least remove therefrom was a glorious rescue. But that it is imperfect, subject to convulsions, and incapable of producing what it seems to promise, is easily demonstrated.

Absolute governments, (tho' the disgrace of human nature) have this advantage with them, they are simple: if the people suffer, they know the head from which their suffering springs; know likewise the remedy; and are not bewildered by a variety of causes and cures. But the Constitution of England is so exceedingly complex, that the nation may suffer for years together without being able to discover in which part the fault lies; some will say in one and some in another, and every political physician will advise a different medicine.

I know it is difficult to get over local or long standing prejudices, yet if we will suffer ourselves to examine the component parts of the English Constitution, we shall find them to be the base remains of two ancient tyrannies, compounded with some new Republican materials.

First.—The remains of Monarchical tyranny in the person of the King.

Secondly.—The remains of Aristocratical tyranny in the persons of the Peers.

Thirdly.—The new Republican materials, in the persons of the Commons, on whose virtue depends the freedom of England.

The two first, by being hereditary, are independent of the People; wherefore in a *constitutional sense* they contribute nothing towards the freedom of the State.

To say that the Constitution of England is an *union* of three powers, reciprocally *checking* each other, is farcical; either the words have no meaning, or they are flat contradictions.

To say that the Commons is a check upon the king, presupposes two things.

First.—That the king is not to be trusted without being looked after; or in other words, that a thirst for absolute power is the natural disease of Monarchy.

Secondly.—That the Commons, by being appointed for that purpose, are either wiser or more worthy of confidence than the crown.

But as the same constitution which gives the Commons a power to check the King by withholding the supplies, gives afterwards the King a power to check the Commons, by empowering him to reject their other bills; it again supposes that the king is wiser than those whom it has already supposed to be wiser than him. A mere absurdity!

There is something exceedingly ridiculous in the composition of Monarchy; it first excludes a man from the means of information, yet empowers him to act in cases where the highest judgment is required. The state of a King shuts him from the World, yet the business of a king requires him to know it thoroughly; wherefore the different parts, by unnaturally opposing and destroying each other, prove the whole character to be absurd and useless.

Some writers have explained the English Constitution thus: the king say they is one, the People another; the Peers are a house in behalf of the King, the Commons in behalf of the People; But this hath all the distinctions of a house divided against itself; and tho' the expressions be pleasantly arranged, yet when examined they appear idle and ambiguous; and it will always happen, that the nicest construction that words are capable of, when applied to the description of something which either cannot exist, or is too incomprehensible to be within the compass of description, will be words of sound only, and tho' they may amuse the ear, they cannot inform the mind: for this explanation includes a previous question, viz. *how came the king by a power which the people are afraid to trust, and always obliged to check?* Such a power could not be the gift of a wise People, neither can any Power, *which needs checking,* be from God; yet the provision which the Constitution makes supposes such a power to exist.

But the provision is unequal to the task; the means either cannot or will not accomplish the end, and the whole affair is a *Felo de se:* for as the greater weight will always carry up the less, and as all the wheels of a machine are put in motion by one, it only remains to know which power in the constitution has the most weight, for that will govern: and tho' the others, or a part of them, may clog, or check the rapidity of its motion, yet so long as they cannot stop it, their endeavors will be ineffectual: The first moving power will at last have its way, and what it wants in speed is supplied by time.

That the crown is this overbearing part in the English constitution needs not be mentioned, and that it derives its whole consequence merely from being the giver of places and pensions is self-evident; wherefore, tho' we have been wise enough to shut and lock a door against absolute Monarchy, we at the same time have been foolish enough to put the Crown in possession of the key.

The prejudice of Englishmen, in favor of their own government, by King, Lords and Commons, arises as much or more from national pride than reason. Individuals are undoubtedly safer in England than in some other Countries: but the Will of the King is as much the Law of the land in Britain as in France, with this difference, that instead of proceeding directly from his

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17 **reciprocally checking.** Montesquieu had held such a view of the Constitution of Britain • 65 **Felo de se,** murderer of itself

mouth, it is handed to the People under the formidable shape of an act of Parliament. For the fate of Charles the First hath only made kings more subtle—not more just.

Wherefore, laying aside all national pride and prejudice in favor of modes and forms, the plain truth is that *it is wholly to the constitution of the People, and not to the constitution of the Government* that the Crown is not as oppressive in England as in Turkey.

An inquiry into the *constitutional errors* in the English form of government, is at this time highly necessary; for as we are never in a proper condition of doing justice to others, while we continue under the influence of some leading partiality, so neither are we capable of doing it to ourselves while we remain fettered by any obstinate prejudice. And as a man who is attached to a prostitute is unfitted to choose or judge of a wife, so any prepossession in favor of a rotten constitution of government will disable us from discerning a good one.

OF MONARCHY AND HEREDITARY SUCCESSION

Mankind being originally equals in the order of creation, the equality could only be destroyed by some subsequent circumstance: the distinctions of rich and poor may in a great measure be accounted for, and that without having recourse to the harsh ill-sounding names of oppression and avarice. Oppression is often the *consequence,* but seldom or never the *means* of riches; and tho' avarice will preserve a man from being necessitously poor, it generally makes him too timorous to be wealthy.

But there is another and greater distinction for which no truly natural or religious reason can be assigned, and that is the distinction of Men into *Kings* and *Subjects.* Male and female are the distinctions of nature, good and bad the distinctions of Heaven; but how a race of Men came into the World so exalted above the rest, and distinguished like some new species, is worth inquiring into, and whether they are the means of happiness or of misery to mankind.

In the early ages of the World, according to the Scripture chronology there were no Kings; the consequence of which was, there were no wars; it is the pride of Kings which throws mankind into confusion. Holland without a King hath enjoyed more peace for this last century than any of the Monarchical governments in Europe. Antiquity favors the same remark; for the quiet and rural lives of the first Patriarchs have a happy something in them, which vanishes when we come to the history of Jewish royalty.

Government by Kings was first introduced into the World by the Heathens, from whom the children of Israel copied the custom. It was the most prosperous invention the Devil ever set on foot for the promotion of idolatry. The heathens paid divine honors to their deceased Kings, and the Christian World has improved on the plan by doing the same to their living ones. How impious is the title of sacred Majesty applied to a worm, who in the midst of his splendor is crumbling into dust!

As the exalting one man so greatly above the rest cannot be justified on the equal rights of nature, so neither can it be justified on the authority of scripture; for the will of the Almighty as declared by Gideon, and the prophet Samuel, expressly disapproves of Government by kings. All anti-monarchical parts of scripture have been very smoothly glossed over in monarchical governments, but they undoubtedly merit the attention of Countries which have their governments yet to form. *"Render unto Cæsar the things which are Cæsar's,"* is the scripture doctrine of Courts, yet it is no support of monarchical government, for the Jews at that time were without a king, and in a state of vassalage to the Romans.

Near three thousand years passed away, from the Mosaic account of the creation, till the Jews under a national delusion requested a king. Till then, their form of government (except in extraordinary cases where the Almighty interposed) was a kind of Republic, administered by a judge and the elders of the tribes. Kings they had none, and it was held sinful to acknowledge any Being under that title but the Lord of Hosts. And when a man seriously reflects on the idolatrous homage which is paid to the persons of kings, he need not wonder that the Almighty, ever jealous of his honor, should disapprove a form of government which so impiously invades the prerogative of Heaven.

Monarchy is ranked in scripture as one of the sins of

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61 Gideon . . . Samuel. See Judges 8:22-23 and I Samuel 8:5-22, most of which Paine quotes directly in the paragraphs which follow

the Jews, for which a course in reserve is denounced against them. The history of that transaction is worth attending to.

The children of Israel being oppressed by the Midianites, Gideon marched against them with a small army, and victory thro' the Divine interposition decided in his favor. The Jews elate with success and attributing it to the generalship of Gideon, proposed making him a king, saying, *Rule thou over us, thou and thy son, and thy son's son.* Here was temptation in its fullest extent; not a kingdom only, but a hereditary one; but Gideon in the piety of his soul replied, *I will not rule over you, neither shall my son rule over you.* THE LORD SHALL RULE OVER YOU. Words need not be more explicit; Gideon doth not *decline* the honor, but denieth their right to give it; neither doth he compliment them with invented declarations of his thanks, but in the positive style of a prophet charges them with disaffection to their proper Sovereign, the King of Heaven.

About one hundred and thirty years after this, they fell again into the same error. The hankering which the Jews had for the idolatrous customs of the Heathens, is something exceedingly unaccountable; but so it was, that laying hold of the misconduct of Samuel's two sons, who were intrusted with some secular concerns, they came in an abrupt and clamorous manner to Samuel, saying, *Behold, thou art old, and thy sons walk not in thy ways, now make us a king to judge us like all the other nations.* And here we cannot but observe that their motives were bad, viz. that they might be *like* unto other nations, i. e. the Heathens, whereas their true glory lay in being as much *unlike* them as possible. *But the thing displeased Samuel when they said, give us a king to judge us; and Samuel prayed unto the Lord, and the Lord said unto Samuel, hearken unto the voice of the people in all that they say unto thee, for they have not rejected thee, but they have rejected me.* THAT I SHOULD NOT REIGN OVER THEM. *According to all the works which they have done since the day that I brought them up out of Egypt even unto this day, wherewith they have forsaken me, and served other Gods: so do they also unto thee. Now therefore hearken unto their voice, howbeit, protest solemnly unto them and show them the manner of the king that shall reign over them,* i. e. not of any particular King, but the general manner of the Kings of the Earth whom Israel was so eagerly copying after. And notwithstanding the great distance of time and difference of manners, the character is still in fashion. *And Samuel told all the words of the Lord unto the People, that asked of him a King. And he said, This shall be the manner of the King that shall reign over you. He will take your sons and appoint them for himself for his chariots and to be his horsemen, and some shall run before his chariots* (This description agrees with the present mode of impressing men) *and he will appoint him captains over thousands and captains over fifties, will set them to ear his ground and to reap his harvests, and to make his instruments of war, and instruments of his chariots. And he will take your daughters to be confectionaries, and to be cooks, and to be bakers* (This describes the expense and luxury as well as the oppression of Kings) *and he will take your fields and your vineyards, and your olive yards, even the best of them, and give them to his servants. And he will take the tenth of your seed, and of your vineyards, and give them to his officers and to his servants* (By which we see that bribery, corruption, and favouritism, are the standing vices of Kings) *and he will take the tenth of your men servants, and your maid servants, and your goodliest young men, and your asses, and put them to his work: and he will take the tenth of your sheep, and ye shall be his servants, and ye shall cry out in that day because of your king which ye shall have chosen,* AND THE LORD WILL NOT HEAR YOU IN THAT DAY. This accounts for the continuation of Monarchy; neither do the characters of the few good Kings which have lived since, either sanctify the title, or blot out the sinfulness of the origin; the high encomium given of David takes no notice of him *officially as a King,* but only as a *Man* after God's own heart. *Nevertheless the People refused to obey the voice of Samuel, and they said, Nay but we will have a King over us, that we may be like all the nations, and that our King may judge us, and go out before us and fight our battles.* Samuel continued to reason with them but to no purpose; he set before them their ingratitude, but all would not avail; and seeing them fully bent on their folly, he cried out, *I will call unto the Lord, and he shall send thunder and rain* (which was then a punishment, being in the time of wheat harvest) *that ye may per-*

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78 David. See I Kings 2:4

ceive and see that your wickedness is great which ye have done in the sight of the Lord, IN ASKING YOU A KING. *So Samuel called unto the Lord, and the Lord sent thunder and rain that day, and all the people greatly feared the Lord and Samuel. And all the people said unto Samuel, Pray for thy servants unto the Lord thy God that we die not, for* WE HAVE ADDED UNTO OUR SINS THIS EVIL, TO ASK A KING. These portions of scripture are direct and positive. They admit of no equivocal construction. That the Almighty hath here entered his protest against monarchical government is true, or the scripture is false. And a man hath good reason to believe that there is as much of king-craft as priestcraft in withholding the scripture from the public in popish countries. For monarchy in every instance is the popery of government.

To the evil of monarchy we have added that of hereditary succession; and as the first is a degradation and lessening of ourselves, so the second, claimed as a matter of right, is an insult and imposition on posterity. For all men being originally equals, no *one* by *birth* could have a right to set up his own family in perpetual preference to all others for ever, and tho' himself might deserve *some* decent degree of honors of his contemporaries, might be far too unworthy to inherit them. One of the strongest natural proofs of the folly of hereditary right in kings, is that nature disapproves it, otherwise she would not so frequently turn it into ridicule, by giving mankind an *ass for a lion.*

Secondly, as no man at first could possess any other public honors than were bestowed upon him, so the givers of those honors could have no power to give away the right of posterity, and though they might say "we choose you for our head," they could not without manifest injustice to their children say "that your children and your children's children shall reign over our's forever." Because such an unwise, unjust, unnatural compact might (perhaps) in the next succession put them under the government of a rogue or a fool. Most wise men in their private sentiments have ever treated hereditary right with contempt; yet it is one of those evils which when once established is not easily removed: many submit from fear, others from superstition, and the more powerful part shares with the king the plunder of the rest.

This is supposing the present race of kings in the world to have had an honorable origin: Whereas it is more than probable, that, could we take off the dark covering of antiquity and trace them to their first rise, we should find the first of them nothing better than the principal ruffian of some restless gang; whose savage manners or pre-eminence in subtility obtained him the title of chief among plunderers: and who by increasing in power and extending his depredations, over-awed the quiet and defenceless to purchase their safety by frequent contributions. Yet his electors could have no idea of giving hereditary right to his descendants, because such a perpetual exclusion of themselves was incompatible with the free and unrestrained principles they profess to live by. Wherefore, hereditary succession in the early ages of monarchy could not take place as a matter of claim, but as something casual or complemental; but as few or no records were extant in those days, and traditionary history stuff'd with fables, it was very easy, after the lapse of a few generations, to trump up some superstitious tale conveniently timed, Mahomet-like, to cram hereditary right down the throats of the vulgar. Perhaps the disorders which threatened, or seemed to threaten, on the decease of a leader and the choice of a new one (for elections among ruffians could not be very orderly) induced many at first to favour hereditary pretensions; by which means it happened, as it hath happened since, that what at first was submitted to as a convenience was afterwards claimed as a right.

England since the conquest hath known some few good monarchs, but groaned beneath a much larger number of bad ones; yet no man in his senses can say that their claim under William the Conqueror is a very honorable one. A French Bastard landing with an armed Banditti and establishing himself king of England against the consent of the natives, is in plain terms a very paltry rascally original.—It certainly hath no divinity in it. However it is needless to spend much time in exposing the folly of hereditary right; if there are any so weak as to believe it, let them promiscuously worship the Ass and the Lion, and welcome. I shall neither copy their humility, nor disturb their devotion.

Yet I should be glad to ask how they suppose Kings

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66 Mahomet-like, an allusion to the belief that Mohammed, prophet of Islam, carefully timed for his political purposes the revelations upon which the Koran is based

came at first? The question admits but of three answers, viz. either by lot, by election, or by usurpation. If the first king was taken by lot, it establishes a precedent for the next, which excludes hereditary succession. Saul was by lot, yet the succession was not hereditary, neither does it appear from that transaction that there was any intention it ever should. If the first king of any country was by election that likewise establishes a precedent for the next; for to say that the right of all future generations is taken away by the act of the first electors in their choice not only of a king, but of a family of kings for ever, hath no parallel in or out of scripture but the doctrine of original sin, which supposes the free will of all men lost in Adam; and from such comparison, and it will admit of no other, hereditary succession can derive no glory. For as in Adam all sinned, and as in the first electors all men obeyed; as in the one all mankind were subjected to Satan, and in the other to sovereignty; as our innocence was lost in the first, and our authority in the last; and as both disable us from reassuming some former state and privilege, it unanswerably follows that original sin and hereditary succession are parallels. Dishonorable rank! inglorious connection! yet the most subtle sophist cannot produce a juster simile.

As to usurpation, no man will be so hardy as to defend it; and that William the Conqueror was an usurper is a fact not to be contradicted. The plain truth is, that the antiquity of English monarchy will not bear looking into.

But it is not so much the absurdity as the evil of hereditary succession which concerns mankind. Did it insure a race of good and wise men it would have the seal of divine authority, but as it opens a door to the *foolish*, the *wicked*, and the *improper*, it hath in it the nature of oppression. Men who look upon themselves born to reign, and others to obey, soon grow insolent.—Selected from the rest of mankind, their minds are early poisoned by importance; and the world they act in differs so materially from the world at large, that they have but little opportunity of knowing its true interest, and when they succeed to the government are frequently the most ignorant and unfit of any throughout the dominions.

Another evil which attends hereditary succession is, that the throne is subject to be possessed by a minor at any age; all which time the regency acting under the cover of a king have every opportunity and inducement to betray their trust. The same national misfortune happens when a king worn out with age and infirmity enters the last stage of human weakness. In both these cases the public becomes a prey to every miscreant who can temper successfully with the follies either of age or infancy.

The most plausible plea which hath ever been offered in favor of hereditary succession is, that it preserves a Nation from civil wars; and were this true, it would be weighty; whereas it is the most barefaced falsity ever imposed upon mankind. The whole history of England disowns the fact. Thirty kings and two minors have reigned in that distracted kingdom since the conquest, in which time there has been (including the Revolution) no less than eight civil wars and nineteen Rebellions. Wherefore instead of making for peace, it makes against it, and destroys the very foundation it seems to stand upon.

The contest for monarchy and succession, between the houses of York and Lancaster, laid England in a scene of blood for many years. Twelve pitched battles besides skirmishes and sieges were fought between Henry and Edward. Twice was Henry prisoner to Edward, who in his turn was prisoner to Henry. And so uncertain is the fate of war and the temper of a Nation, when nothing but personal matters are the ground of a quarrel, that Henry was taken in triumph from a prison to a palace, and Edward obliged to fly from a palace to a foreign land; yet, as sudden transitions of temper are seldom lasting, Henry in his turn was driven from the throne, and Edward recalled to succeed him. The parliament always following the strongest side.

This contest began in the reign of Henry the 6th, and was not entirely extinguished till Henry the 7th, in whom the families were united. Including a period of 67 years, viz. from 1422 to 1489.

In short, monarchy and succession have laid (not this or that kingdom only) but the world in blood and ashes. 'Tis a form of government which the word of God bears testimony against, and blood will attend it.

If we inquire into the business of a King, we shall

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4 Saul . . . lot. See I Kings 10:17-24 • 65 York and Lancaster, the two houses which contended for the rule in England after the deposition of Richard II in 1399. The period described by Paine is that of the Wars of the Roses, so-called because the emblem of the Lancastrians was a red rose, that of the Yorkists, a white one

find that in some countries they may have none; and after sauntering away their lives without pleasure to themselves or advantages to the nation, withdraw from the scene, and leave their successors to tread the same idle round. In absolute monarchies the whole weight of business civil and military lies on the King; the children of Israel in their request for a King urged this plea, "that he may judge us, and go out before us and fight our battles." But in countries where he is neither a judge nor a general, as in England, a man would be puzzled to know what *is* his business.

The nearer any government approaches to a Republic, the less business there is for a King. It is somewhat difficult to find a proper name for the government of England. Sir William Meredith calls it a Republic; but in its present state it is unworthy of the name, because the corrupt influence of the Crown, by having all the places in its disposal, hath so effectually swallowed up the power, and eaten out the virtue of the House of Commons (the Republican part in the constitution) that the government of England is nearly as monarchical as that of France or Spain. Men fall out with names without understanding them. For 'tis the republican and not the monarchical part of the constitution of England which Englishmen glory in, viz. the liberty of choosing an house of commons from out of their own body—and it is easy to see that when republican virtues fail, slavery ensues. Why is the Constitution of England sickly? but because monarchy hath poisoned the Republic; the crown has engrossed the Commons.

In England a king hath little more to do than to make war and give away places; which in plain terms is to empoverish the nation and set it together by the ears. A pretty business indeed for a man to be allowed eight hundred thousand sterling a year for, and worshipped into the bargain! Of more worth is one honest man to society, and in the sight of God, than all the crowned ruffians that ever lived.

THOUGHTS ON THE PRESENT STATE OF AMERICAN AFFAIRS

In the following pages I offer nothing more than simple facts, plain arguments, and common sense: and have no other preliminaries to settle with the reader, than that he will divest himself of prejudice and prepossession, and suffer his reason and his feeling to determine for themselves: that he will put on, or rather that he will not put off, the true character of a man, and generously enlarge his views beyond the present day.

Volumes have been written on the subject of the struggle between England and America. Men of all ranks have embarked in the controversy, from different motives, and with various designs; but all have been ineffectual, and the period of debate is closed. Arms as the last resource decide the contest; the appeal was the choice of the King, and the continent has accepted the challenge.

It hath been reported of the late Mr. Pelham (who tho' an able minister was not without his faults) that on his being attacked in the House of Commons on the score that his measures were only of a temporary kind, replied, "*they will last my time.*" Should a thought so fatal and unmanly possess the Colonies in the present contest, the name of Ancestors will be remembered by future generations with detestation.

The Sun never shined on a cause of greater worth. 'Tis not the affair of a City, a County, a Province, or a Kingdom; but of a Continent—of at least one eighth part of the habitable globe. 'Tis not the concern of a day, a year, or an age; posterity are virtually involved in the contest, and will be more or less affected even to the end of time by the proceedings now. Now is the seedtime of continental union, faith and honor. The least fracture now, will be like a name engraved with the point of a pin on the tender rind of a young oak; the wound would enlarge with the tree, and posterity read it in full grown characters.

By referring the matter from argument to arms, a new æra for politics is struck—a new method of thinking has arisen. All plans, proposals, &c. prior to the nineteenth of April, i. e. to the commencement of hostilities, are like the almanacks of last year; which though proper then, are superceded and useless now. Whatever was advanced by the advocates on either side of the

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15 **Sir William Meredith** (1725?-1790), an English political leader, at one time prominent in the Whig opposition to the Tory ministry • 55 **Mr. Pelham**, Henry Pelham (1694-1754), prime minister of Great Britain, 1744-1754 • 78 **nineteenth of April**, the date of the engagement at Lexington

question then, terminated in one and the same point, viz. a union with Great Britain; the only difference between the parties was the method of effecting it; the one proposing force, the other friendship; but it has so far happened that the first has failed, and the second has withdrawn her influence.

As much has been said of the advantages of reconciliation, which, like an agreeable dream, has passed away and left us as we were, it is but right that we should examine the contrary side of the argument, and enquire into some of the many material injuries which these Colonies sustain, and always will sustain, by being connected with and dependant on Great Britain. To examine that connection and dependance, on the principles of nature and common sense, to see what we have to trust to, if separated, and what we are to expect, if dependant.

I have heard it asserted by some, that as America has flourished under her former connection with Great Britain, the same connection is necessary toward her future happiness, and will always have the same effect. —Nothing can be more fallacious than this kind of argument.—We may as well assert that because a child has thrived upon milk, that it is never to have meat, or that the first twenty years of our lives is to become a precedent for the next twenty. But even this is admitting more than is true; for I answer roundly, that America would have flourished as much, and probably much more, had no European power taken any notice of her. The commerce by which she hath enriched herself are the necessaries of life, and will always have a market while eating is the custom of Europe.

But she has protected us, say some. That she hath engrossed us is true, and defended the Continent at our expence as well as her own, is admitted, and she would have defended Turkey from the same motive, *viz.* for the sake of trade and dominion.

Alas! we have been long led away by ancient prejudices and made large sacrifices to superstition. We have boasted the protection of Great Britain, without considering, that her motive was *interest* not *attachment;* and that she did not protect us from *our enemies* on *our account,* but from her enemies on her own account, from those who had no quarrel with us on any *other account,* and who will always be our enemies on the *same account.* Let Britain waive her pretensions to the continent, or the continent throw off the dependance, and we should be at peace with France and Spain were they at war with Britain. The miseries of Hanover's last war ought to warn us against connections.

It hath lately been asserted in Parliament, that the colonies have no relation to each other but through the parent country, i. e. that Pennsylvania and the Jerseys, and so on for the rest, are sister colonies by the way of England; this is certainly a very roundabout way of proving relationship, but it is the nearest and only true way of proving enmity (or enemyship, if I may so call it). France and Spain never were, nor perhaps ever will be, our enemies as *Americans,* but as our being the *subjects of Great Britain.*

But Britain is the parent country, say some. Then the more shame upon her conduct. Even brutes do not devour their young, nor savages make war upon their families; wherefore, the assertion, if true, turns to her reproach; but it happens not to be true, or only partly so, and the phrase *parent* or *mother country* hath been jesuitically adopted by the King and his parasites, with a low papistical design of gaining an unfair bias on the credulous weakness of our minds. Europe, and not England, is the parent country of America. This new world hath been the asylum for the persecuted lovers of civil and religious liberty from *every part* of Europe. Hither have they fled, not from the tender embraces of the mother, but from the cruelty of the monster; and it is so far true of England, that the same tyranny which drove the first emigrants from home, pursues their descendants still.

In this extensive quarter of the globe, we forget the narrow limits of three hundred and sixty miles (the extent of England) and carry our friendship on a larger scale; we claim brotherhood with every European Christian, and triumph in the generosity of the sentiment.

It is pleasant to observe by what regular gradations we surmount the force of local prejudices, as we enlarge our acquaintance with the world. A man born in any town in England divided into parishes, will naturally associate most with his fellow parishioners (because their interests in many cases will be common) and distinguish him by the name of *neighbor;* if he meet him but a

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48 Hanover's last war, the Seven Years' War (1756-1763), estimated to have cost 900,000 lives

few miles from home, he drops the narrow idea of a street, and salutes him by the name of *townsman;* if he travel out of the country and meet him in any other, he forgets the minor divisions of street and town, and calls him *country-man, i.e. county-man;* but if in their foreign excursions they should associate in France, or any other part of *Europe,* their local remembrance would be enlarged into that of *Englishman.* And by a just parity of reasoning, all Europeans meeting in America, or any other quarter of the globe, are *countrymen;* for England, Holland, Germany, or Sweden, when compared with the whole, stand in the same places on the larger scale, which the divisions of street, town, and county do on the smaller ones; Distinctions too limited for Continental minds. Not one third of the inhabitants, even of this province are of English descent. Wherefore, I reprobate the phrase of parent or mother country applied to England only, as being false, selfish, narrow and ungenerous.

But, admitting that we were all of English descent, what does it amount to? Nothing. Britain, being now an open enemy, extinguishes every other name and title: and to say that reconciliation is our duty, is truly farcical. The first king of England, of the present line (William the Conqueror) was a Frenchman, and half the Peers of England are descendants from the same country; wherefore, by the same method of reasoning, England ought to be governed by France.

Much hath been said of the united strength of Britain and the Colonies, that in conjunction they might bid defiance to the world: But this is mere presumption, the fate of war is uncertain, neither do the expressions mean any thing, for this Continent would never suffer itself to be drained of inhabitants, to support the British arms in either Asia, Africa or Europe.

Besides, what have we to do with setting the world at defiance? Our plan is commerce, and that, well attended to, will secure us the peace and friendship of all Europe; because it is the enterest of all Europe to have America a *free port.* Her trade will always be a protection, and her barrenness of gold and silver secure her from invaders.

I challenge the warmest advocate of reconciliation to show a single advantage that this Continent can reap, by being connected with Great Britain. I repeat the challenge, not a single advantage is derived. Our corn will fetch its price in any market in Europe, and our imported goods must be paid for buy them where we will.

But the injuries and disadvantages which we sustain by that connection, are without number; and our duty to mankind at large, as well as to ourselves, instruct us to renounce the alliance: Because, any submission to, or dependance on, Great Britain, tends directly to involve this Continent in European wars and quarrels, and set us at variance with nations who would otherwise seek our friendship, and against whom we have neither anger nor complaint. As Europe is our market for trade, we ought to form no partial connection with any part of it. 'Tis the true interest of America to steer clear of European contentions, which she can never do, while by her dependance on Britain, she is made the make-weight in the scale of British politics.

Europe is too thickly planted with kingdoms to be long at peace, and whenever a war breaks out between England and any foreign power, the trade of America goes to ruin, *because of her connection with Britain.* The next war may not turn out like the last, and should it not, the advocates for reconciliation now will be wishing for separation then, because neutrality in that case would be a safer convoy than a man of war. Everything that is right or reasonable pleads for separation. The blood of the slain, the weeping voice of nature cries, 'TIS TIME TO PART. Even the distance at which the Almighty hath placed England and America is a strong and natural proof that the authority of the one over the other, was never the design of heaven. The time likewise at which the Continent was discovered, adds weight to the argument, and the manner in which it was peopled, encreases the force of it.—The Reformation was preceded by the discovery of America: As if the Almighty graciously meant to open a sanctuary to the persecuted in future years, when home should afford neither friendship nor safety.

The authority of Great Britain over this Continent, is a form of government, which sooner or later must have an end. And a serious mind can draw no true pleasure by looking forward, under the painful and positive conviction that what he calls "the present constitution" is

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16 this province, Pennsylvania • **29 Much . . . said.** See, for example, Jonathan Boucher's preface, quoted on p. 314

merely temporary. As parents, we can have no joy, knowing that *this government* is not sufficiently lasting to insure any thing which we may bequeath to posterity: And by a plain method of argument, as we are running the next generation into debt, we ought to do the work of it, otherwise we use them meanly and pitifully. In order to discover the line of our duty rightly, we should take our children in our hand, and fix our station a few years farther into life; that eminence will present a prospect which a few present fears and prejudices conceal from our sight.

Though I would carefully avoid giving unnecessary offence, yet I am inclined to believe, that all those who espouse the doctrine of reconciliation, may be included within the following descriptions.

Interested men, who are not to be trusted, weak men who *cannot* see, prejudiced men who *will not* see, and a certain set of moderate men who think better of the European world than it deserves; and this last class, by an ill-judged deliberation, will be the cause of more calamities to this continent than all the other three.

It is the good fortune of many to live distant from the scene of present sorrow; the evil is not sufficiently brought to *their* doors to make *them* feel the precariousness with which all American property is possessed. But let our imaginations transport us a few moments to Boston; that seat of wretchedness will teach us wisdom, and instruct us for ever to renounce a power in whom we can have no trust. The inhabitants of that unfortunate city who but a few months ago were in ease and affluence, have now no other alternative than to stay and starve, or turn out to beg. Endangered by the fire of their friends if they continue within the city, and plundered by the soldiery if they leave it, in their present situation they are prisoners without the hope of redemption, and in a general attack for their relief they would be exposed to the fury of both armies.

Men of passive tempers look somewhat lightly over the offences of Great Britain, and, still hoping for the best, are apt to call out, *come, come, we shall be friends again for all this.* But examine the passions and feelings of mankind: Bring the doctrine of reconciliation to the touchstone of nature, and then tell me whether you can hereafter love, honor, and faithfully serve the power that hath carried fire and sword into your land? If you cannot do all these, then are you only deceiving yourselves, and by your delay bringing ruin upon posterity. Your future connection with Britain, whom you can neither love nor honor, will be forced and unnatural, and being formed only on the plan of present convenience, will in a little time fall into a relapse more wretched than the first. But if you say, you can still pass the violations over, then I ask, Hath your house been burnt? Hath your property been destroyed before your face? Are your wife and children destitute of a bed to lie on, or bread to live on? Have you lost a parent or child by their hands, and yourself the ruined and wretched survivor? If you have not, then are you not a judge of those who have. But if you have, and can still shake hands with the murderers, then are you unworthy the name of husband, father, friend, or lover, and whatever may be your rank or title in life, you have the heart of a coward, and the spirit of a sycophant.

This is not inflaming or exaggerating matters, but trying them by those feelings and affections which nature justifies, and without which we should be incapable of discharging the social duties of life, or enjoying the felicities of it. I mean not to exhibit horror for the purpose of provoking revenge, but to awaken us from fatal and unmanly slumbers, that we may pursue determinately some fixed object. 'Tis not in the power of Britain or of Europe to conquer America, if she doth not conquer herself by *delay* and *timidity*. The present winter is worth an age if rightly employed, but if lost or neglected the whole continent will partake of the misfortune; and there is no punishment which that man doth not deserve, be he who, or what, or where he will, that may be the means of sacrificing a season so precious and useful.

'Tis repugnant to reason, to the universal order of things; to all examples from former ages, to suppose, that this continent can long remain subject to any external power. The most sanguine in Britain doth not think so. The utmost stretch of human wisdom cannot, at this time, compass a plan, short of separation, which can promise the continent even a year's security. Reconciliation is *now* a fallacious dream. Nature has deserted the connection, and art cannot supply her place. For, as Milton wisely expresses, "never can true reconcilement grow where wounds of deadly hate have pierced so deep."

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27 **Boston,** besieged from July 1775 until March 1776 • 88 **Milton.** See **Paradise Lost**, Bk. IV, ll. 98-99

Every quiet method for peace hath been ineffectual. Our prayers have been rejected with disdain; and hath tended to convince us that nothing flatters vanity or confirms obstinacy in Kings more than repeated petitioning—and nothing hath contributed more than that very measure to make the Kings of Europe absolute. Witness Denmark and Sweden. Wherefore, since nothing but blows will do, for God's sake let us come to a final separation, and not leave the next generation to be cutting throats under the violated unmeaning names of parent and child.

To say they will never attempt it again is idle and visionary; we thought so at the repeal of the stamp act, yet a year or two undeceived us; as well may we suppose that nations which have been once defeated will never renew the quarrel.

As to government matters, 'tis not in the power of Britain to do this Continent justice: the business of it will soon be too weighty and intricate to be managed with any tolerable degree of convenience, by a power so distant from us, and so very ignorant of us; for if they cannot conquer us they cannot govern us. To be always running three or four thousand miles with a tale or a petition, waiting four or five months for an answer, which, when obtained, requires five or six more to explain it in, will in a few years be looked upon as folly and childishness.—There was a time when it was proper, and there is a proper time for it to cease.

Small islands not capable of protecting themselves, are the proper objects for government to take under their care; but there is something absurd in supposing a Continent to be perpetually governed by an island. In no instance hath nature made the satellite larger than its primary planet; and as England and America, with respect to each other, reverse the common order of nature, it is evident that they belong to different systems. England to Europe: America to itself.

I am not induced by motives of pride, party or resentment to espouse the doctrine of separation and independance; I am clearly, positively, and conscientiously persuaded that 'tis the true interest of this continent to be so; that everything short of *that* is mere patchwork, that it can afford no lasting felicity—that it is leaving the sword to our children, and shrinking back at a time when a little more, a little further, would have rendered this continent the glory of the earth.

As Britain hath not manifested the least inclination towards a compromise, we may be assured that no terms can be obtained worthy the acceptance of the continent, or any ways equal to the expence of blood and treasure we have been already put to.

The object contended for, ought always to bear some just proportion to the expence. The removal of North, or the whole detestable junto, is a matter unworthy the millions we have expended. A temporary stoppage of trade was an inconvenience, which would have sufficiently balanced the repeal of all the acts complained of, had such repeals been obtained; but if the whole Continent must take up arms, if every man must be a soldier, 'tis scarcely worth our while to fight against a contemptible ministry only. Dearly, dearly do we pay for the repeal of the acts, if that is all we fight for; for, in a just estimation 'tis as great a folly to pay a bunker-hill price for law as for land. As I have always considered the independancy of this Continent, as an event which sooner or later must arrive, so from the late rapid progress of the Continent to maturity, the event cannot be far off. Wherefore, on the breaking out of hostilities, it was not worth the while to have disputed a matter which time would have finally redressed, unless we meant to be in earnest: otherwise it is like wasting an estate on a suit at law, to regulate the trespasses of a tenant whose lease is just expiring. No man was a warmer wisher for a reconciliation than myself, before the fatal nineteenth of April, 1775, but the moment the event of that day was made known, I rejected the hardened, sullen-tempered Pharaoh of England for ever; and disdain the wretch, that with the pretended title of FATHER OF HIS PEOPLE can unfeelingly hear of their slaughter, and composedly sleep with their blood upon his soul.

But admitting that matters were now made up, what would be the event? I answer, the ruin of the continent. And that for several reasons.

First. The powers of governing still remaining in the hands of the king, he will have a negative over the whole legislation of this Continent. And as he hath

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7 **Denmark and Sweden,** where quarrels among the nobles had led to the establishment of absolute monarchy, under Frederick III of Denmark in 1660 and Gustavus III of Sweden in 1772 • 53 **North,** Lord North (1733-1792), prime minister of Great Britain, 1770-1782 • 63 **bunker-hill price.** Killed and wounded numbered nearly one third of the troops engaged on both sides

shown himself such an inveterate enemy to liberty, and discovered such a thirst for arbitrary power, is he, or is he not, a proper person to say to these Colonies, *You shall make no laws but what I please!?* And is there any inhabitant of America so ignorant as not to know, that according to what is called the *present Constitution,* this Continent can make no laws but what the king gives leave to; and is there any man so unwise as not to see, that (considering what has happened) he will suffer no law to be made here but such as suits his purpose? We may be as effectually enslaved by the want of laws in America, as by submitting to laws made for us in England. After matters are made up, (as it is called) can there be any doubt, but the whole power of the crown will be exerted to keep this Continent as low and humble as possible? Instead of going forward we shall go backward, or be perpetually quarrelling, or ridiculously petitioning.—We are already greater than the King wishes us to be, and will he not hereafter endeavor to make us less? To bring the matter to one point, Is the power who is jealous of our prosperity, a proper power to govern us? Whoever says No, to this question, is an Independent for independency means no more than this, whether we shall make our own laws, or, whether the King, the greatest enemy this Continent hath, or can have, shall tell us *"there shall be no laws but such as I like."*

But the King, you'll say, has a negative in England; the people there can make no laws without his consent. In point of right and good order, it is something very ridiculous that a youth of twenty-one (which hath often happened) shall say to several millions of people older and wiser than himself, "I forbid this or that act of yours to be law." But in this place I decline this sort of reply, tho' I will never cease to expose the absurdity of it, and only answer that England being the King's residence, and America not so, makes quite another case. The King's negative here is ten times more dangerous and fatal than it can be in England; for *there* he will scarcely refuse his consent to a bill for putting England into as strong a state of defence as possible, and in America he would never suffer such a bill to be passed.

America is only a secondary object in the system of British politics, England consults the good of *this* country no further than it answers her *own* purpose. Wherefore, her own interest leads her to suppress the growth of *ours,* in every case which doth not promote *her* advantage, or in the least interfere with it. A pretty state we should soon be in under such a second-hand government, considering what has happened! Men do not change from enemies to friends by the alteration of a name: And in order to show that reconciliation *now* is a dangerous doctrine, I affirm, *that it would be policy in the king at this time to repeal the acts, for the sake of reinstating himself in the government of the provinces;* In order that HE MAY ACCOMPLISH BY CRAFT AND SUBTLETY, IN THE LONG RUN, WHAT HE CANNOT DO BY FORCE AND VIOLENCE IN THE SHORT ONE. Reconciliation and ruin are nearly related.

Secondly.—That as even the best terms which we can expect to obtain can amount to no more than a temporary expedient, or a kind of government by guardianship, which can last no longer than till the Colonies come of age, so the general face and state of things in the interim will be unsettled and unpromising: Emigrants of property will not choose to come to a country whose form of government hangs but by a thread, and who is every day tottering on the brink of commotion and disturbance: And numbers of the present inhabitants would lay hold of the interval to dispose of their effects, and quit the continent.

But the most powerful of all arguments is, that nothing but independence, i. e. a continental form of government, can keep the peace of the continent and preserve it inviolate from civil wars. I dread the event of a reconciliation with Britain *now,* as it is more than probable that it will be followed by a revolt some where or other, the consequences of which may be far more fatal than all malice of Britain.

Thousands are already ruined by British barbarity; (thousands more will probably suffer the same fate). Those men have other feelings than us who have nothing suffered. All they *now* possess is liberty; what they have before enjoyed is sacrificed to its service, and having nothing more to lose they disdain submission. Besides, the general temper of the colonies, towards a British government will be like that of a youth who is nearly out of his time; they will care very little about her: And a government which cannot preserve the peace is no government at all, and in that case we pay our money for nothing; and pray what is it that Britain can do, whose power will be wholly on paper, should a civil

tumult break out the very day after reconciliation? I have heard some men say, many of whom I believe spoke without thinking, that they dreaded an independence, fearing that it would produce civil wars: It is but seldom that our first thoughts are truly correct, and that is the case here; for there is ten times more to dread from a patched up connection than from independence. I make the sufferer's case my own, and I protest, that were I driven from house and home, my property destroyed, and my circumstances ruined, that as a man, sensible of injuries, I could never relish the doctrine of reconciliation, or consider myself bound thereby.

The colonies have manifested such a spirit of good order and obedience to continental government, as is sufficient to make every reasonable person easy and happy on that head. No man can assign the least pretence for his fears, on any other grounds, than such as are truly childish and ridiculous, viz., that one colony will be striving for superiority over another.

Where there are no distinctions there can be no superiority; perfect equality affords no temptation. The Republics of Europe are all (and we may say always) in peace. Holland and Switzerland are without wars, foreign or domestic: Monarchical governments, it is true, are never long at rest: the crown itself is a temptation to enterprising ruffians at *home;* and that degree of pride and insolence ever attendant on regal authority, swells into a rupture with foreign powers in instances where a republican government, by being formed on more natural principles, would negociate the mistake.

If there is any true cause of fear regarding independence, it is because no plan is yet laid down. Men do not see their way out.—Wherefore, as an opening into that business I offer the following hints; at the same time modesty affirming, that I have no other opinion of them myself, than that they may be the means of giving rise to something better. Could the straggling thoughts of individuals be collected, they would frequently form materials for wise and able men to improve into useful matter.

LET the assemblies be annual, with a president only. The representation more equal, their business wholly domestic, and subject to the authority of a Continental Congress.

Let each Colony be divided into six, eight, or ten, convenient districts, each district to send a proper number of Delegates to Congress, so that each Colony send at least thirty. The whole number in Congress will be at least 390. Each Congress to sit and to choose a President by the following method. When the Delegates are met, let a colony be taken from the whole thirteen Colonies by lot, after which let the Congress choose (by ballot) a president from out of the Delegates of that province. In the next Congress, let a Colony be taken by lot from twelve only, omitting that Colony from which the president was taken in the former Congress, and so proceeding on till the whole thirteen shall have had their proper rotation. And in order that nothing may pass into a law but what is satisfactorily just, not less than three fifths of the Congress to be called a majority.—He that will promote discord, under a government so equally formed as this, would have joined Lucifer in his revolt.

But as there is a peculiar delicacy from whom, or in what manner, this business must first arise, and as it seems most agreeable and consistent that it should come from some intermediate body between the governed and the governors, that is, between the Congress and the People, Let a CONTINENTAL CONFERENCE be held in the following manner, and for the following purpose.

A Committee of twenty six members of Congress, *viz.* Two for each colony. Two members from each house or Assembly, or Provincial convention; and five Representatives of the people at large, to be chosen in the capital city or town of each Province, for, and in behalf of the whole Province, by as many qualified voters as shall think proper to attend from all parts of the Province for that purpose; or, if more convenient, the Representatives may be chosen in two or three of the most populous parts thereof. In this CONFERENCE, thus assembled, will be united the two grand principles of business, *knowledge* and *power.* The members of Congress, Assemblies, or Conventions, by having had experience in national concerns, will be able and useful counsellors, and the

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23 **Holland and Switzerland.** The United Netherlands (northern Holland) were a republic until 1814; they and Switzerland were frequently cited by Americans as precedents in their arguments against monarchy • 41 **a president only.** Paine's fear of monarchy was accompanied by such a strong distrust of executive power that he favored abolishing the office of governor of an individual state. It will also be evident from his proposed scheme of government that he was opposed both to a bicameral legislature and to the principle of checks and balances

whole, being impowered by the people, will have a truly legal authority.

The conferring members being met, let their business be to frame a CONTINENTAL CHARTER, or Charter of the United Colonies; (answering to what is called the Magna Charta of England) fixing the number and manner of choosing members of Congress, Members of Assembly, with their date of sitting; and drawing the line of business and jurisdiction between them: Always remembering, that our strength is continental, not provincial. Securing freedom and property to all men, and above all things, the free exercise of religion, according to the dictates of conscience; with such other matter as it is necessary for a charter to contain. Immediately after which, the said conference to dissolve, and the bodies which shall be chosen conformable to the said charter, to be the legislators and governors of this continent for the time being: Whose peace and happiness, may God preserve. AMEN.

Should any body of men be hereafter delegated for this or some similar purpose, I offer them the following extracts from that wise observer on governments, DRAGONETTI. "The science," says he, "of the politician consists in fixing the true point of happiness and freedom. Those men would deserve the gratitude of ages, who should discover a mode of government that contained the greatest sum of individual happiness, with the least national expense."

But where, say some, is the king of America? I'll tell you, Friend, he reigns above, and doth not make havoc of mankind like the Royal Brute of Great Britain. Yet that we may not appear to be defective even in earthly honors, let a day be solemnly set apart for proclaiming the Charter; let it be brought forth placed on the divine law, the Word of God; let a Crown be placed thereon, by which the world may know, that so far as we approve of monarchy, that in America THE LAW IS KING. For as in absolute governments the king is law, so in free countries the law *ought* to BE king, and there ought to be no other. But lest any ill use should afterwards arise, let the Crown at the conclusion of the ceremony be demolished, and scattered among the People whose right it is.

A government of our own is our natural right: and when a man seriously reflects on the precariousness of human affairs, he will become convinced, that it is infinitely wiser and safer, to form a Constitution of our own in a cool deliberate manner, while we have it in our power, than to trust such an interesting event to time and chance. If we omit it now, some Massanello may hereafter arise, who, laying hold of popular disquietudes, may collect together the desperate and the discontented, and by assuming to themselves the powers of government, finally sweep away the liberties of the Continent like a deluge. Should the government of America return again into the hands of Britain, the tottering situation of things will be a temptation for some desperate adventurer to try his fortune; and in such a case, what relief can Britain give? Ere she could hear the news, the fatal business might be done; and ourselves suffering like the wretched Britons under the oppression of the conqueror. Ye that oppose independance now, ye know not what ye do; ye are opening a door to eternal tyranny, by keeping vacant the seat of government. There are thousands and tens of thousands, who would think it glorious to expel from the Continent, that barbarous and hellish power, which hath stirred up the Indians and the Negroes to destroy us; the cruelty hath a double guilt, it is dealing brutally by us, and treacherously by them.

To talk of friendship with those in whom our reason forbids us to have faith, and our affections wounded thro' a thousand pores instruct us to detest, is madness and folly. Every day wears out the little remains of kindred between us and them; and can there be any reason to hope, that as the relationship expires, the affection will increase, or that we shall agree better when we have ten times more and greater concerns to quarrel over than ever?

Ye that tell us of harmony and reconciliation, can ye restore to us the time that is past? Can ye give to prostitution its former innocence? neither can ye reconcile Britain and America. The last cord now is broken, the people of England are presenting addresses against

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23 **Dragonetti,** Giacinto, Marquis degl' Dragonetti (1738-1818), a Neapolitan jurist • 28 **expense.** "Dragonetti on 'Virtues and Rewards.' "—Paine • 50 **Massanello.** "Thomas Anello, otherwise Massanello, a fisherman of Naples, who after spiriting up his countrymen in the public market place, against the oppression of the Spaniards, to whom the place was then subject, prompted them to revolts, and in the space of a day became king."—Paine, in later editions

us. There are injuries which nature cannot forgive; she would cease to be nature if she did. As well can the lover forgive the ravisher of his mistress, as the Continent forgive the murders of Britain. The Almighty hath implanted in us these inextinguishable feelings for good and wise purposes. They are the guardians of his image in our hearts. They distinguish us from the herd of common animals. The social compact would dissolve, and justice be extirpated from the earth, or have only a casual existence were we callous to the touches of affection. The robber and the murderer would often escape unpunished, did not the injuries which our tempers sustain, provoke us into justice.

O! ye that love mankind! Ye that dare oppose not only the tyranny but the tyrant, stand forth! Every spot of the old world is over-run with oppression. Freedom hath been hunted round the globe. Asia and Africa have long expelled her.—Europe regards her like a stranger, and England hath given her warning to depart. O receive the fugitive, and prepare in time an asylum for mankind.

OF THE PRESENT ABILITY OF AMERICA WITH SOME MISCELLANEOUS REFLECTIONS

I have never met a man either in England or America, who hath not confessed his opinion, that a separation between the countries would take place, one time or other: And there is no instance, in which we have shown less judgment; than in endeavoring to describe, what we call, the ripeness or fitness of the Continent for independance.

As all men allow the measure, and vary only in their opinion of the time, let us, in order to remove mistakes, take a general survey of things, and endeavor if possible to find out the very time. But I need not go far, the inquiry ceases at once, for the *time hath found us.* The general concurrence, the glorious union of all things, proves the fact.

'Tis not in numbers but in unity that our great strength lies; yet our present numbers are sufficient to repel the force of all the world. The Continent has at this time the largest body of armed and disciplined men of any power under Heaven: and is just arrived at that pitch of strength, in which no single Colony is able to support itself, and the whole, when united, is able to do any thing. Our land force is more than sufficient, and as to naval affairs, we cannot be insensible that Britain would never suffer an American man of war to be built, while the Continent remained in her hands. Wherefore, we should be no forwarder a hundred years hence in that branch than we are now; but the truth is, we should be less so, because the timber of the country is every day diminishing.

Were the Continent crowded with inhabitants, her sufferings under the present circumstances would be intolerable. The more seaport-towns we had, the more should we have both to defend and to lose. Our present numbers are so happily proportioned to our wants, that no man need be idle. The diminution of trade affords an army, and the necessities of an army create a new trade.

Debts we have none; and whatever we may contract on this account will serve as a glorious memento of our virtue. Can we but leave posterity with a settled form of government, an independent constitution of its own, the purchase at any price will be cheap. But to expend millions for the sake of getting a few vile acts repealed, and routing the present ministry only, is unworthy the charge, and is using posterity with the utmost cruelty; because it is leaving them the great work to do, and a debt upon their backs from which they derive no advantage. Such a thought's unworthy a man of honor, and is the true characteristic of a narrow heart and a pidling politician.

The debt we may contract doth not deserve our regard if the work be but accomplished. No nation ought to be without a debt. A national debt is a national bond; and when it bears no interest, it is in no case a grievance. Britain is oppressed with a debt of upwards of one hundred and forty millions sterling, for which she pays upwards of four millions interest. And as a compensation for her debt, she has a large navy. America is without a debt, and without a navy; yet for a twentieth part of the English national debt, could have a navy as large again. The navy of England is not worth at this time more than three millions and a half sterling.

No country on the globe is so happily situated, or so internally capable of raising a fleet as America. Tar, timber, iron and cordage are her natural produce. We need go abroad for nothing. Whereas the Dutch, who make large profits by hiring out their ships of war to the Spaniards and Portuguese, are obliged to import

most of the materials they use. We ought to view the building a fleet as an article of commerce, it being the natural manufactory of this country. 'Tis the best money we can lay out. A navy when finished is worth more than it cost: And is that nice point in national policy, in which commerce and protection are united. Let us build; if we want them not, we can sell; and by that means re-place our paper currency with ready gold and silver.

In point of manning a fleet, people in general run into great errors; it is not necessary that one fourth part should be sailors. The Terrible privateer, Captain Death, stood the hottest engagement of any ship last war, yet had not twenty sailors on board, though her complement of men was upwards of two hundred. A few able and social sailors will soon instruct a sufficient number of active landsmen in the common work of a ship. Wherefore we never can be more capable of beginning on maritime matters than now, while our timber is standing, our fisheries blocked up, and our sailors and shipwrights out of employ. Men of war, of seventy and eighty guns, were built forty years ago in New England, and why not the same now? Ship building is America's greatest pride, and in which she will, in time, excel the whole world. The great empires of the east are mostly inland, and consequently excluded from the possibility of rivalling her. Africa is in a state of barbarism; and no power in Europe, hath either such an extent of coast, or such an internal supply of materials. Where nature hath given the one, she hath withheld the other; to America only hath she been liberal to both. The vast empire of Russia is almost shut out from the sea; wherefore her boundless forests, her tar, iron, and cordage are only articles of commerce.

In point of safety, ought we to be without a fleet? We are not the little people now, which we were sixty years ago; at that time we might have trusted our property in the streets, or fields rather, and slept securely without locks or bolts to our doors and windows. The case is now altered, and our methods of defence ought to improve with our encrease of property. A common pirate, twelve months ago, might have come up the Delaware, and laid the city of Philadelphia under contribution for what sum he pleased; and the same might have happened to other places. Nay, any daring fellow, in a brig of 14 or 16 guns, might have robbed the whole continent, and carried off half a million of money. These are circumstances which demand our attention, and point out the necessity of naval protection.

Some perhaps will say, that after we have made it up with Britain, she will protect us. Can they be so unwise as to mean, that she will keep a navy in our harbors for that purpose? Common sense will tell us, that the power which hath endeavored to subdue us, is of all others, the most improper to defend us. Conquest may be effected under the pretence of friendship; and ourselves, after a long and brave resistance, be at last cheated into slavery. And if her ships are not to be admitted into our harbors, I would ask, how is she to protect us? A navy three or four thousand miles off can be of little use, and on sudden emergencies, none at all. Wherefore if we must hereafter protect ourselves, why not do it for ourselves? Why do it for another?

The English list of ships of war, is long and formidable, but not a tenth part of them are at any one time fit for service, numbers of them are not in being; yet their names are pompously continued in the list, if only a plank be left of the ship; and not a fifth part of such as are fit for service, can be spared on any one station at one time. The East and West Indies, Mediterranean, Africa, and other parts, over which Britain extends her claim, make large demands upon her navy. From a mixture of prejudice and inattention, we have contracted a false notion respecting the navy of England, and have talked as if we should have the whole of it to encounter at once, and, for that reason, supposed that we must have one as large; which not being instantly practicable, has been made use of by a set of disguised Tories to discourage our beginning thereon. Nothing can be further from truth than this; for if America had only a twentieth part of the naval force of Britain, she would be by far an over-match for her; because, as we neither have, nor claim any foreign dominion, our whole force would be employed on our own coast, where we should, in the long run, have two to one the advantage of those who had three or four thousand miles to sail over, before they could attack us, and the same distance to return in order

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11 **Captain Death,** commander of the Terrible, a British privateer captured by the French on December 28, 1756, after a murderous battle. About four hundred men were killed. "Death" was of course a pseudonym; his lieutenants were "Spirit" and "Ghost"

to refit and recruit. And although Britain, by her fleet, hath a check over our trade to Europe, we have as large a one over her trade to the West Indies, which, by laying in the neighborhood of the Continent lies entirely at its mercy.

Some method might be fallen on to keep up a naval force in time of peace, if we should not judge it necessary to support a constant navy. If premiums were to be given to merchants to build and employ in their service, ships mounted with 20, 30, 40, or 50 guns, (the premiums to be in proportion to the loss of bulk to the merchant,) fifty or sixty of those ships, with a few guardships on constant duty, would keep up a sufficient navy, and that without burdening ourselves with the evil so loudly complained of in England, of suffering their fleet in time of peace to lie rotting in the docks. To unite the sinews of commerce and defence is sound policy; for when our strength and our riches play into each other's hand, we need fear no external enemy.

In almost every article of defence we abound. Hemp flourishes even to rankness, so that we need not want cordage. Our iron is superior to that of other countries. Our small arms equal to any in the world. Cannon we can cast at pleasure. Saltpeter and gunpowder we are every day producing. Our knowledge is hourly improving. Resolution is our inherent character, and courage has never yet forsaken us. Wherefore, what is it that we want? Why is it that we hesitate? From Britain we can expect nothing but ruin. If she is once admitted to the government of America again, this continent will not be worth living in. Jealousies will be always arising; insurrections will be constantly happening; and who will go forth to quell them? Who will venture his life to reduce his own countrymen to a foreign obedience? The difference between Pennsylvania and Connecticut, respecting some unlocated lands, shows the insignificance of a British government, and fully proves that nothing but Continental authority can regulate Continental matters.

Another reason why the present time is preferable to all others, is, that the fewer our numbers are, the more land there is yet unoccupied, which, instead of being lavished by the king on his worthless dependants, may be hereafter supplied, not only to the discharge of the present debt, but to the constant support of government. No nation under Heaven hath such an advantage as this.

The infant state of the Colonies, as it is called, so far from being against is an argument in favor of independance. We are sufficiently numerous, and were we more so we might be less united. 'Tis a matter worthy of observation, that the more a country is peopled, the smaller their armies are. In military numbers, the ancients far exceeded the moderns: and the reason is evident, for trade being the consequence of population, men became too much absorbed thereby to attend to any thing else. Commerce diminishes the spirit both of Patriotism and military defence. And history sufficiently informs us, that the bravest achievements were always accomplished in the nonage of a nation. With the increase of commerce England hath lost its spirit. The city of London, notwithstanding its numbers, submits to continued insults with the patience of a coward. The more men have to lose, the less willing are they to venture. The rich are in general slaves to fear, and submit to courtly power with the trembling duplicity of a spaniel.

Youth is the seed-time of good habits as well in nations as in individuals. It might be difficult, if not impossible, to form the Continent into one Government half a century hence. The vast variety of interests, occasioned by an increase of trade and population, would create confusion. Colony would be against Colony. Each being able would scorn each other's assistance: and while the proud and foolish gloried in their little distinctions, the wise would lament that the union had not been formed before. Wherefore the present time is the true time for establishing it. The intimacy which is contracted in infancy, and the friendship which is formed in misfortune, are of all others the most lasting and unalterable. Our present union is marked with both these characters: we are young, and we have been distressed; but our concord hath withstood our troubles, and fixes a memorable Æra for posterity to glory in.

The present time likewise, is that peculiar time which never happens to a nation but once, viz. the time of forming itself into a government. Most nations have let slip the opportunity, and by that means have been compelled to receive laws from their conquerors, instead of making laws for themselves. First, they had a king, and then a form of government; whereas the articles or charter of government should be formed first, and men delegated to execute them afterwards: but from the errors of other nations let us learn wisdom, and lay hold of the present opportunity—*To begin Government at the right end.*

When William the Conqueror subdued England, he gave them law at the point of the sword; and, until we consent that the seat of government in America be legally and authoritatively occupied, we shall be in danger of having it filled by some fortunate ruffian, who may treat us in the same manner, and then, where will be our freedom? where our property?

As to religion, I hold it to be the indispensible duty of government to protect all conscientious professors thereof, and I know of no other business which government has to do therewith. Let a man throw aside that narrowness of soul, that selfishness of principle, which the niggards of all professions are so unwilling to part with, and he will be at once delivered of his fears on that head. Suspicion is the companion of mean souls, and the bane of all good society. For myself, I fully and conscientiously believe, that it is the will of the Almighty that there should be a diversity of religious opinions among us. It affords a larger field for our christian kindness: were we all of one way of thinking, our religious dispositions would want matter for probation; and on this liberal principles I look on the various denominations among us, to be like children of the same family, differing only in what is called their Christian names.

In pages 343 and 344 I threw out a few thoughts on the propriety of a continental charter (for I only presume to offer hints, not plans) and in this place, I take the liberty of re-mentioning the subject, by observing, that a charter is to be understood as a bond of solemn obligation, which the whole enters into, to support the right of every separate part, whether of religion, professional freedom, or property. A right reckoning makes long friends.

I have heretofore likewise mentioned the necessity of a large and equal representation; and there is no political matter which more deserves our attention. A small number of electors, or a small number of representatives, are equally dangerous. But if the number of representatives be not only small, but unequal, the danger is encreased. As an instance of this, I mention the following; when the petition of the associates was before the House of Assembly of Pennsylvania, twenty-eight members only were present; all the Bucks county members, being eight, voted against it, and had seven of the Chester members done the same, this whole province had been governed by two counties only; and this danger it is always exposed to. The unwarrantable stretch likewise, which the house made in their last sitting, to gain an undue authority over the Delegates of that Province, ought to warn the people at large, how they trust power out of their hands. A set of instructions for their Delegates were put together, which in point of sense and business would have dishonoured a school-boy, and after being approved by a few, a very few, without doors, were carried into the house, and there passed in behalf of the whole Colony; whereas, did the whole Colony know with what ill-will that house had entered on some necessary public measures, they would not hesitate a moment to think them unworthy of such a trust.

Immediate necessity makes many things convenient, which if continued would grow into oppressions. Expedience and right are different things. When the calamities of America required a consultation, there was no method so ready, or at that time so proper, as to appoint persons from the several houses of Assembly for that purpose; and the wisdom with which they have proceeded hath preserved this Continent from ruin. But as it is more than probable that we shall never be without a CONGRESS, every well wisher to good order must own that the mode for choosing members of that body, deserves consideration. And I put it as a question to those who make a study of mankind, whether representation and election is not too great a power for one and the same body of men to possess? When we are planning for posterity, we ought to remember that virtue is not hereditary.

It is from our enemies that we often gain excellent maxims, and are frequently surprised into reason by their mistakes. Mr. Cornwall (one of the Lords of the Treasury) treated the petition of the New-York Assembly with contempt, because *that* house, he said, consisted but of twenty-six members, which trifling number, he argued, could not with decency be put for the whole. We thank him for his involuntary honesty.

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40 **petition . . . associates**, an allusion, apparently, to the Association of 1774, a series of nonimportation, nonconsumption, and nonexportation resolutions adopted by the First Continental Congress • 77 **Mr. Cornwall**, Charles Wolfram Cornwall (1735-1789), Lord of the Treasury in North's cabinet, 1774-1780, later speaker of the House of Commons, 1780-1789 • 82 **honesty.** "Those who would fully understand of what great consequence a large and equal representation is to a State, should read Burgh's Political Disquisitions."—Paine. The reference is to **Political Disquisitions** (3 vols., 1774-1775) by James Burgh (1714-1775), a British reformer who was friendly to the American colonists

TO CONCLUDE, however strange it may appear to some, or however unwilling they may be to think so, matters not, but many strong and striking reasons may be given to shew, that nothing can settle our affairs so expeditiously as an open and determined DECLARATION FOR INDEPENDANCE. Some of which are,

First.—It is the custom of Nations, when any two are at war, for some other powers, not engaged in the quarrel, to step in as mediators, and bring about the Preliminaries of a Peace: but while America calls herself the Subject of Great Britain, no power, however well disposed she may be, can offer her Mediation. Wherefore, in our present state we may quarrel on for ever.

Secondly.—It is unreasonable to suppose, that France or Spain will give us any kind of assistance, if we mean only to make use of that assistance for the purpose of repairing the breach, and strengthening the connection between Britain and America; because, those powers would be sufferers by the consequences.

Thirdly.—While we profess ourselves the Subjects of Britain, we must, in the eyes of foreign nations, be considered as Rebels. The precedent is somewhat dangerous to *their peace,* for men to be in arms under the name of Subjects: we, on the spot, can solve the paradox; but to unite resistance and subjection, requires an idea much too refined for common understanding.

Fourthly.—Were a manifesto to be published, and despatched to foreign Courts, setting forth the miseries we have endured, and the peaceful methods which we have ineffectually used for redress; declaring at the same time, that not being able any longer to live happily or safely under the cruel disposition of the British court, we have been driven to the necessity of breaking off all connections with her; at the same time, assuring all such Courts of our peaceable disposition towards them, and of our desire of entering into trade with them; such a memorial would produce more good effects to this Continent, than if a ship were freighted with petitions to Britain.

Under our present denomination of British Subjects, we can neither be received nor heard abroad: the custom of All courts is against us, and will be so, until by an independence we take rank with other Nations.

These proceedings may at first seem strange and difficult, but like all other steps which we have already passed over, will in a little time become familiar and agreeable: and until an Independance is declared, the Continent will feel itself like a man who continues putting off some unpleasant business from day to day, yet knows it must be done, hates to set about it, wishes it over, and is continually haunted with the thoughts of its necessity.

1775·1776

From

The American Crisis

The first Crisis appeared in the Pennsylvania Journal for December 19, 1776, and was almost immediately issued as a pamphlet. New Jersey was at the time well-nigh lost and Philadelphia panic-stricken. Washington had even written to his brother that "if every nerve is not strained to recruit the new army with all possible expedition, I think the game is pretty nearly up." No one would ever guess from Paine's stirring remarks that the situation was so serious. His courage, faith, and righteous wrath are here embodied in rhetoric which can yet stir Americans after all these many years. The use of alliteration, antithesis, balance, the rhetorical question, Biblical echoes, and other oratorical devices shows how well Paine had learned the first lesson of the propagandist—to aim straight at the apathetic, timid, individual reader. Never again, perhaps, did he attain such heights as a phrase-maker. The New York legislature made no mistake in giving Paine a farm because "his literary works, and those especially under the signature of Common Sense, and the Crisis, inspired the citizens of this state with unanimity, confirmed their

confidence in the rectitude of their cause, and have ultimately contributed to the freedom, sovereignty, and independence of the United States."

NUMBER I

These are the times that try men's souls: The summer soldier and the sunshine patriot will in this crisis, shrink from the service of his country; but he that stands it NOW, deserves the love and thanks of man and woman. Tyranny, like hell, is not easily conquered; yet we have this consolation with us, that the harder the conflict, the more glorious the triumph. What we obtain too cheap, we esteem too lightly:—'Tis dearness only that gives everything its value. Heaven knows how to put a proper price upon its goods; and it would be strange indeed, if so celestial an article as FREEDOM should not be highly rated. Britain, with an army to enforce her tyranny, has declared that she has a right (*not only to*) TAX but "to BIND *us in* ALL CASES WHATSOEVER," and if being *bound in that manner,* is not slavery, then is there not such a thing as slavery upon earth. Even the expression is impious, for so unlimited a power can belong only to GOD.

Whether the Independence of the Continent was declared too soon, or delayed too long, I will not now enter into as an argument; my own simple opinion is, that had it been eight months earlier, it would have been much better. We did not make a proper use of last winter, neither could we, while we were in a dependent state. However, the fault, if it were one, was all our own; we have none to blame but ourselves. But no great deal is lost yet; all that Howe has been doing for this month past, is rather a ravage than a conquest, which the spirit of the Jersies a year ago would have quickly repulsed, and which time and a little resolution will soon recover.

I have as little superstition in me as any man living, but my secret opinion has ever been, and still is, that God Almighty will not give up a people to military destruction, or leave them unsupportedly to perish, who have so earnestly and so repeatedly sought to avoid the calamities of war, by every decent method which wisdom could invent. Neither have I so much of the infidel in me, as to suppose that he has relinquished the government of the world, and given us up to the care of devils; and as I do not, I cannot see on what grounds the king of Britain can look up to Heaven for help against us: a common murderer, a highwayman, or a house-breaker, has as good a pretence as he.

'Tis surprising to see how rapidly a panic will sometimes run through a country. All nations and ages have been subject to them: Britain has trembled like an ague at the report of a French fleet of flat-bottomed boats; and in the fourteenth century the whole English army, after ravaging the kingdom of France, was driven back like men petrified with fear; and this brave exploit was performed by a few broken forces collected and headed by a woman, Joan of Arc. Would that heaven might inspire some Jersey maid to spirit up her countrymen, and save her fair fellow sufferers from ravage and ravishment! Yet panics, in some cases, have their uses; they produce as much good as hurt. Their duration is always short; the mind soon grows through them, and acquires a firmer habit than before. But their peculiar advantage is, that they are the touchstones of sincerity and hypocrisy, and bring things and men to light, which might otherwise have lain forever undiscovered. In fact, they have the same effect on secret traitors which an imaginary apparition would have upon a private murderer. They sift out the hidden thoughts of man, and hold them up in public to the world. Many a disguised tory has lately shown his head, that shall penitentially solemnize with curses the day on which Howe arrived upon the Delaware.

As I was with the troops at Fort-Lee, and marched with them to the edge of Pennsylvania, I am well acquainted with many circumstances, which those who live at a distance, know but little or nothing of. Our situation there, was exceedingly cramped, the place being a narrow neck of land between the North-River and the Hacken-

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Text: an impression dated December 23, 1776, regarded by Professor Peach as the most authentic of its early pamphlet appearances • 27 **Howe,** William Howe. See note, p. 324 • 29 **the Jersies,** East Jersey, whose economic center was New York City, and West Jersey, which looked toward Philadelphia. East Jersey had most of the "spirit" for independence; the western part of the province was predominantly Quaker • 47 **a French fleet . . . ,** assembled at Havre and other ports in 1759, during the Seven Years' War. The projected invasion was halted by British naval victories at Lagos and Quiberon Bay • 48 **the fourteenth century.** Conway remarks that Paine "had no cyclopaedia in his knapsack" and hence placed Joan of Arc (1412-1431) in the wrong century • 68 **Fort-Lee,** on the western shore of the Hudson, opposite Manhattan Island. It was hastily evacuated on November 20, the Americans even leaving their dinners cooking

sack. Our force was inconsiderable, being not one-fourth so great as Howe could bring against us. We had no army at hand to have relieved the garrison, had we shut ourselves up and stood on our defence. Our ammunition, light artillery, and the best part of our stores, had been removed, on the apprehension that Howe would endeavor to penetrate the Jerseys, in which case Fort Lee could be of no use to us; for it must occur to every thinking man, whether in the army or not, that these kind of field forts are only for temporary purposes, and last in use no longer than the enemy directs his force against the particular object, which such forts are raised to defend. Such was our situation and condition at Fort-Lee on the morning of the 20th of November, when an officer arrived with information that the enemy with 200 boats had landed about seven miles above: Major General Green, who commanded the garrison, immediately ordered them under arms, and sent express to General Washington at the town of Hackensack, distant by the way of the ferry, six miles. Our first object was to secure the bridge over the Hackensack, which laid up the river between the enemy and us, about six miles from us, three from them. General Washington arrived in about three-quarters of an hour, and marched at the head of the troops towards the bridge, which place I expected we should have a brush for; however, they did not choose to dispute it with us, and the greatest part of our troops went over the bridge, the rest over the ferry, except some which passed at a mill on a small creek, between the bridge and the ferry, and made their way through some marshy grounds up to the town of Hackensack, and there passed the river. We brought off as much baggage as the wagons could contain, the rest was lost. The simple object was to bring off the garrison, and march them on till they could be strengthened by the Jersey or Pennsylvania militia, so as to be enabled to make a stand. We staid four days at Newark, collected our out-posts with some of the Jersey militia, and marched out twice to meet the enemy, on being informed that they were advancing, though our numbers were greatly inferior to theirs. Howe, in my little opinion, committed a great error in generalship in not throwing a body of forces off from Staten-Island through Amboy, by which means he might have seized all our stores at Brunswick, and intercepted our march into Pennsylvania; but if we believe the power of hell to be limited, we must likewise believe that their agents are under some providential control.

I shall not now attempt to give all the particulars of our retreat to the Delaware; suffice it for the present to say, that both officers and man, though greatly harassed and fatigued, frequently without rest, covering, or provision, the inevitable consequences of a long retreat, bore it with a manly and martial spirit. All their wishes centred in one, which was, that the country would turn out and help them to drive the enemy back. *Voltaire* has remarked that King William never appeared to full advantage but in difficulties and in action; the same remark may be made on General Washington, for the character fits him. There is a natural firmness in some minds which cannot be unlocked by trifles, but which, when unlocked, discovers a cabinet of fortitude; and I reckon it among those kind of public blessings, which we do not immediately see, that GOD hath blessed him with uninterrupted health, and given him a mind that can even flourish upon care.

I shall conclude this paper with some miscellaneous remarks on the state of our affairs; and shall begin with asking the following question, Why is it that the enemy have left the New-England provinces, and made these middle ones the seat of war? The answer is easy: New England is not infested with tories, and we are. I have been tender in raising the cry against these men, and used numberless arguments to show them their danger, but it will not do to sacrifice a world either to their folly or their baseness. The period is now arrived, in which either they or we must change our sentiments, or one or both must fall. And what is a tory? Good GOD! what is he? I should not be afraid to go with a hundred Whigs against a thousand tories, were they to attempt to get into arms. Every tory is a coward; for servile, slavish, self-interested fear is the foundation of Toryism; and a man under such influence, though he may be cruel, never can be brave.

But, before the line of irrecoverable separation be drawn between us, let us reason the matter together:

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16 **Major General Green,** Nathanael Greene (1742-1786). See Freneau's poem "To the Memory of the Brave Americans," p. 443 • 56 **Voltaire** (1694-1778) remarked that William III (1650-1702) was "jamais vif que dans un jour de combat," bright only in a day of battle; see **Le Siècle de Louis XIV** (1751), Chap. 17

Your conduct is an invitation to the enemy, yet not one in a thousand of you has heart enough to join him. Howe is as much deceived by you as the American cause is injured by you. He expects you will all take up arms, and flock to his standard, with muskets on your shoulders. Your opinions are of no use to him, unless you support him personally, for 'tis soldiers, and not tories, that he wants.

I once felt all that kind of anger, which a man ought to feel against the mean principles that are held by the tories: A noted one, who kept a tavern at Amboy, was standing at his door, with as pretty a child in his hand, about eight or nine years old, as I ever saw, and after speaking his mind as freely as he thought was prudent, finished with this unfatherly expression, "*Well! give me peace in my day.*" Not a man lives on the continent but fully believes that a separation must some time or other finally take place, and a generous parent should have said, "*If there must be trouble, let it be in my day, that my child may have peace:*" and this single reflection, well applied, is sufficient to awaken every man to duty. Not a place upon earth might be so happy as America. Her situation is remote from all the wrangling world, and she has nothing to do but to trade with them. A man can distinguish himself between temper and principle, and I am as confident, as I am that GOD governs the world, that America will never be happy till she gets clear of foreign dominion. Wars, without ceasing, will break out till that period arrives, and the continent must in the end be conqueror; for though the flame of liberty may sometimes cease to shine, the coal can never expire.

America did not, nor does not want force; but she wanted a proper application of that force. Wisdom is not the purchase of a day, and it is no wonder that we should err at the first setting off. From an excess of tenderness, we were unwilling to raise an army, and trusted our cause to the temporary defence of a well-meaning militia. A summer's experience has now taught us better; yet with those troops, while they were collected, we were able to set bounds to the progress of the enemy, and, thank God! they are again assembling. I always considered militia as the best troops in the world for a sudden exertion, but they will not do for a long campaign. Howe, it is probable, will make an attempt on this city; should he fail on this side the Delaware, he is ruined. If he succeeds, our cause is not ruined. He stakes all on his side against a part on ours; admitting he succeeds, the consequences will be, that armies from both ends of the continent will march to assist their suffering friends in the middle states; for he cannot go everywhere, it is impossible. I consider Howe as the greatest enemy the Tories have; he is bringing war into their country, which, had it not been for him and partly for themselves, they had been clear of. Should he now be expelled, I wish with all the devotion of a Christian, that the names of Whig and Tory may never more be mentioned; but should the Tories give him encouragement to come, or assistance if he come, I as sincerely wish that our next year's arms may expel them from the continent, and the Congress appropriate their possessions to the relief of those who have suffered in well-doing. A single successful battle next year will settle the whole. America could carry on a two years' war by the confiscation of the property of disaffected persons, and be made happy by their expulsion. Say not that this is revenge, call it rather the soft resentment of a suffering people, who, having no object in view but the GOOD of ALL, have staked their OWN ALL upon a seemingly doubtful event. Yet it is folly to argue against determined hardness; eloquence may strike the ear, and the language of sorrow draw forth the tear of compassion, but nothing can reach the heart that is steeled with prejudice.

Quitting this class of men, I turn with the warm ardor of a friend to those who have nobly stood, and are yet determined to stand the matter out: I call not upon a few, but upon all: not in THIS state or THAT state, but on EVERY state: up and help us; lay your shoulders to the wheel; better have too much force than too little, when so great an object is at stake. Let it be told to the future world, that in the depth of winter, when nothing but hope and virtue could survive, that the city and country, alarmed at one common danger, came forth to meet and to repulse it. Say not that thousands are gone, turn out your tens of thousands; throw not the burden of the day upon Providence, but "*shew your faith by your works,*" that God may bless you. It matters not where you live,

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45 this city, Philadelphia. Paine's prediction was borne out in September 1777, but Howe's capture of the city so weakened the British position in the north that the Americans were able to defeat Burgoyne • 86 "shew . . . works." See James 2:18

or what rank of life you hold, the evil or the blessing will reach you all. The far and the near, the home counties and the back, the rich and the poor, will suffer or rejoice alike. The heart that feels not now is dead; the blood of his children will curse his cowardice, who shrinks back at a time when a little might have saved the whole, and made *them* happy. I love the man that can smile in trouble, that can gather strength from distress, and grow brave by reflection. 'Tis the business of little minds to shrink; but he whose heart is firm, and whose conscience approves his conduct, will pursue his principles unto death. My own line of reasoning is to myself as straight and clear as a ray of light. Not all the treasures of the world, so far as I believe, could have induced me to support an offensive war, for I think it murder; but if a thief breaks into my house, burns and destroys my property, and kills or threatens to kill me, or those that are in it, and to *"bind me in all cases whatsoever"* to his absolute will, am I to suffer it? What signifies it to me, whether he who does it is a king or a common man; my countryman or not my countryman; whether it be done by an individual villain, or an army of them? If we reason to the root of things we shall find no difference; neither can any just cause be assigned why we should punish in the one case and pardon in the other. Let them call me rebel and welcome, I feel no concern from it; but I should suffer the misery of devils, were I to make a whore of my soul by swearing allegiance to one whose character is that of a sottish, stupid, stubborn, worthless, brutish man. I conceive likewise a horrid idea in receiving mercy from a being, who at the last day shall be shrieking to the rocks and mountains to cover him, and fleeing with terror from the orphan, the widow, and the slain of America.

There are cases which cannot be overdone by language, and this is one. There are persons, too, who see not the full extent of the evil which threatens them; they solace themselves with hopes that the enemy, if he succeed, will be merciful. It is the madness of folly, to expect mercy from those who have refused to do justice; and even mercy, where conquest is the object, is only a trick of war: The cunning of the fox is as murderous as the violence of the wolf, and we ought to guard equally against both. Howe's first object is, partly by threats and partly by promises, to terrify or seduce the people to deliver up their arms and receive mercy. The ministry recommended the same plan to Gage, and this is what the tories call making their peace, *"a peace which passeth all understanding,"* *indeed!* A peace which would be the immediate forerunner of a worse ruin than any we have yet thought of. Ye men of Pennsylvania, do reason upon these things! Were the back counties to give up their arms, they would fall an easy prey to the Indians, who are all armed: this perhaps is what some tories would not be sorry for. Were the home counties to deliver up their arms, they would be exposed to the resentment of the back counties, who would then have it in their power to chastise their defection at pleasure. And were any one state to give up its arms, THAT state must be garrisoned by all Howe's army of Britons and Hessians to preserve it from the anger of the rest. Mutual fear is the principal link in the chain of mutual love, and woe be to that state that breaks the compact. Howe is mercifully inviting you to barbarous destruction, and men must be either rogues or fools that will not see it. I dwell not upon the vapors of imagination; I bring reason to your ears, and, in language as plain as A, B, C, hold up truth to your eyes.

I thank *God* that I fear not. I see no real cause for fear. I know our situation well, and can see the way out of it. While our army was collected, Howe dared not risk a battle; and it is no credit to him that he decamped from the White Plains, and waited a mean opportunity to ravage the defenceless Jerseys; but it is great credit to us, that, with a handful of men, we sustained an orderly retreat for near an hundred miles, brought off our ammunition, all our field-pieces, the greatest part of our stores, and had four rivers to pass. None can say that our retreat was precipitate, for we were near three weeks in performing it, that the coun-

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2 **the home . . . back,** the seaboard and the frontier, already divergent in attitudes and economic interests • 47 **Gage,** Thomas Gage (1721-1787), Howe's predecessor, had been commander in chief in North America from 1763 to 1775. He ordered the march on Concord and the attack on Bunker Hill • 48 **"a peace . . . understanding."** See Philippians 4:7 • 61 **Hessians,** German mercenaries from six states (over half of them from Hesse-Cassel and Hesse-Hanau). About thirty thousand were brought to America by the British • 73 **the White Plains,** in Westchester County, New York, where Howe had attacked American positions on October 28-29. On the thirtieth, the Americans withdrew to Newcastle without opposition and were able to cross the Hudson to New Jersey, across which they slowly retreated, to take positions on the western bank of the Delaware • 80 **the country,** the militia

try might have time to come in. Twice we marched back to meet the enemy, and remained out till dark. The sign of fear was not seen in our camp, and had not some of the cowardly and disaffected inhabitants spread false alarms through the country, the Jersies had never been ravaged. Once more we are again collected and collecting, our new army at both ends of the continent is recruiting fast, and we shall be able to open the next campaign with sixty thousand men, well armed and clothed. This is our situation, and who will may know it. By perseverance and fortitude we have the prospect of a glorious issue; by cowardice and submission, the sad choice of a variety of evils—a ravaged country—a depopulated city—habitations without safety, and slavery without hope—our homes turned into barracks and bawdy-houses for Hessians, and a future race to provide for, whose fathers we shall doubt of. Look on this picture and weep over it! and if there yet remains one thoughtless wretch who believes it not, let him suffer it unlamented.

COMMON SENSE

DECEMBER 23, 1776

1776

Thomas Jefferson

1743 · 1826

Thomas Jefferson, the third President of the United States, remains to this day the chief symbol for what has come to be called the "American way of life." Politicians quote him to lend authority to the most diverse points of view imaginable; to attack Jeffersonian principles would be well-nigh blasphemous. His words are the scriptures of our faith in democracy and the common man ("We hold these truths to be self-evident: that all men are created equal; that they are endowed by their creator with certain inalienable rights; that among these are life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness"); of our abiding trust in popular education ("Religion, morality, and knowledge being necessary to good government and the happiness of mankind, schools and the means of education shall forever be encouraged"); of our deep-rooted individualism ("I have sworn upon the altar of God eternal hostility against every form of tyranny over the mind of man"). Nor is Jefferson's influence merely a matter of words; he has left his mark upon American political and educational institutions, even upon our public architecture, which reflects his enthusiasm for Greek and Roman models. Yet Jefferson is more than an oracle, more than a builder of the institutional foundations of American society. He himself would have deprecated the use of any man's words or actions to lend credit to any particular political or social program, for he had a sure grasp of the fact that every day is a new day, not merely to be endured but to be lived with as much intelligence and zest as an individual or nation can command. "The earth belongs always to the living generation. They may manage it then and what proceeds from it as they please during their usufruct. They are masters too of their own persons and consequently may govern them as they please."

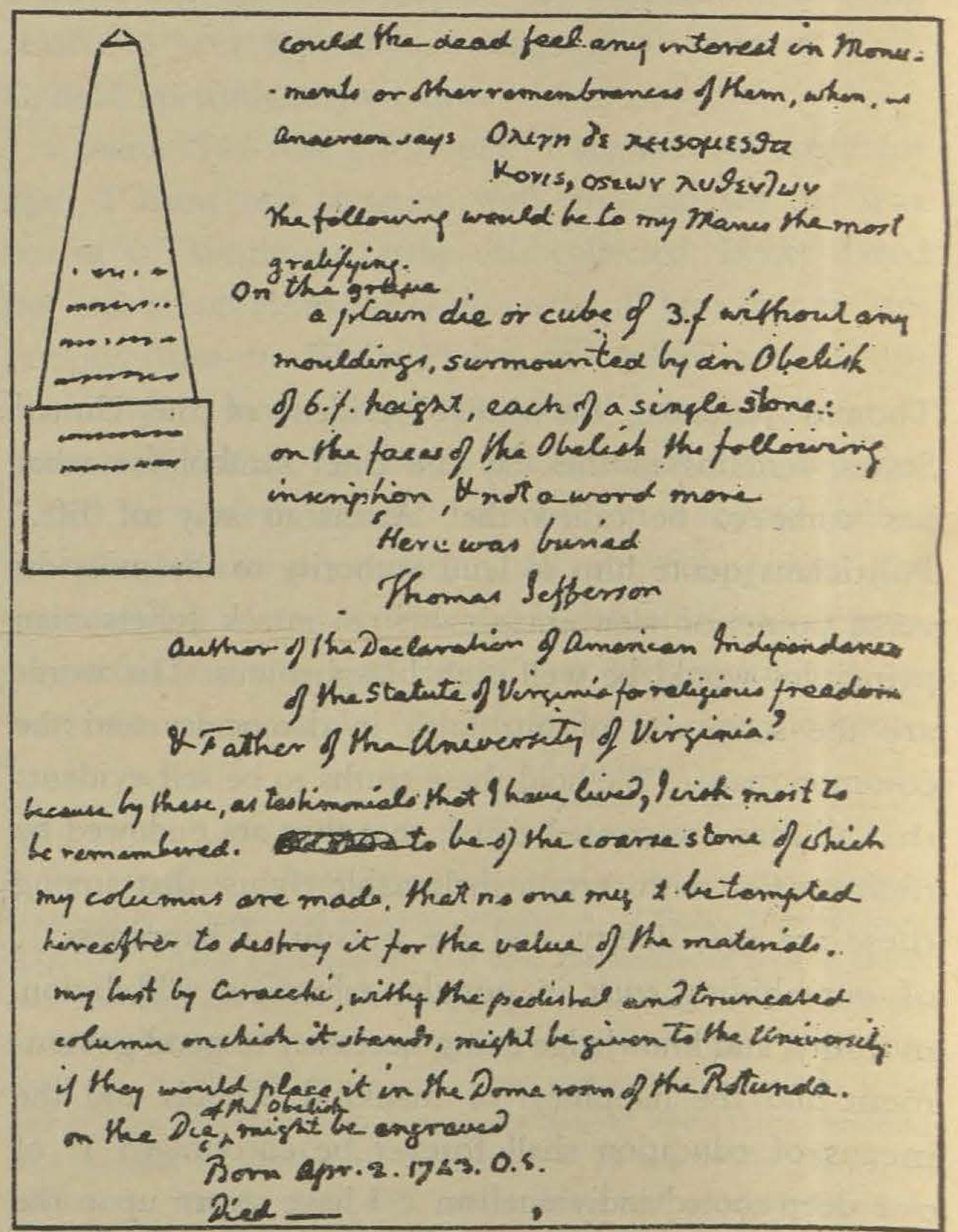
It would take many pages to describe how Jefferson attained, through painful experience, such wisdom. The outline of his career tells only the outward story, not the inward, mental growth. He was born near Char-

lottesville, Virginia, in 1743, his father being a planter who had married into the famous Randolph family. At fourteen he inherited nearly three thousand acres of land and a considerable number of slaves. He studied hard at William and Mary during 1760-1762, but he was also a social leader, welcome at the dinner table of the colonial governor and other Williamsburg notables. He read law, was admitted to the bar in 1767, and succeeded in combining his profession with the management of large estates. On New Year's Day, 1772, he married Martha Wayles Skelton, an attractive widow with whom he was deeply in love. About a year later she inherited forty thousand acres of land and one hundred and thirty-five slaves. Not many revolutionists have come from such a background, and it would no doubt have been easy for Jefferson to spend his energies in plantation and family life, of which he was very fond, and to let the world go its own way. The record of his public service is, considering his tastes and his ability to satisfy them, one of the most remarkable in American history.

Member of the Virginia House of Burgesses, 1769-1774, member of the Virginia Conventions of 1774 and 1775, Virginia delegate to the Second Continental Congress, 1775-1776, member of the legislature of the new state of Virginia, 1776-1779, governor of Virginia, 1779-1781, member of Congress under the Articles of Confederation, 1783-1784, American minister to France, 1784-1789, secretary of state, 1790-1793, vice-president, 1797-1801, President of the United States, 1801-1809—the list by itself is a thumbnail sketch of the birth and youth of a new nation. Jefferson was in the forefront of most of the great political developments of his age. His *Summary of the Rights of British America* (1774) was one of the notable assertions of the right of the colonists to self-government; he wrote, at thirty-three, the first draft of the *Declaration of Independence*; he led the attack on the state-supported church and the aristocracy-breeding institutions of primogeniture and entail in Virginia; he, more than any other single man, was responsible for the two-party system of government under the Constitution; as Chief Executive he engineered one of the great real-estate deals in history, the Louisiana Purchase; and throughout his life he was an earnest advocate of universal education for citizenship, of generous support of all the arts and sciences, of the emancipation of slaves, and of as large a measure of local self-government as was compatible with the common good of the whole nation.

Not the least of the many paradoxes in his life is that he should be remembered for the studied sentences of his public papers, for he was inclined to distrust rhetoric and oratory. Behind the words of his great state papers, however, are both the maturing of a great people and a deep faith in the integrity of the common man. Jefferson's dream was of a world wherein reason and justice should prevail over brute force and selfishness. To know his writings is to fortify oneself against any shallow interpretation of the much-abused term "Americanism."

The Works of Thomas Jefferson, ed. P. L. Ford, Federal Edition, 12 vols., New York, 1892-1894 • Gilbert Chinard, **Thomas Jefferson, the Apostle of Americanism**, Boston, 1929 • S. K. Padover, **Jefferson**, New York, 1942 • Carl Becker, **The Declaration of Independence**, New York, 1922



Jefferson's sketch for his tombstone, and the inscription suggested by him.

From

Autobiography

Between January 6 and July 29, 1821, Jefferson spent some time composing the paper known as the "Autobiography," an account of his life up to 1790, when he arrived in New York to begin his work as secretary of state under President Washington. It was first printed in **Memoirs, Correspondence, and Miscellanies** (1829), edited by his grandson, T. J. Randolph. The portion here reprinted was written many years before, however, perhaps as early as August 1776. It is the most authoritative account of the composition and adoption of the **Declaration of Independence**, which Jefferson rightly regarded as the contribution for which he was most likely to be remembered by later generations. Neither he nor his contemporaries regarded the **Declaration** as an original composition; it expressed the philosophy of natural rights which had been everywhere accepted in the colonies, and largely in Great Britain, since the Glorious Revolution of 1688. Jefferson denied, however, that he had turned to any book or pamphlet while writing it, and the similarities to John Locke's **Two Treatises on Government** (1689-1690) and James Otis' **The Rights of the British Colonies Asserted and Proved** (1764) were doubtless coincidental. The tone of its appeal to the high court of world opinion and the ingenious concentration of responsibility upon King George III—always a useful device in propaganda—make it an unexcelled model of skillful rhetoric.

In Congress, Friday June 7. 1776. The delegates from Virginia moved in obedience to instructions from their constituents that the Congress should declare that these United colonies are & of right ought to be free & independent states, that they are absolved from all allegiance to the British crown, and that all political connection between them & the state of Great Britain is & ought to be, totally dissolved; that measures should be immediately taken for procuring the assistance of foreign powers, and a Confederation be formed to bind the colonies more closely together.

The house being obliged to attend at that time to some other business, the proposition was referred to the next day, when the members were ordered to attend punctually at ten o'clock.

Saturday June 8. They proceeded to take it into consideration and referred it to a committee of the whole, into which they immediately resolved themselves, and passed that day & Monday the 10th in debating on the subject.

It was argued by Wilson, Robert R. Livingston, E. Rutledge, Dickinson and others

That tho' they were friends to the measures themselves, and saw the impossibility that we should ever again be united with Gr. Britain, yet they were against adopting them at this time:

That the conduct we had formerly observed was wise & proper now, of deferring to take any capital step till the voice of the people drove us into it:

That they were our power, & without them our declarations could not be carried into effect;

That the people of the middle colonies (Maryland, Delaware, Pennsylva, the Jerseys & N. York) were not yet ripe for bidding adieu to British connection, but that they were fast ripening & in a short time would join in the general voice of America:

That the resolution entered into by this house on the

Text: Ford's edition of the Works, Vol. I • 1 **Congress**, the Second Continental Congress, which convened in Philadelphia, May 10, 1775, to direct the contest which had already become, with the Battle of Lexington, open war • 2 **moved**, by Richard Henry Lee (1732-1794), later one of the first two United States senators from Virginia. The motion was seconded by John Adams • 21 **Wilson**, James Wilson (1742-1798) of Pennsylvania, later associate justice of the Supreme Court • 21 **Robert R. Livingston** (1746-1813) of New York; as chancellor of New York he administered the first presidential oath of office to George Washington • 21 **E. Rutledge**, Edward Rutledge (1749-1800) of South Carolina, later a United States senator • 22 **Dickinson**, John Dickinson (1732-1808) of Pennsylvania, author of the popular **Letters from a Farmer in Pennsylvania** (1768) • 37 **resolution**, declaring that "every kind of authority under the said crown should be totally suppressed"

15th of May for suppressing the exercise of all powers derived from the crown, had shown, by the ferment into which it had thrown these middle colonies, that they had not yet accomodated their minds to a separation from the mother country:

That some of them had expressly forbidden their delegates to consent to such a declaration, and others had given no instructions, & consequently no powers to give such consent:

That if the delegates of any particular colony had no power to declare such colony independant, certain they were the others could not declare it for them; the colonies being as yet perfectly independant of each other:

That the assembly of Pennsylvania was now sitting above stairs, their convention would sit within a few days, the convention of New York was now sitting, & those of the Jerseys & Delaware counties would meet on the Monday following, & it was probable these bodies would take up the question of Independance & would declare to their delegates the voice of their state:

That if such a declaration should now be agreed to, these delegates must retire & possibly their colonies might secede from the Union:

That such a secession would weaken us more than could be compensated by any foreign alliance:

That in the event of such a division, foreign powers would either refuse to join themselves to our fortunes, or, having us so much in their power as that desperate declaration would place us, they would insist on terms proportionably more hard and prejudicial:

That we had little reason to expect an alliance with those to whom alone as yet we had cast our eyes:

That France & Spain had reason to be jealous of that rising power which would one day certainly strip them of all their American possessions:

That it was more likely they should form a connection with the British court, who, if they should find themselves unable otherwise to extricate themselves from their difficulties, would agree to a partition of our territories, restoring Canada to France, & the Floridas to Spain, to accomplish for themselves a recovery of these colonies:

That it would not be long before we should receive certain information of the disposition of the French court, from the agent whom we had sent to Paris for that purpose:

That if this disposition should be favorable, by waiting the event of the present campaign, which we all hoped would be successful, we should have reason to expect an alliance on better terms:

That this would in fact work no delay of any effectual aid from such ally, as, from the advance of the season & distance of our situation, it was impossible we could receive any assistance during this campaign:

That it was prudent to fix among ourselves the terms on which we should form alliance, before we declared we would form one at all events:

And that if these were agreed on, & our Declaration of Independance ready by the time our Ambassador should be prepared to sail, it would be as well to go into that Declaration at this day.

On the other side it was urged by J. Adams, Lee, Wythe, and others

That no gentleman had argued against the policy or the right of separation from Britain, nor had supposed it possible we should ever renew our connection; that they had only opposed its being now declared:

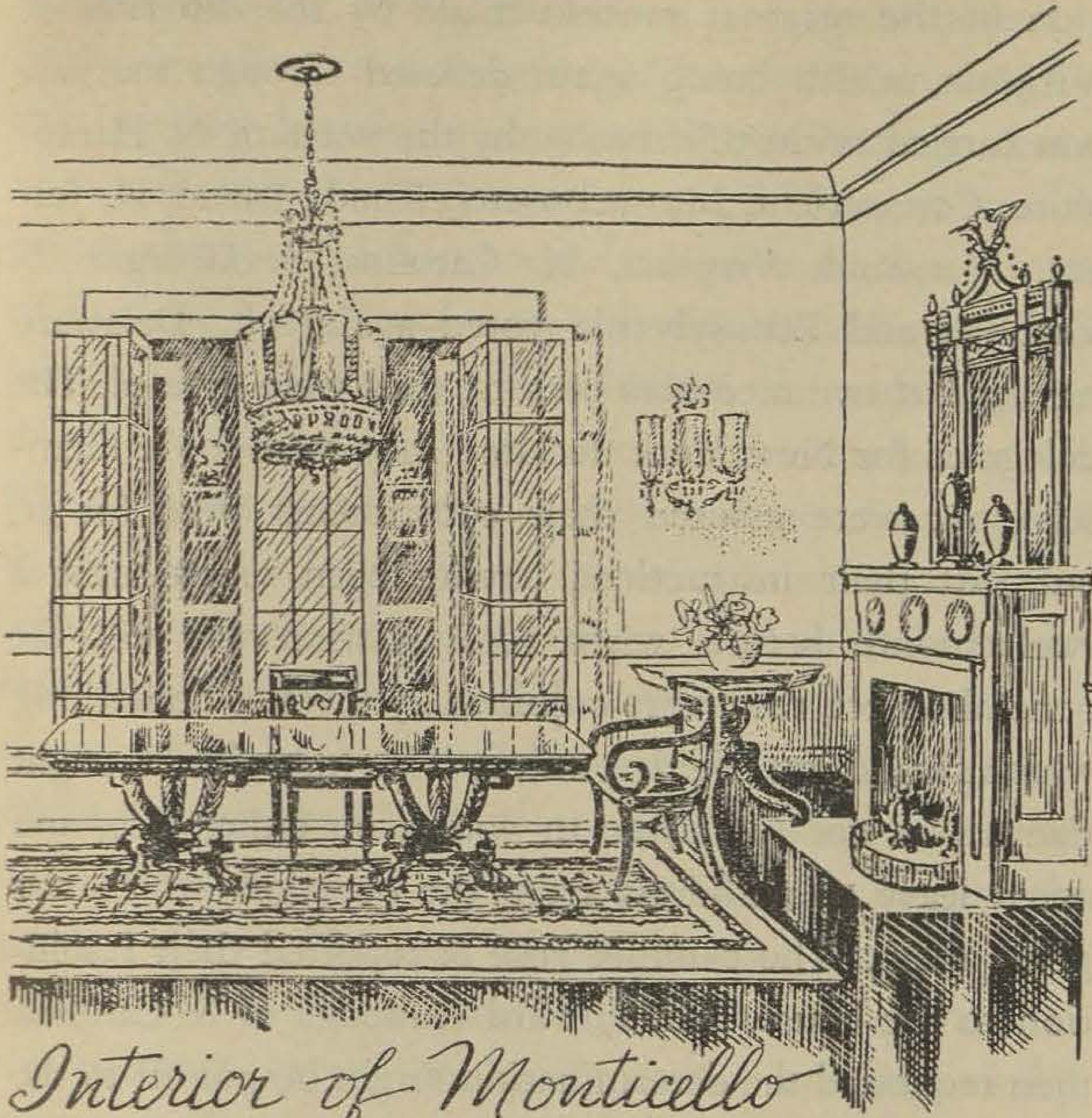
That the question was not whether, by a declaration of independance, we should make ourselves what we are not; but whether we should declare a fact which already exists:

That as to the people or parliament of England, we had alwais been independent of them, their restraints on our trade deriving efficacy from our acquiescence only, & not from any rights they possessed of imposing them, & that so far our connection had been federal only & was now dissolved by the commencement of hostilities:

That as to the King, we had been bound to him by allegiance, but that this bond was now dissolved by his assent to the late act of parliament, by which he declares us out of his protection, and by his levying war on us, a fact which had long ago proved us out of his protection; it being a certain position in law that allegiance & protection are reciprocal, the one ceasing when the other is withdrawn:

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45 **the agent**, Silas Deane (1737-1789), who went to Paris under instructions dated March 1776 • 48 **present campaign**, to defend New York and the Hudson River. At the time of these deliberations Washington was busy constructing fortifications commanding New York Harbor • 63 **Wythe**, George Wythe (1726-1806) of Virginia, in whose office Jefferson had studied law; among his other famous pupils were Chief Justice John Marshall, President James Monroe, and Henry Clay



Interior of Monticello

That James the IId. never declared the people of England out of his protection yet his actions proved it & the parliament declared it:

No delegates then can be denied, or ever want, a power of declaring an existing truth:

That the delegates from the Delaware counties having declared their constituents ready to join, there are only two colonies Pennsylvania & Maryland whose delegates are absolutely tied up, and that these had by their instructions only reserved a right of confirming or rejecting the measure:

That the instructions from Pennsylvania might be accounted for from the times in which they were drawn, near a twelvemonth ago since which the face of affairs has totally changed:

That within that time it had become apparent that Britain was determined to accept nothing less than a carte-blanche, and that the King's answer to the Lord Mayor Aldermen & common council of London, which had come to hand four days ago, must have satisfied every one of this point:

That the people wait for us to lead the way:

That *they* are in favour of the measure, tho' the instructions given by some of their *representatives* are not:

That the voice of the representatives is not always consonant with the voice of the people, and that this is remarkably the case in these middle colonies:

That the effect of the resolution of the 15th of May has proved this, which, raising the murmurs of some in the colonies of Pennsylvania & Maryland, called forth the opposing voice of the freer part of the people, & proved them to be the majority, even in these colonies:

That the backwardness of these two colonies might be ascribed partly to the influence of proprietary power & connections, & partly to their having not yet been attacked by the enemy:

That these causes were not likely to be soon removed, as there seemed no probability that the enemy would make either of these the seat of this summer's war:

That it would be vain to wait either weeks or months for perfect unanimity, since it was impossible that all men should ever become of one sentiment on any question:

That the conduct of some colonies from the beginning of this contest, had given reason to suspect it was their settled policy to keep in the rear of the confederacy, that their particular prospect might be better, even in the worst event:

That therefore it was necessary for those colonies who had thrown themselves forward & hazarded all from the beginning, to come forward now also, and put all again to their own hazard:

That the history of the Dutch revolution, of whom three states only confederated at first proved that a secession of some colonies would not be so dangerous as some apprehended:

That a declaration of Independence alone could render it consistent with European delicacy for European powers to treat with us, or even to receive an Ambassador from us:

That till this they would not receive our vessels into their ports, nor acknowledge the adjudications of our courts of admiralty to be legitimate, in cases of capture of British vessels:

That though France & Spain may be jealous of our rising power, they must think it will be much more formidable with the addition of Great Britain; and will therefore see it their interest to prevent a coalition; but should they refuse, we shall be but where we are;

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18 **King's answer,** one of George III's rejections of petitions addressed to him on behalf of the colonies • 53 **Dutch revolution,** of 1576. The United Netherlands Confederation was formed three years later

whereas without trying we shall never know whether they will aid us or not:

That the present campaign may be unsuccessful, & therefore we had better propose an alliance while our affairs wear a hopeful aspect:

That to await the event of this campaign will certainly work delay, because during this summer France may assist us effectually by cutting off those supplies of provisions from England & Ireland on which the enemy's armies here are to depend; or by setting in motion the great power they have collected in the West Indies, & calling our enemy to the defence of the possessions they have there:

That it would be idle to lose time in settling the terms of alliance, till we had first determined we would enter into alliance:

That it is necessary to lose no time in opening a trade for our people, who will want clothes, and will want money too for the paiment of taxes:

And that the only misfortune is that we did not enter into alliance with France six months sooner, as besides opening their ports for the vent of our last year's produce, they might have marched an army into Germany and prevented the petty princes there from selling their unhappy subjects to subdue us.

It appearing in the course of these debates that the colonies of N. York, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Delaware, Maryland, and South Carolina were not yet matured for falling from the parent stem, but that they were fast advancing to that state, it was thought most prudent to wait a while for them, and to postpone the final decision to July 1. but that this might occasion as little delay as possible a committee was appointed to prepare a declaration of independence. The commee were J. Adams, Dr. Franklin, Roger Sherman, Robert R. Livingston & myself. Committees were also appointed at the same time to prepare a plan of confederation for the colonies, and to state the terms proper to be proposed for foreign alliance. The committee for drawing the declaration of Independence desired me to do it. It was accordingly done, and being approved by them, I reported it to the house on Friday the 28th of June when it was read and ordered to lie on the table. On Monday, the 1st of July the House resolved itself into a commee of the whole & resumed the consideration of the original motion made by the delegates of Virginia, which being again debated through the day, was carried in the affirmative by the votes of N. Hampshire, Connecticut, Massachusetts, Rhode Island, N. Jersey, Maryland, Virginia, N. Carolina, & Georgia. S. Carolina and Pennsylvania voted against it. Delaware having but two members present, they were divided. The delegates for New York declared they were for it themselves & were assured their constituents were for it, but that their instructions having been drawn near a twelvemonth before, when reconciliation was still the general object, they were enjoined by them to do nothing which should impede that object. They therefore thought themselves not justifiable in voting on either side, and asked leave to withdraw from the question, which was given them. The commee rose & reported their resolution to the house. Mr. Edward Rutledge of S. Carolina then requested the determination might be put off to the next day, as he believed his colleagues, tho' they disapproved of the resolution, would then join in it for the sake of unanimity. The ultimate question whether the house would agree to the resolution of the committee was accordingly postponed to the next day, when it was again moved and S. Carolina concurred in voting for it. In the meantime a third member had come post from the Delaware counties and turned the vote of that colony in favour of the resolution. Members of a different sentiment attending that morning from Pennsylvania also, her vote was changed, so that the whole 12 colonies who were authorized to vote at all, gave their voices for it; and within a few days, the convention of N. York approved of it and thus supplied the void occasioned by the withdrawing of her delegates from the vote.

Congress proceeded the same day to consider the declaration of Independance which had been reported & lain

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21 **six months sooner.** The tone here suggests what is generally thought to be the fact: that the colonists had received some assurances of secret assistance from France as early as the autumn of 1775 • 24 **petty princes.** The British ministry sent agents to employ mercenary troops from the German princes late in 1775, with the obvious intention of settling the American revolt in 1776 • 35 **Roger Sherman** (1721-1793), of Connecticut, later United States senator • 36 **myself.** Although he was only thirty-three, Jefferson's reputation as a writer won him more votes for appointment on this committee than any other candidate • 76 **few days,** July 9 • 79 **same day,** Monday, July 1

on the table the Friday preceding, and on Monday referred to a commee of the whole. The pusillanimous idea that we had friends in England worth keeping terms with, still haunted the minds of many. For this reason those passages which conveyed censures on the people of England were struck out, lest they should give them offence. The clause too, reprobating the enslaving the inhabitants of Africa, was struck out in complaisance to South Carolina and Georgia, who had never attempted to restrain the importation of slaves, and who on the contrary still wished to continue it. Our northern brethren also I believe felt a little tender under those censures; for tho' their people had very few slaves themselves yet they had been pretty considerable carriers of them to others. The debates having taken up the greater parts of the 2d 3d & 4th days of July were, on the evening of the last, closed the declaration was reported by the commee, agreed to by the house and signed by every member present except Mr. Dickinson. As the sentiments of men are known not only by what they receive, but what they reject also, I will state the form of the declaration as originally reported. The parts struck out by Congress shall be distinguished by a black line drawn under them; and those inserted by them shall be placed in the margin or in a concurrent column.

A DECLARATION BY THE REPRESENTATIVES OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA, IN GENERAL CONGRESS ASSEMBLED

When in the course of human events it becomes necessary for one people to dissolve the political bands which have connected them with another, and to assume among the powers of the earth the separate & equal station to which the laws of nature and of nature's God entitle them, a decent respect to the opinions of mankind requires that they should declare the causes which impel them to the separation.

We hold these truths to be self-evident: that all men are created equal; that they are endowed by their creator
certain with [*inherent and*] inalienable rights; that among these are life, liberty, & the pursuit of happiness: that to secure these rights, governments are instituted among men, deriving their just powers from the consent of the governed; that whenever any form of government becomes destructive of these ends, it is the right of the people to alter or to abolish it, & to institute new government, laying it's foundation on such principles, & organizing it's powers in such form, as to them shall seem most likely to effect their safety & happiness. Prudence indeed will dictate that governments long established should not be changed for light & transient causes; and accordingly all experience hath shewn that mankind are more disposed to suffer while evils are sufferable, than to right themselves by abolishing the forms to which they are accustomed. But when a long train of abuses & usurpations [*begun at a distinguished period and*] pursuing invariably the same object, evinces a design to reduce them under absolute despotism, it is their right, it is their duty to throw off such government, & to provide new guards for their future security. Such has been the patient sufferance of these colonies; & such is now the necessity which constrains
alter them to [*expunge*] their former systems of government. The history of the present king of Great Britain is a
repeated history of [*unremitting*] injuries &

18 **signed . . . Dickinson.** Historians are agreed that Jefferson's memory was at fault on this point and that the Declaration was only "authenticated" by the signatures of the president and the secretary on July 4. The formal signing took place on August 2 • 23 **a black line . . . .** In the present text the excisions are italicized and enclosed within brackets

all having

usurpations, [*among which appears no solitary fact to contradict the uniform tenor of the rest but all have*] in direct object the establishment of an absolute tyranny over these states. To prove this let facts be submitted to a candid world [*for the truth of which we pledge a faith yet unsullied by falsehood*].

He has refused his assent to laws the most wholesome & necessary for the public good.

He has forbidden his governors to pass laws of immediate & pressing importance, unless suspended in their operation till his assent should be obtained; & when so suspended, he has utterly neglected to attend to them.

He has refused to pass other laws for the accommodation of large districts of people, unless those people would relinquish the right of representation in the legislature, a right inestimable to them, & formidable to tyrants only.

He has called together legislative bodies at places unusual, uncomfortable, and distant from the depository of their public records, for the sole purpose of fatiguing them into compliance with his measures.

He has dissolved representative houses repeatedly [*& continually*] for opposing with manly firmness his invasions on the rights of the people.

He has refused for a long time after such dissolutions to cause others to be elected, whereby the legislative powers, incapable of annihilation, have returned to the people at large for their exercise, the state remaining in the meantime exposed to all the dangers of invasion from without & convulsions within.

He has endeavored to prevent the population of these states; for that purpose obstructing the laws for naturalization of foreigners, refusing to pass others to encourage their migrations hither, & raising the conditions of new appropriations of lands.

obstructed by

He has [*suffered*] the administration of justice [*totally to cease in some of these states*] refusing his assent to laws for establishing judiciary powers.

He has made [*our*] judges dependant on his will alone, for the tenure of their offices, & the amount and paiment of their salaries.

He has erected a multitude of new offices [*by a self-assumed power*] and sent hither swarms of new officers to harass our people and eat out their substance.

He has kept among us in times of peace standing armies [*and ships of war*] without the consent of our legislatures.

He has affected to render the military independant of, & superior to the civil power.

in many cases

He has combined with others to subject us to a jurisdiction foreign to our constitutions & unacknowledged by our laws, giving his assent to their acts of pretended legislation for quartering large bodies of armed troops among us; for protecting them by a mock-trial from punishment for any murders which they should commit on the inhabitants of these states; for cutting off our trade with all parts of the world; for imposing taxes on us without our consent; for depriving us [ ] of the benefits of trial by jury; for transporting us beyond seas to be tried for pretended offences; for abolishing the free system of English laws in a neighboring province, establishing therein an arbitrary government, and enlarging it's boundaries, so as to render it at once an example and fit instrument for in-

troducing the same absolute rule into these [*states*]; for taking away our charters, abolishing our most valuable laws, and altering fundamentally the forms of our governments; for suspending our own legislatures, & declaring themselves invested with power to legislate for us in all cases whatsoever.

colonies

He has abdicated government here [*withdrawing his governors, and declaring us out of his allegiance & protection*].

by declaring us out of his protection, and waging war against us.

He has plundered our seas, ravaged our coasts, burnt our towns, & destroyed the lives of our people.

He is at this time transporting large armies of foreign mercenaries to compleat the works of death, desolation & tyranny already begun with circumstances of cruelty and perfidy [ ] unworthy the head of a civilized nation.

scarcely paralleled in the most barbarous ages, & totally

He has constrained our fellow citizens taken captive on the high seas to bear arms against their country, to become the executioners of their friends & brethren, or to fall themselves by their hands.

He has [ ] endeavored to bring on the inhabitants of our frontiers the merciless Indian savages, whose known rule of warfare is an undistinguished destruction of all ages, sexes, & condition [*of existence*].

excited domestic insurrections among us, & has

[*He has incited treasonable insurrections of our fellow-citizens, with the allurements of forfeiture & confiscation of our property.*

He has waged cruel war against human nature itself, violating it's most sacred rights of life and liberty in the persons of a distant people who never offended him, captivating & carrying them into slavery in another hemisphere, or to incur miserable death in their transportation thither. This piratical warfare, the opprobium of IN-FIDEL *powers, is the warfare of the* CHRISTIAN *king of Great Britain. Determined to keep open a market where* MEN *should be bought & sold, he has prostituted his negative for suppressing every legislative attempt to prohibit or to restrain this execrable commerce. And that this assemblage of horrors might want no fact of distinguished die, he is now exciting those very people to rise in arms among us, and to purchase that liberty of which he has deprived them, by murdering the people on whom he also obtruded them: thus paying off former crimes committed against the* LIBERTIES *of one people, with crimes which he urges them to commit against the* LIVES *of another.*]

In every stage of these oppressions we have petitioned for redress in the most humble terms: our repeated petitions have been answered only by repeated injuries.

A prince whose character is thus marked by every act which may define a tyrant is unfit to be the ruler of a [ ] people [*who mean to be free. Future ages will scarcely believe that the hardiness of one man adventured, within the short compass of twelve years only, to lay a foundation so broad & so undisguised for tyranny over a people fostered & fixed in principles of freedom*].

free

Nor have we been wanting in attentions to our British brethren. We have warned them from time to time of attempts by their legislature to extend [*a*] jurisdiction over [*these our states*]. We have reminded them of the circumstances of our emigration & settlement here, [*no one of which could warrant so strange a pretension: that these were effected at the expense of our own blood & treasure, unassisted*

an unwarrantable

us

by the wealth or the strength of Great Britain: that in constituting indeed our several forms of government, we had adopted one common king, thereby laying a foundation for perpetual league & amity with them: but that submission to their parliament was no part of our constitution, nor ever in idea, if history may be credited: and,] we [ ] appealed to their native justice and magnanimity [*as well as to*] the ties of our common kindred to disavow these usurpations which [*were likely to*] interrupt our connection and correspondence. They too have been deaf to the voice of justice & of consanguinity, [*and when occasions have been given them, by the regular course of their laws, of removing from their councils the disturbers of our harmony, they have, by their free election, re-established them in power. At this very time too they are permitting their chief magistrate to send over not only soldiers of our common blood, but Scotch & foreign mercenaries to invade & destroy us. These facts have given the last stab to agonizing affection, and manly spirit bids us to renounce forever these unfeeling brethren. We must endeavor to forget our former love for them, and hold them as we hold the rest of mankind, enemies in war, in peace friends. We might have been a free and a great people together; but a communication of grandeur & of freedom it seems is below their dignity. Be it so, since they will have it. The road to happiness & to glory is open to us too. We will tread it apart from them, and*] acquiesce in the necessity which denounces our [*eternal*] separation [ ]!

have

and we have conjured them by

would inevitably

We must therefore

and hold them as we hold the rest of mankind, enemies in war, in peace friends.

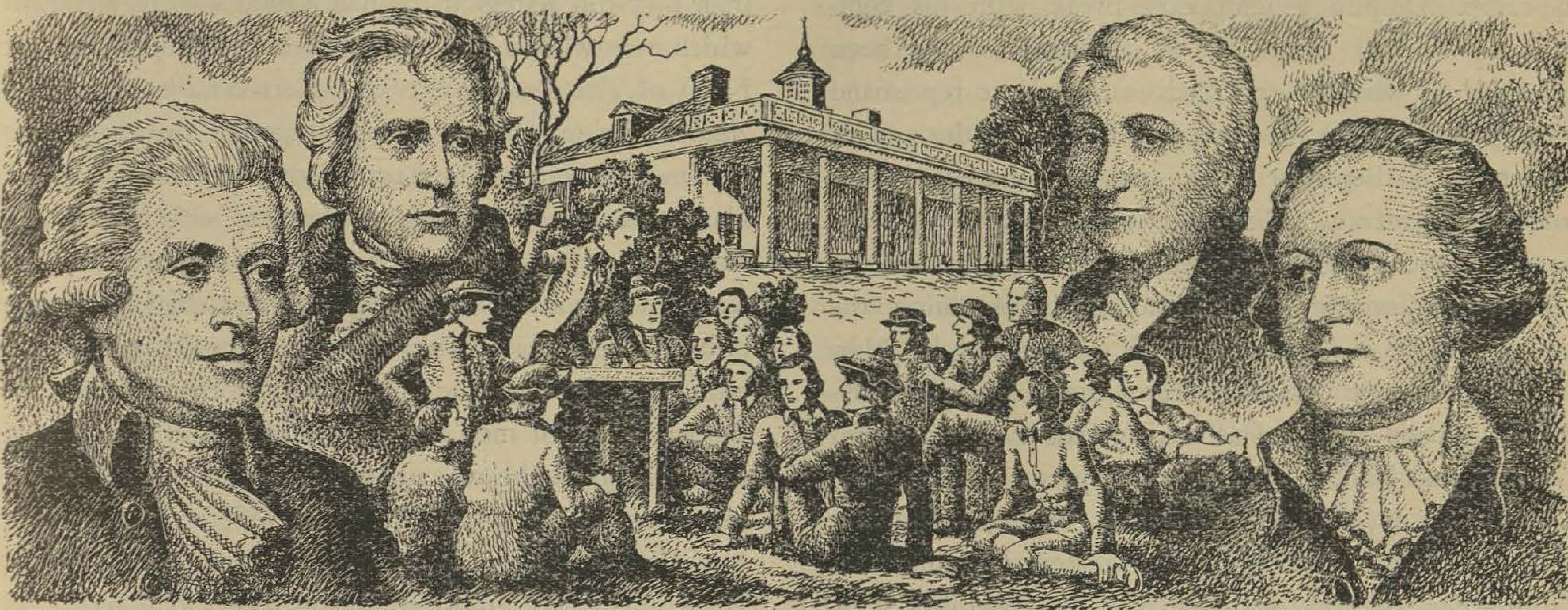
We therefore the representatives of the United States of America in General Congress assembled do in the name & by the authority of the good people of these [*states reject & renounce all allegiance & subjection to the kings of Great Britain & all others who may hereafter claim by, through or under them: we utterly dissolve all political connection which may heretofore have subsisted between us & the people or parliament of Great Britain: & finally we do assert & declare these colonies to be free & independent states,*] & that as free & independent states, they have full power to levy war, conclude peace, contract alliances, establish commerce, & to do all other acts & things which independent states may of right do.	We therefore the representatives of the United States of America in General Congress assembled, appealing to the supreme judge of the world for the rectitude of our intentions, do in the name, & by the authority of the good people of these colonies, solemnly publish & declare that these united colonies are & of right ought to be free & independent states; that they are absolved from all allegiance to the British crown, and that all political connection between them & the state of Great Britain is, & ought to be, totally dissolved; & that as free and independent states they have full power to levy war, conclude peace, contract alliances, establish commerce & to do all other acts & things which independant states may of right do.
And for the support of this declaration we mutually pledge to each other our lives, our fortunes, & our sacred honour.	And for the support of this declaration, with a firm reliance on the protection of divine providence we mutually pledge to each other our lives, our fortunes, & our sacred honor.

The Declaration thus signed on the 4th, on paper was engrossed on parchment, & signed again on the 2d. of August. . . .

1776?-1829

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44 **We therefore.** The version in the right-hand column is that adopted • 80 **The Declaration.** This last sentence was added by Jefferson later, when he knew that his account of the signing had been called into question



Alexander Hamilton

1757 · 1804

Much of the stability of the government of the United States, as we know it even today, must be attributed to the labors of Alexander Hamilton. Soldier, statesman, lawyer, and practical politician, he was only incidentally a writer. Yet, assisted by James Madison and John Jay, he planned and executed *The Federalist,* which Jefferson called, in a letter to Madison, "the best commentary on the principles of government that ever was written." The broader, more speculative papers in the series, notably No. X, were often Madison's, but Hamilton's shrewd realism helped to give the work the high place which it holds in the political literature of Western civilization.

Hamilton was born in the West Indies in 1757. At an early age he displayed an amazing talent for business, so that interested elders sent him to the Continent to finish his education. In 1774, when he was an undergraduate at King's College (now Columbia University), he joined the Whig opposition to the British and soon distinguished himself as a speaker and pamphleteer. The first indications of his mastery of constitutional history and the intricacies of political action appeared in *A Full Vindication of the Measures of the Congress from the Calumnies of Their Enemies* (1774) and *The Farmer*

Panel (l. to r.): Thomas Jefferson • Andrew Jackson • Mount Vernon • A political meeting on the frontier • Hugh Henry Brackenridge • Alexander Hamilton

Refuted (1775). In March 1776 he joined the Continental army as captain of an artillery company; within a year he was a lieutenant colonel and Washington's aide-de-camp. Despite a temporary break with his commander in chief (Hamilton is supposed to have been offended at what he regarded as an unjust reprimand from Washington), he served brilliantly to the end of the war and thereafter was a nationally known lawyer and public servant. His most important contributions to government were his draft of the call for the Constitutional Convention, his success in obtaining the ratification of the new form of government by New York, his term as first secretary of the treasury in 1789-1795 (usually regarded as having laid the foundations of the fiscal policy, and the chief party issues, of the United States), and his influence as Washington's most trusted adviser, nowhere better illustrated than in the latter's *Farewell Address* (see p. 374). Hamilton's opposition to Aaron Burr, first in the Presidential election of 1800, which was decided in favor of Jefferson in the House of Representatives, and later in the contest of 1804 for the governorship of New York, resulted in the famous duel in which Hamilton was killed.

The inevitable contrast between Hamilton and Jefferson has frequently obscured the former's greatness. The self-made man, relatively narrow in his interests and distrustful of the masses—"The people," he once remarked, "is a great beast!"—has suffered by the comparison with a versatile philosopher who, gracefully minimizing his own wealth and family connections, believed that all men are created equal. Men like Washington, however, quite evidently trusted Hamilton more than they did Jefferson; he had a solid quality, a realism which was wholly honest and direct. A comparison of No. I of *The Federalist* with Jefferson's *First Inaugural Address* brings the men closer together than might be expected, although it also reveals their mutual suspicions. Hamilton wanted a strong government, safe from attack from without and from disorder within; a political system which would place responsible and efficient men in public office, pay its own way, provide for the public good without partiality, and, above all, work smoothly. A shrewd judge of men's motives and a careful calculator of probabilities, he was more aware of the difficulties of obtaining such a system than was Jefferson, whose aim was, after all, not much different. To Hamilton, however, government was almost an end in itself; to Jefferson, as to most men, it was only a necessary means to other ends.

On political questions Hamilton was always well-informed, and he wrote clearly and effectively for the audience to which he addressed himself. There are few better practitioners of argument in American literature.

The Works of Alexander Hamilton, ed. H. C. Lodge, Constitutional Edition, 12 vols., New York, 1904 • Alexander Hamilton and Thomas Jefferson: Representative Selections, ed. F. C. Prescott, Cincinnati, 1934 • H. J. Ford, Alexander Hamilton, New York, 1925 • Bower Aly, The Rhetoric of Alexander Hamilton, New York, 1941

From *The Federalist*

The Federalist consists of eighty-five essays, all but the last eight of which originally appeared in New York City newspapers between October 27, 1787, and April 4, 1788. They were at once collected and published in two volumes, presumably with Hamilton's supervision. There have since been many reprints, some of which incorporate verbal changes of doubtful authenticity. The authorship of some of the essays has long been disputed, but it seems certain that Hamilton wrote at least fifty-one, Jay, five, and Madison, fourteen. Three were written by Hamilton and Jefferson in collaboration, and the authorship of the remaining twelve, long disputed, is now thought to have been Madison's.

The series was begun in answer to newspaper essays and pamphlets in opposition to the ratification of the Constitution (see **Pamphlets on the Constitution of the United States**, 1888, and **Essays on the Constitution of the United States**, 1892, ed. P. L. Ford). In New York, Hamilton was the only delegate to the Constitutional

Convention who supported the proposed new form of government; Robert Yates and John Lansing, joined by Governor George Clinton, vigorously opposed it. The Federalist is credited with having carried the issue in New York, and it may have had influence elsewhere. In the course of its creation, however, the series became something more than mere debate; it enabled Hamilton to bring to fruition his thorough study of constitutional problems. Of the three essays here reprinted, No. I shows his realistic philosophy of politics, No. XXIII his skill in logical argument, and No. LXIX his thorough knowledge of the early state constitutions, eleven of which had been adopted between 1776 and 1784.

NO. I

To the People of the State of New York:

After an unequivocal experience of the inefficiency of the subsisting federal government, you are called upon to deliberate on a new Constitution for the United States of America. The subject speaks its own importance; comprehending in its consequences nothing less than the existence of the UNION, the safety and welfare of the parts of which it is composed, the fate of an empire in many respects the most interesting in the world. It has been frequently remarked that it seems to have been reserved to the people of this country, by their conduct and example, to decide the important question, whether societies of men are really capable or not of establishing good government from reflection and choice, or whether they are forever destined to depend for their political constitutions on accident and force. If there be any truth in the remark, the crisis at which we are arrived may with propriety be regarded as the era in which that decision is to be made; and a wrong election of the part we shall act may, in this view, deserve to be considered as the general misfortune of mankind.

This idea will add the inducements of philanthropy to those of patriotism, to heighten the solicitude which all considerate and good men must feel for the event. Happy will it be if our choice should be directed by a judicious estimate of our true interests, unperplexed and unbiassed by considerations not connected with the public good. But this is a thing more ardently to be wished than seriously to be expected. The plan offered to our deliberations affects too many particular interests, innovates upon too many local institutions, not to involve in its discussion a variety of objects foreign to its merits, and of views, passions and prejudices little favorable to the discovery of truth.

Among the most formidable of the obstacles which the new Constitution will have to encounter may readily be distinguished the obvious interest of a certain class of men in every State to resist all changes which may hazard a diminution of the power, emolument, and consequence of the offices they hold under the State establishments; and the perverted ambition of another class of men, who will either hope to aggrandise themselves by the confusions of their country, or will flatter themselves with fairer prospects of elevation from the subdivision of the empire into several partial confederacies than from its union under one government.

It is not, however, my design to dwell upon observations of this nature. I am well aware that it would be disingenuous to resolve indiscriminately the opposition of any set of men (merely because their situations might subject them to suspicion) into interested or ambitious views. Candor will oblige us to admit that even such men may be actuated by upright intentions; and it cannot be doubted that much of the opposition which has made its appearance, or may hereafter make its appearance, will spring from sources, blameless at least, if not respectable—the honest errors of minds led astray by preconceived jealousies and fears. So numerous indeed and so powerful are the causes which serve to give a false bias to the judgment, that we, upon many occasions, see wise and good men on the wrong as well as on the right side of questions of the first magnitude to society. This circumstance, if duly attended to, would furnish a lesson of moderation to those who are ever so much persuaded of their being in the right in any controversy. And a further reason for caution, in this respect, might be drawn from the reflection that we are not always sure that those who advocate the truth are influenced by purer principles than their antagonists. Ambition, avarice, personal animosity, party opposition, and many other motives not more laudable than these, are apt to operate as well upon those who support as those who oppose the right side of a question. Were there not even these inducements to

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Text: the Lodge edition of the Works, 1904, Vols. XI and XII • **29 The plan,** the Constitution

moderation, nothing could be more ill-judged than that intolerant spirit which has, at all times, characterized political parties. For in politics, as in religion, it is equally absurd to aim at making proselytes by fire and sword. Heresies in either can rarely be cured by persecution.

And yet, however just these sentiments will be allowed to be, we have already sufficient indications that it will happen in this as in all former cases of great national discussion. A torrent of angry and malignant passions will be let loose. To judge from the conduct of the opposite parties, we shall be led to conclude that they will mutually hope to evince the justness of their opinions, and to increase the number of their converts by the loudness of their declamations and the bitterness of their invectives. An enlightened zeal for the energy and efficiency of government will be stigmatized as the offspring of a temper fond of despotic power and hostile to the principles of liberty. An over-scrupulous jealousy of danger to the rights of the people, which is more commonly the fault of the head than of the heart, will be represented as mere pretence and artifice, the stale bait for popularity at the expense of the public good. It will be forgotten, on the one hand, that jealousy is the usual concomitant of love, and that the noble enthusiasm of liberty is apt to be infected with a spirit of narrow and illiberal distrust. On the other hand, it will be equally forgotten that the vigor of government is essential to the security of liberty; that, in the contemplation of a sound and well-informed judgment, their interest can never be separated; and that a dangerous ambition more often lurks behind the specious mask of zeal for the rights of the people than under the forbidding appearance of zeal for the firmness and efficiency of government. History will teach us that the former has been found a much more certain road to the introduction of despotism than the latter, and that of those men who have overturned the liberties of republics, the greatest number have begun their career by paying an obsequious court to the people; commencing demagogues, and ending tyrants.

In the course of the preceding observations, I have had an eye, my fellow-citizens, to putting you upon your guard against all attempts, from whatever quarter, to influence your decision in a matter of the utmost moment to your welfare, by any impressions other than those which may result from the evidence of truth. You will, no doubt, at the same time, have collected from the general scope of them, that they proceed from a source not unfriendly to the new Constitution. Yes, my countrymen, I own to you that, after having given it an attentive consideration, I am clearly of opinion it is your interest to adopt it. I am convinced that this is the safest course for your liberty, your dignity, and your happiness. I affect not reserves which I do not feel. I will not amuse you with an appearance of deliberation when I have decided. I frankly acknowledge to you my convictions, and I will freely lay before you the reasons on which they are founded. The consciousness of good intentions disdains ambiguity. I shall not, however, multiply professions on this head. My motives must remain in the depository of my own breast. My arguments will be open to all, and may be judged of by all. They shall at least be offered in a spirit which will not disgrace the cause of truth.

I propose, in a series of papers, to discuss the following interesting particulars:—*The utility of the UNION to your political prosperity—The insufficiency of the present Confederation to preserve that Union—The necessity of a government at least equally energetic with the one proposed, to the attainment of this object—The conformity of the proposed Constitution to the true principles of republican government—Its analogy to your own State constitution*—and lastly, *The additional security which its adoption will afford to the preservation of that species of government, to liberty, and to property.*

In the progress of this discussion I shall endeavor to give a satisfactory answer to all the objections which shall have made their appearance, that may seem to have any claim to your attention.

It may perhaps be thought superfluous to offer arguments to prove the utility of the UNION, a point, no doubt, deeply engraved on the hearts of the great body of the people in every State, and one, which it may be imagined, has no adversaries. But the fact is, that we already hear it whispered in the private circles of those who oppose the new Constitution, that the thirteen States are of too great extent for any general system, and that we must of necessity resort to separate confederacies

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65 particulars. The outline covers only the first fifty-one essays; the scheme was later expanded to include analyses of the House of Representatives, the Senate, the Executive (see p. 369), and the Judiciary

of distinct portions of the whole. This doctrine will, in all probability, be gradually propagated, till it has votaries enough to countenance an open avowal of it. For nothing can be more evident, to those who are able to take an enlarged view of the subject, than the alternative of an adoption of the new Constitution or a dismemberment of the Union. It will therefore be of use to begin by examining the advantages of that Union, the certain evils, and the probable dangers, to which every State will be exposed from its dissolution. This shall accordingly constitute the subject of my next address.

PUBLIUS

NO. XXIII

To the People of the State of New York:

The necessity of a Constitution, at least equally energetic with the one proposed, to the preservation of the Union, is the point at the examination of which we are now arrived.

This inquiry will naturally divide itself into three branches—the objects to be provided for by the federal government, the quantity of power necessary to the accomplishment of those objects, the persons upon whom that power ought to operate. Its distribution and organization will more properly claim our attention under the succeeding head.

The principal purposes to be answered by union are these—the common defence of the members; the preservation of the public peace, as well against internal convulsions as external attacks; the regulation of commerce with other nations and between the States; the superintendence of our intercourse, political and commercial, with foreign countries.

The authorities essential to the common defence are these: to raise armies; to build and equip fleets; to prescribe rules for the government of both; to direct their operations; to provide for their support. These powers ought to exist without limitation, *because it is impossible to foresee or define the extent and variety of national exigencies, or the correspondent extent and variety of the means which may be necessary to satisfy them.* The circumstances that endanger the safety of nations are infinite, and for this reason no constitutional shackles can wisely be imposed on the power to which the care of it is committed. This power ought to be co-extensive with all the possible combinations of such circumstances; and ought to be under the direction of the same councils which are appointed to preside over the common defence.

This is one of those truths which, to a correct and unprejudiced mind, carries its own evidence along with it; and may be obscured, but cannot be made plainer by argument or reasoning. It rests upon axioms as simple as they are universal; the *means* ought to be proportioned to the *end;* the persons, from whose agency the attainment of any *end* is expected, ought to possess the *means* by which it is to be attained.

Whether there ought to be a federal government intrusted with the care of the common defence, is a question in the first instance, open for discussion; but the moment it is decided in the affirmative, it will follow, that that government ought to be clothed with all the powers requisite to complete execution of its trust. And unless it can be shown that the circumstances which may affect the public safety are reducible within certain determinate limits; unless the contrary of this position can be fairly and rationally disputed, it must be admitted, as a necessary consequence, that there can be no limitation of that authority which is to provide for the defence and protection of the community, in any matter essential to its efficacy—that is, in any matter essential to the *formation, direction,* or *support* of the NATIONAL FORCES.

Defective as the present Confederation has been proved to be, this principle appears to have been fully recognised by the framers of it; though they have not made proper or adequate provision for its exercise. Congress have an unlimited discretion to make requisitions of men and money; to govern the army and navy; to direct their operations. As their requisitions are made constitutionally binding upon the States, who are in fact under the most solemn obligations to furnish the supplies required of them, the intention evidently was, that the

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1 **the whole.** "The same idea, tracing the arguments to their consequences, is held out in several of the late publications against the new Constitution."—Publius. Madison had dealt with this "territorial" objection in No. XIV, and Hamilton returns to it briefly in No. XXIII. One conspicuous use of it by the opposition was the popular **Letters from the Federal Farmer to the Republican** (1787) by Richard Henry Lee of Virginia

United States should command whatever resources were by them judged requisite to the "common defence and general welfare." It was presumed that a sense of their true interests, and a regard to the dictates of good faith, would be found sufficient pledges for the punctual performance of the duty of the members to the federal head.

The experiment has, however, demonstrated that this expectation was ill-founded and illusory; and the observations, made under the last head, will, I imagine, have sufficed to convince the impartial and discerning, that there is an absolute necessity for an entire change in the first principles of the system; that if we are in earnest about giving the Union energy and duration, we must abandon the vain project of legislating upon the States in their collective capacities; we must extend the laws of the federal government to the individual citizens of America; we must discard the fallacious scheme of quotas and requisitions, as equally impracticable and unjust. The result from all this is that the Union ought to be invested with full power to levy troops; to build and equip fleets; and to raise the revenues which will be required for the formation and support of an army and navy, in the customary and ordinary modes practised in other governments.

If the circumstances of our country are such as to demand a compound instead of a simple, a confederate instead of a sole, government, the essential point which will remain to be adjusted will be to discriminate the OBJECTS, as far as it can be done, which shall appertain to the different provinces or departments of power; allowing to each the most ample authority for fulfilling the objects committed to its charge. Shall the Union be constituted the guardian of the common safety? Are fleets and armies and revenues necessary to this purpose? The government of the Union must be empowered to pass all laws, and to make all regulations which have relation to them. The same must be the case in respect to commerce, and to every other matter to which its jurisdiction is permitted to extend. Is the administration of justice between the citizens of the same State the proper department of the local governments? These must possess all the authorities which are connected with this object, and with every other that may be allotted to their particular cognizance and direction. Not to confer in each case a degree of power commensurate to the end, would be to violate the most obvious rules of prudence and propriety, and improvidently to trust the great interests of the nation to hands which are disabled from managing them with vigor and success.

Who so likely to make suitable provisions for the public defence, as that body to which the guardianship of the public safety is confided; which, as the centre of information, will best understand the extent and urgency of the dangers that threaten; as the representative of the WHOLE, will feel itself most deeply interested in the preservation of every part; which, from the responsibility implied in the duty assigned to it, will be most sensibly impressed with the necessity of proper exertions; and which, by the extension of its authority throughout the States, can alone establish uniformity and concert in the plans and measures by which the common safety is to be secured? Is there not a manifest inconsistency in devolving upon the federal government the care of the general defence, and leaving in the State governments the *effective* powers by which it is to be provided for? Is not a want of co-operation the infallible consequence of such a system? And will not weakness, disorder, an undue distribution of the burdens and calamities of war, an unnecessary and intolerable increase of expense, be its natural and inevitable concomitants? Have we not had unequivocal experience of its effects in the course of the revolution which we have just accomplished?

Every view we may take of the subject, as candid inquirers after truth, will serve to convince us, that it is both unwise and dangerous to deny the federal government an unconfined authority, as to all those objects which are intrusted to its management. It will indeed deserve the most vigilant and careful attention of the people, to see that it be modelled in such a manner as to admit of its being safely vested with the requisite powers. If any plan which has been, or may be, offered to our consideration, should not, upon a dispassionate inspection, be found to answer this description, it ought to be rejected. A government, the constitution of which renders it unfit to be trusted with all the powers which a free people *ought to delegate to any government,* would be an unsafe and improper depositary of the NATIONAL

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10 **the last head.** Nos. XV-XXII deal with the insufficiency and defects of the Confederation

INTERESTS. Wherever THESE can with propriety be confided, the coincident powers may safely accompany them. This is the true result of all just reasoning upon the subject. And the adversaries of the plan promulgated by the convention ought to have confined themselves to showing, that the internal structure of the proposed government was such as to render it unworthy of the confidence of the people. They ought not to have wandered into inflammatory declamations and unmeaning cavils about the extent of the powers. The POWERS are not too extensive for the OBJECTS of federal administration, or, in other words, for the management of our NATIONAL INTERESTS; nor can any satisfactory argument be framed to show that they are chargeable with such an excess. If it be true, as has been insinuated by some of the writers on the other side, that the difficulty arises from the nature of the thing, and that the extent of the country will not permit us to form a government in which such ample powers can safely be reposed, it would prove that we ought to contract our views, and resort to the expedient of separate confederacies, which will move within more practicable spheres. For the absurdity must continually stare us in the face of confiding to a government the direction of the most essential national interests, without daring to trust it to the authorities which are indispensable to their proper and efficient management. Let us not attempt to reconcile contradictions, but firmly embrace a rational alternative.

I trust, however, that the impracticability of one general system cannot be shown. I am greatly mistaken, if anything of weight has yet been advanced of this tendency; and I flatter myself, that the observations which have been made in the course of these papers have served to place the reverse of that position in as clear a light as any matter still in the womb of time and experience can be susceptible of. This, at all events, must be evident, that the very difficulty itself, drawn from the extent of the country, is the strongest argument in favour of an energetic government; for any other can certainly never preserve the Union of so large an empire. If we embrace the tenets of those who oppose the adoption of the proposed Constitution, as the standard of our political creed, we cannot fail to verify the gloomy doctrines which predict the impracticability of a national system pervading the entire limits of the present Confederacy.

PUBLIUS

NO. LXIX

To the People of the State of New York:

I proceed now to trace the real characters of the proposed Executive, as they are marked out in the plan of the convention. This will serve to place in a strong light the unfairness of the representations which have been made in regard to it.

The first thing which strikes our attention is, that the executive authority, with few exceptions, is to be vested in a single magistrate. This will scarcely, however, be considered as a point upon which any comparison can be grounded; for if, in this particular, there be a resemblance to the king of Great Britain, there is not less a resemblance to the Grand Seignior, to the khan of Tartary, to the Man of the Seven Mountains, or to the governor of New York.

That magistrate is to be elected for *four* years; and is to be reëligible as often as the people of the United States shall think him worthy of their confidence. In these circumstances there is a total dissimilitude between *him* and a king of Great Britain, who is an *hereditary* monarch, possessing the crown as a patrimony descendible to his heirs forever; but there is a close analogy between *him* and a governor of New York, who is elected for *three* years, and is reëligible without limitation or intermission. If we consider how much less time would be requisite for establishing a dangerous influence in a single State, than for establishing a like influence throughout the United States we must conclude that a duration of *four* years for the Chief Magistrate of the Union is a degree of permanency far less to be dreaded in that office, than a duration of *three* years for a corresponding office in a single State.

The President of the United States would be liable to be impeached, tried, and, upon conviction of treason, bribery, or other high crimes or misdemeanors, removed from office; and would afterwards be liable to prosecution and punishment in the ordinary course of law. The person of the king of Great Britain is sacred and inviolable; there is no constitutional tribunal to which he is amenable; no punishment to which he can be subjected without involving the crisis of a national revolution. In this delicate and important circumstance of personal responsibility, the President of Confederated America would

stand upon no better ground than a governor of New York, and upon worse ground than the governors of Maryland and Delaware.

The President of the United States is to have power to return a bill, which shall have passed the two branches of the legislature, for reconsideration; and the bill so returned is to become a law, if, upon that reconsideration, it be approved by two thirds of both houses. The king of Great Britain, on his part, has an absolute negative upon the acts of the two houses of Parliament. The disuse of that power for a considerable time past does not affect the reality of its existence; and is to be ascribed wholly to the crown's having found the means of substituting influence to authority, or the art of gaining a majority in one or the other of the two houses, to the necessity of exerting a prerogative which could seldom be exerted without hazarding some degree of national agitation. The qualified negative of the President differs widely from this absolute negative of the British sovereign; and tallies exactly with the revisionary authority of the council of revision of this State, of which the governor is a constituent part. In this respect the power of the President would exceed that of the governor of New York, because the former would possess, singly, what the latter shares with the chancellor and judges; but it would be precisely the same with that of the governor of Massachusetts, whose constitution, as to this article, seems to have been the original from which the convention have copied.

The President is to be the "commander-in-chief of the army and navy of the United States, and of the militia of the several States, when called into the actual service of the United States. He is to have power to grant reprieves and pardons for offences against the United States, *except in cases of impeachment;* to recommend to the consideration of Congress such measures as he shall judge necessary and expedient; to convene, on extraordinary occasions, both houses of the legislature, or either of them, and, in case of disagreement between them *with respect to the time of adjournment,* to adjourn them to such time as he shall think proper; to take care that the laws be faithfully executed; and to commission all officers of the United States." In most of these particulars, the power of the President will resemble equally that of the king of Great Britain and of the governor of New York. The most material points of difference are these:—*First.* The President will have only the occasional command of such part of the militia of the nation as by legislative provision may be called into the actual service of the Union. The king of Great Britain and the governor of New York have at all times the entire command of all the militia within their several jurisdictions. In this article, therefore, the power of the President would be inferior to that of either the monarch or the governor. *Secondly.* The President is to be commander-in-chief of the army and navy of the United States. In this respect his authority would be nominally the same with that of the king of Great Britain, but in substance much inferior to it. It would amount to nothing more than the supreme command and direction of the military and naval forces, as first General and admiral of the Confederacy; while that of the British king extends to the *declaring* of war and to the *raising* and *regulating* of fleets and armies,—all which, by the Constitution under consideration, would appertain to the legislature. The governor of New York, on the other hand, is by the constitution of the State vested only with the command of its militia and navy. But the constitutions of several of the States expressly declare their governors to be commanders-in-chief, as well of the army as navy; and it may well be a question, whether those of New Hampshire and Massachusetts, in particular, do not, in this instance, confer larger powers upon their respective governors, than could be claimed by a President of the United States. *Thirdly.* The power of the President, in respect to par-

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3 **Maryland and Delaware.** The constitutions of Maryland and Delaware had no specific provision for impeachment; the governor of New York could be impeached • 65 **legislature.** "A writer in a Pennsylvania paper, under the signature of **Tamony,** has asserted that the king of Great Britain owes his prerogative as commander-in-chief to an annual mutiny bill. The truth is, on the contrary, that his prerogative, in this respect, is immemorial, and was only disputed, 'contrary to all reason and precedent,' as Blackstone, vol. i., page 262, expresses it, by the Long Parliament of Charles I.; but by the statute the 13th of Charles II., chap. 6, it was declared to be in the king alone, for that the sole supreme government and command of the militia within his Majesty's realms and dominions, and of all forces by sea and land, and of all forts and places of strength, EVER WAS AND IS the undoubted right of his Majesty and his royal predecessors, kings and queens of England, and that both or either house of Parliament cannot nor ought to pretend to the same."—Publius. The reference is to **Commentaries** on the Laws of England (1765) by Sir William Blackstone (1723-1780), one of the chief sources of Hamilton's political philosophy

dons, would extend to all cases, *except those of impeachment.* The governor of New York may pardon in all cases, even in those of impeachment, except for treason and murder. Is not the power of the governor, in this article, on a calculation of political consequences, greater than that of the President? All conspiracies and plots against the government, which have not been matured into actual treason, may be screened from punishment of every kind, by the interposition of the prerogative of pardoning. If a governor of New York, therefore, should be at the head of any such conspiracy, until the design had been ripened into actual hostility he could insure his accomplices and adherents an entire impunity. A President of the Union, on the other hand, though he may even pardon treason, when prosecuted in the ordinary course of law, could shelter no offender, in any degree, from the effects of impeachment and conviction. Would not the prospect of a total indemnity for all the preliminary steps be a greater temptation to undertake and persevere in an enterprise against the public liberty, than the mere prospect of an exemption from death and confiscation, if the final execution of the design, upon an actual appeal to arms, should miscarry? Would this last expectation have any influence at all, when the probability was computed, that the person who was to afford that exemption might himself be involved in the consequences of the measure, and might be incapacitated by his agency in it from affording the desired impunity? The better to judge of this matter, it will be necessary to recollect that, by the proposed Constitution, the offence of treason is limited "to levying war upon the United States, and adhering to their enemies, giving them aid and comfort"; and that by the laws of New York it is confined with similar bounds. *Fourthly.* The President can only adjourn the national legislature in the single case of disagreement about the time of adjournment. The British monarch may prorogue or even dissolve the Parliament. The governor of New York may also prorogue the legislature of this State for a limited time; a power which, in certain situations, may be employed to very important purposes.

The President is to have power, with the advice and consent of the Senate, to make treaties, provided two thirds of the senators present concur. The king of Great Britain is the sole and absolute representative of the nation in all foreign transactions. He can of his own accord make treaties of peace, commerce, alliance, and of every other description. It has been insinuated, that his authority in this respect is not conclusive, and that his conventions with foreign powers are subject to the revision, and stand in need of the ratification, of Parliament. But I believe this doctrine was never heard of until it was broached upon the present occasion. Every jurist of that kingdom, and every other man acquainted with its Constitution, knows, as an established fact, that the prerogative of making treaties exists in the crown in its utmost plenitude; and that the compacts entered into by the royal authority have the most complete legal validity and perfection, independent of any other sanction. The Parliament, it is true, is sometimes seen employing itself in altering the existing laws to conform them to the stipulations in a new treaty; and this may have possibly given birth to the imagination, that its coöperation was necessary to the obligatory efficacy of the treaty. But this parliamentary interposition proceeds from a different cause: from the necessity of adjusting a most artificial and intricate system of revenue and commercial laws, to the changes made in them by the operation of the treaty; and of adapting new provisions and precautions to the new state of things, to keep the machine from running into disorder. In this respect, therefore, there is no comparison between the intended power of the President and the actual power of the British sovereign. The one can perform alone what the other can do only with the concurrence of a branch of the legislature. It must be admitted, that, in this instance, the power of the federal Executive would exceed that of any State Executive. But this arises naturally from the sovereign power which relates to treaties. If the Confederacy were to be dissolved, it would become a question, whether the Executives of the several States were not solely invested with that delicate and important prerogative.

The President is also to be authorized to receive ambassadors and other public ministers. This, though it has been a rich theme of declamation, is more a matter of dignity than of authority. It is a circumstance which will be without consequence in the administration of the government; and it was far more convenient that it should

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54 jurist. "Vide Blackstone's Commentaries, vol. i., p. 257."—Publius

be arranged in this manner, than that there should be a necessity of convening the legislature, or one of its branches, upon every arrival of a foreign minister, though it were merely to take the place of a departed predecessor.

The President is to nominate and, *with the advice and consent of the Senate,* to appoint ambassadors and other public ministers, judges of the Supreme Court, and in general all officers of the United States established by law, and whose appointments are not otherwise provided for by the Constitution. The king of Great Britain is emphatically and truly styled the fountain of honor. He not only appoints to all offices, but can create offices. He can confer titles of nobility at pleasure; and has the disposal of an immense number of church preferments. There is evidently a great inferiority in the power of the President, in this particular, to that of the British king; nor is it equal to that of the governor of New York, if we are to interpret the meaning of the constitution of the State by the practice which has obtained under it. The power of appointment is with us lodged in a council, composed of the governor and four members of the Senate, chosen by the Assembly. The governor *claims,* and has frequently *exercised,* the right of nomination, and is *entitled* to a casting vote in the appointment. If he really has the right of nominating, his authority is in this respect equal to that of the President, and exceeds it in the article of the casting vote. In the national government, if the Senate should be divided, no appointment could be made; in the government of New York, if the council should be divided, the governor can turn the scale, and confirm his own nomination. If we compare the publicity which must necessarily attend the mode of appointment by the President and an entire branch of the national legislature, with the privacy in the mode of appointment by the governor of New York, closeted in a secret apartment with at most four, and frequently with only two persons; and if we at the same time consider how much more easy it must be to influence the small number of which a council of appointment consists, than the considerable number of which the national Senate would consist, we cannot hesitate to pronounce that the power of the chief magistrate of this State, in the disposition of offices, must, in practice, be greatly superior to that of the Chief Magistrate of the Union.

Hence it appears that, except as to the concurrent authority of the President in the article of treaties, it would be difficult to determine whether that magistrate would, in the aggregate, possess more or less power than the Governor of New York. And it appears yet more unequivocally, that there is no pretence for the parallel which has been attempted between him and the king of Great Britain. But to render the contrast in this respect still more striking, it may be of use to throw the principal circumstances of dissimilitude into a closer group.

The President of the United States would be an officer elected by the people for *four* years; the king of Great Britain is a perpetual and *hereditary* prince. The one would be amenable to personal punishment and disgrace; the person of the other is sacred and inviolable. The one would have a *qualified* negative upon the acts of the legislative body; the other has an *absolute* negative. The one would have a right to command the military and naval forces of the nation; the other, in addition to this right, possesses that of *declaring* war, and of *raising* and *regulating* fleets and armies by his own authority. The one would have a concurrent power with a branch of the legislature in the formation of treaties; the other is the *sole possessor* of the power of making treaties. The one would have a like concurrent authority in appointing to offices; the other is the sole author of all appointments. The one can confer no privileges whatever: the other can make denizens of aliens, noblemen of commoners; can erect corporations with all the rights incident to corporate bodies. The one can prescribe no rules concerning the commerce or currency of the nation; the other is in several respects the arbiter of commerce, and in this capacity can establish markets and fairs, can regulate weights and measures, can lay embargoes for a limited time, can coin money, can authorize or prohibit the circulation of foreign coin. The one has no particle of spiritual jurisdiction; the other is the supreme head and governor of the national church! What answer shall we give to those who would persuade us that things so unlike resemble each other? The same that ought to be given to those who tell us that a government, the whole power of which would be in the hands of the elective and periodical servants of the people, is an aristocracy, a monarchy, and a despotism.

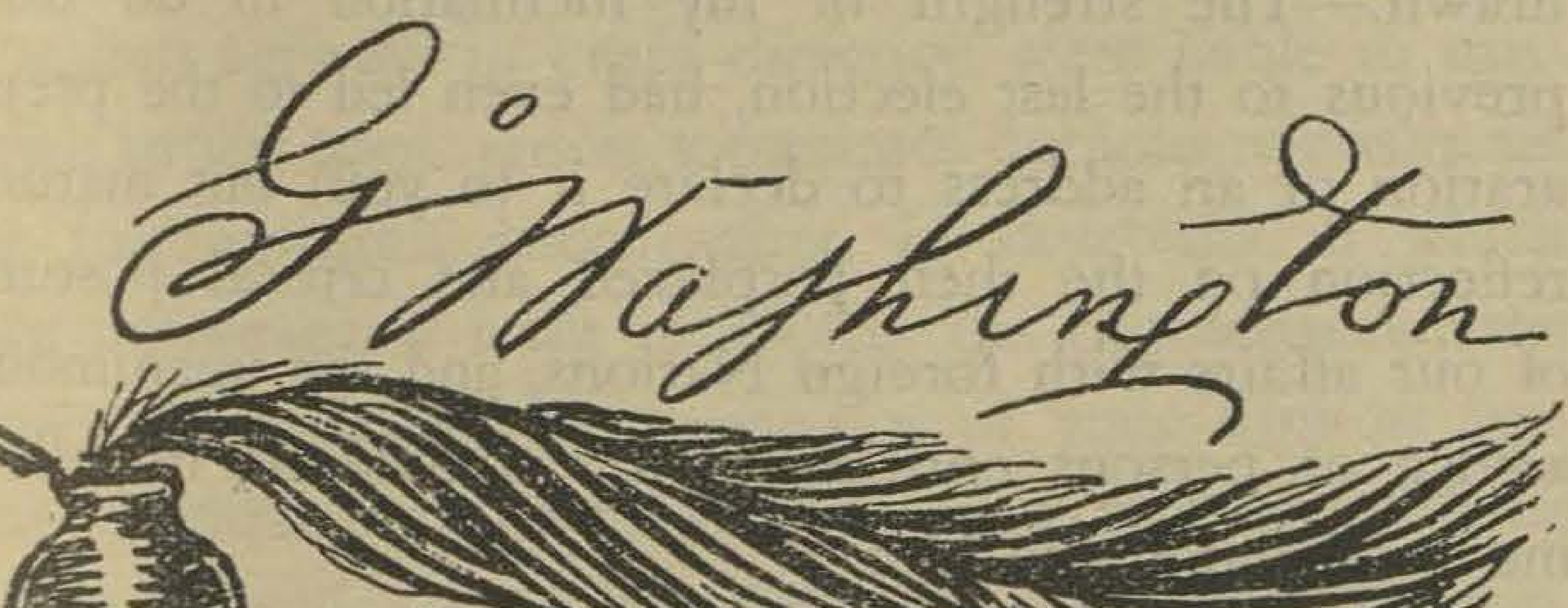
PUBLIUS

1787-1788•1788

George Washington

1732 · 1799

George Washington, hero of the Revolution, was called the father of his country long before he was chosen as the first President of the United States. The phrase was appropriate to a man who would have been notable in any society for patience, dependability, dignity, and courage. Common sense and the copybook virtues, not brilliance, made Washington a great soldier-leader; it is unfortunate that they also delivered him to the myth-makers, who, with a few inventions such as that of the cherry tree, made him a painful example of perfection.



Recent efforts to humanize Washington, by emphasizing his occasional outbursts of temper, his delight in the company of ladies, and his eighteenth-century overseriousness, represent a reaction which was to be expected. They have not dimmed Washington's reputation perceptibly, however, because it is obvious that he accepted his responsibilities with humility, persevered in adversities which would have crushed a merely ambitious man, and endured both abuse and idolatry with more serenity than Americans had any right to expect.

The chief events in Washington's life were the death of his father in 1743, which meant that his formal education ended when he was sixteen and that he had, unexpectedly, to make his own way in the world; the frontier war with the French and Indians in which, in 1754 and 1755, he encountered humiliation and defeat; his decision that the Stamp Act was an attack on colonial liberty; his acceptance in 1775 of the invitation of the Continental Congress to assume command of the American army; and his election to the Presidency under the new Constitution in 1788. Always there was sacrifice for a man whose dearest wish was to be a Virginia planter. If ever a man had greatness thrust upon him, that man was Washington.

His forte was action rather than language, yet his collected writings, in the Bicentennial Edition begun in 1932, are expected to run to thirty-seven volumes. Many of his state papers, including the *Farewell Address*, were of course composed in large part by others, and yet Washington was always careful to say what he had in mind as meticulously as possible. He believed in a plain style, pruned of all unnecessary words and closely punctuated. The result was prose which is ordinarily accurate and clear. If it is unpoetic, a trifle plodding, and formal rather than lively, it can be defended by the familiar doctrine that style is the man.

The Writings of George Washington, ed. W. C. Ford, 14 vols., New York, 1889-1893 • **Washington's Farewell Address**, ed. V. H. Paltsits, New York, 1935 • N. W. Stephenson and W. H. Dunn, **George Washington**, 2 vols., New York, 1940 • Dixon Wecter, **The Hero in America: A Chronicle of Hero-Worship**, New York, 1941

Farewell Address

To the People of the United States
September 17th, 1796

The **Farewell Address** has long been regarded as the summation of Washington's political and social experience. First published in **Claypoole's American Daily Advertiser**, of Philadelphia, on September 19, 1796, it was reprinted by the end of the year in over one hundred newspapers and in fifty-five separate editions. Its immense influence upon subsequent public policy, particularly in the area of foreign relations, will be apparent to any reader.

Thanks to the careful preservation of Washington's manuscripts, the composition of the **Address** can be minutely studied. In 1792, when he hoped to retire after his first term as President, Washington discussed with James Madison the proper way of announcing his intention, and Madison drafted for him a "valedictory" address. Four years later, certain this time that he could not be dissuaded, Washington wrote a first draft of nineteen pages, using Madison's draft for about five pages. This he turned over to Alexander Hamilton, asking his suggestions for revision and expansion. Hamilton drew up a list of points which he thought should be considered in the final address, based in part upon Washington's manuscript; he also wrote out in full what he thought should be said. Washington took Hamilton's full draft, which incorporated some of his own paragraphs and some of Madison's, shortened it considerably, changed some words here and there, and sent it to the printer. The ideas of the **Farewell Address** are largely Washington's, but the form of expression is the result of extensive collaboration, Hamilton's contribution being most important.

Friends, and Fellow-Citizens,

The period for a new election of a Citizen, to administer the Executive Government of the United States, being not far distant, and the time actually arrived, when your thoughts must be employed in designating the person, who is to be clothed with that important trust, it appears to me proper, especially as it may conduce to a more distinct expression of the public voice, that I should now apprise you of the resolution I have formed, to decline being considered among the number of those, out of whom a choice is to be made.

I beg you, at the same time, to do me the justice to be assured, that this resolution has not been taken, without a strict regard to all the considerations appertaining to the relation, which binds a dutiful citizen to his country—and that, in withdrawing the tender of service which silence in my situation might imply, I am influenced by no diminution of zeal for your future interest, no deficiency of grateful respect for your past kindness; but act under [and?] am supported by a full conviction that the step is compatible with both.

The acceptance of, and continuance hitherto in, the office to which your suffrages have twice called me, have been a uniform sacrifice of inclination to the opinion of duty, and to a deference for what appeared to be your desire.—I constantly hoped, that it would have been much earlier in my power, consistently with motives, which I was not at liberty to disregard, to return to that retirement, from which I had been reluctantly drawn.—The strength of my inclination to do this, previous to the last election, had even led to the preparation of an address to declare it to you; but mature reflection on the then perplexed and critical posture of our affairs with foreign Nations, and the unanimous advice of persons entitled to my confidence, impelled me to abandon the idea.—

I rejoice that the state of your concerns, external as well as internal, no longer renders the pursuit of inclination incompatible with the sentiment of duty, or propriety; and am persuaded, whatever partiality may be retained for my services, that in the present circumstances of our country, you will not disapprove my determination to retire.

The impressions, with which I first undertook the arduous trust, were explained on the proper occasion.—In the discharge of this trust, I will only say, that I have,

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Text: the original manuscript as established by W. C. Ford in **Writings**, Vol. XIII

with good intentions, contributed towards the organization and administration of the government, the best exertions of which a very fallible judgment was capable.—Not unconscious, in the outset, of the inferiority of my qualifications, experience in my own eyes, perhaps still more in the eyes of others, has strengthened the motives to diffidence of myself; and every day the increasing weight of years admonishes me more and more, that the shade of retirement is as necessary to me as it will be welcome.—Satisfied, that, if any circumstances have given peculiar value to my services, they were temporary, I have the consolation to believe, that, while choice and prudence invite me to quit the political scene, patriotism does not forbid it.

In looking forward to the moment, which is intended to terminate the career of my public life, my feelings do not permit me to suspend the deep acknowledgment of that debt of gratitude, which I owe to my beloved country,—for the many honors it has conferred upon me; still more for the steadfast confidence with which it has supported me; and for the opportunities I have thence enjoyed of manifesting my inviolable attachment, by services faithful and persevering, though in usefulness unequal to my zeal.—If benefits have resulted to our country from these services, let it always be remembered to your praise, and as an instructive example in our annals, that under circumstances in which the Passions agitated in every direction were liable to mislead, amidst appearances sometimes dubious, vicissitudes of fortune often discouraging, in situations in which not unfrequently want of success has countenanced the spirit of criticism, the constancy of your support was the essential prop of the efforts, and a guarantee of the plans by which they were effected.—Profoundly penetrated with this idea, I shall carry it with me to the grave, as a strong incitement to unceasing vows that Heaven may continue to you the choicest tokens of its beneficence—that your union and brotherly affection may be perpetual—that the free constitution, which is the work of your hands, may be sacredly maintained—that its administration in every department may be stamped with wisdom and virtue—that, in fine, the happiness of the people of these States, under the auspices of liberty, may be made complete, by so careful a preservation and so prudent a use of this blessing as will acquire to them the glory of recommending it to the applause, the affection, and adoption of every nation, which is yet a stranger to it.

Here, perhaps, I ought to stop.—But a solicitude for your welfare, which cannot end but with my life, and the apprehension of danger, natural to that solicitude, urge me on an occasion like the present, to offer to your solemn contemplation, and to recommend to your frequent review, some sentiments; which are the result of much reflection, of no inconsiderable observation and which appear to me all important to the permanency of your felicity as a People.—These will be offered to you with the more freedom, as you can only see in them the disinterested warnings of a parting friend, who can possibly have no personal motive to bias his counsels.—Nor can I forget, as an encouragement to it your indulgent reception of my sentiments on a former and not dissimilar occasion.

Interwoven as is the love of liberty, with every ligament of your hearts, no recommendation of mine is necessary to fortify or confirm the attachment.—

The Unity of Government which constitutes you one people, is also now dear to you.—It is justly so;—for it is a main Pillar in the Edifice of your real independence; the support of your tranquillity at home; your peace abroad; of your safety; of your prosperity in every shape; of that very Liberty, which you so highly prize.—But as it is easy to foresee, that, from different causes, and from different quarters, much pains will be taken, many artifices employed, to weaken in your minds the conviction of this truth;—as this is the point in your political fortress against which the batteries of internal and external enemies will be most constantly and actively (though often covertly and insidiously) directed, it is of infinite moment, that you should properly estimate the immense value of your national Union to your collective and individual happiness;—that you should cherish a cordial, habitual, and immovable attachment to it; accustoming yourselves to think and speak of it as of the Palladium of your political safety and prosperity; watching for its preservation with jealous anxiety; discountenancing whatever may suggest even a suspicion that it can in any event be abandoned, and indignantly frowning upon the first dawning of every attempt to alienate any portion of our Country from the rest, or to enfeeble the sacred ties which now link together the various parts.

For this you have every inducement of sympathy and interest.—Citizens by birth or choice of a common country, that country has a right to concentrate your affections.—The name of AMERICAN, which belongs to you, in your national capacity, must always exalt the just pride of Patriotism, more than any appellation derived from local discriminations.—With slight shades of difference, you have the same Religion, Manners, Habits, and political Principles.—You have in a common cause fought and triumphed together. The Independence and Liberty you possess are the work of joint councils, and joint efforts—of common dangers, sufferings and successes.—

But these considerations, however powerfully they address themselves to your sensibility, are greatly outweighed by those, which apply more immediately to your Interest.—Here every portion of our country finds the most commanding motives for carefully guarding and preserving the Union of the whole.

The *North* in an unrestrained intercourse with the *South,* protected by the equal Laws of a common government, finds in the productions of the latter great additional resources of maritime and commercial enterprise—and precious materials of manufacturing industry.—The *South,* in the same intercourse, benefiting by the agency of the *North,* sees its agriculture grow and its commerce expand. Turning partly into its own channels the seamen of the *North,* it finds its particular navigation envigorated;—and, while it contributes, in different ways, to nourish and increase the general mass of the national navigation, it looks forward to the protection of a maritime strength to which itself is unequally adapted.—The *East,* in a like intercourse with the *West,* already finds, and in the progressive improvement of interior communications, by land and water, will more and more find, a valuable vent for the commodities which it brings from abroad, or manufactures at home.—The *West* derives from the *East* supplies requisite to its growth and comfort,—and what is perhaps of still greater consequence, it must of necessity owe the *secure* enjoyment of indispensable *outlets* for its own productions to the weight, influence, and the future maritime strength of the Atlantic side of the Union, directed by an indissoluble community of interest, as *one Nation.*—Any other tenure by which the *West* can hold this essential advantage, whether derived from its own separate strength, or from an apostate and unnatural connexion with any foreign Power, must be intrinsically precarious.

While then every part of our Country thus feels an immediate and particular interest in Union, all the parts combined in the united mass of means and efforts cannot fail to find greater strength, greater resource, proportionably greater security from external danger, a less frequent interruption of their Peace by foreign Nations; and, what is of inestimable value! they must derive from Union an exemption from those broils and wars between themselves, which so frequently afflict neighboring countries, not tied together by the same government; which their own rivalships alone would be sufficient to produce; but which opposite foreign alliances, attachments, and intrigues would stimulate and embitter.—Hence likewise they will avoid the necessity of those overgrown Military establishments, which under any form of government, are inauspicious to liberty, and which are to be regarded as particularly hostile to Republican Liberty: In this sense it is, that your Union ought to be considered as a main prop of your liberty, and that the love of the one ought to endear to you the preservation of the other.

These considerations speak a persuasive language to every reflecting and virtuous mind,—and exhibit the continuance of the UNION as a primary object of Patriotic desire.—Is there a doubt, whether a common government can embrace so large a sphere?—Let experience solve it.—To listen to mere speculation in such a case were criminal.—We are authorized to hope that a proper organization of the whole, with the auxiliary agency of governments for the respective subdivisions, will afford a happy issue to the experiment. 'Tis well worth a fair and full experiment. With such powerful and obvious motives to Union, affecting all parts of our country, while experience shall not have demonstrated its impracticability, there will always be reason to distrust the patriotism of those, who in any quarter may endeavor to weaken its bands.—

In contemplating the causes which may disturb our Union, it occurs as matter of serious concern, that any ground should have been furnished for characterizing parties by *Geographical* discriminations—*Northern* and *Southern*—*Atlantic* and *Western;* whence designing men may endeavor to excite a belief, that there is a

real difference of local interests and views. One of the expedients of Party to acquire influence, within particular districts, is to misrepresent the opinions and aims of other districts.—You cannot shield yourselves too much against the jealousies and heart burnings which spring from these misrepresentations;—They tend to render alien to each other those who ought to be bound together by fraternal affection.—The inhabitants of our Western country have lately had a useful lesson on this head.—They have seen, in the negotiation by the Executive, and in the unanimous ratification by the Senate, of the treaty with Spain, and in the universal satisfaction at that event, throughout the United States, a decisive proof how unfounded were the suspicions propagated among them of a policy in the General Government and in the Atlantic States unfriendly to their interests in regard to the MISSISSIPPI.—They have been witnesses to the formation of two Treaties, that with G. Britain, and that with Spain, which secure to them every thing they could desire, in respect to our Foreign Relations, towards confirming their prosperity.—Will it not be their wisdom to rely for the preservation of these advantages on the UNION by which they were procured?—Will they not henceforth be deaf to those advisers, if such there are, who would sever them from their Brethren, and connect them with Aliens?—

To the efficacy and permanency of your Union, a Government for the whole is indispensable.—No alliances however strict between the parts can be an adequate substitute.—They must inevitably experience the infractions and interruptions which all alliances in all times have experienced.—Sensible of this momentous truth, you have improved upon your first essay, by the adoption of a Constitution of Government, better calculated than your former for an intimate Union, and for the efficacious management of your common concerns.—This government, the offspring of our own choice uninfluenced and unawed, adopted upon full investigation and mature deliberation, completely free in its principles, in the distribution of its powers, uniting security with energy, and containing within itself a provision for its own amendment, has a just claim to your confidence and your support.—Respect for its authority, compliance with its Laws, acquiescence in its measures, are duties enjoined by the fundamental maxims of true Liberty.—The basis of our political systems is the right of the people to make and to alter their Constitutions of Government.—But the Constitution which at any time exists, 'till changed by an explicit and authentic act of the whole People, is sacredly obligatory upon all.—The very idea of the power and the right of the People to establish Government, presupposed the duty of every individual to obey the established Government.

All obstructions to the execution of the Laws, all combinations and associations, under whatever plausible character, with the real design to direct, controul, counteract, or awe the regular deliberation and action of the constituted authorities, are destructive of this fundamental principle, and of fatal tendency.—They serve to organize faction, to give it an artificial and extraordinary force—to put in the place of the delegated will of the Nation, the will of a party;—often a small but artful and enterprizing minority of the community; —and, according to the alternate triumphs of different parties, to make the public administration the mirror of the ill-concerted and incongruous projects of faction, rather than the organ of consistent and wholesome plans digested by common councils, and modified by mutual interests.—However combinations or associations of the above description may now and then answer popular ends, they are likely, in the course of time and things, to become potent engines, by which cunning, ambitious, and unprincipled men will be enabled to subvert the Power of the People and to usurp for themselves the reins of Government; destroying afterwards the very engines, which have lifted them to unjust dominion.—

Towards the preservation of your Government and the permanency of your present happy state, it is requisite, not only that you steadily discountenance irregular oppositions to its acknowledged authority, but also that you resist with care the spirit of innovation upon its principles, however specious the pretexts.—One method of assault may be to effect, in the forms of the Constitution, alterations which will impair the energy of the

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18 **two Treaties.** The treaty negotiated by John Jay in 1795 provided for the surrender by Great Britain of the Western forts at Mackinac, Detroit, Sandusky, etc.; in the same year Thomas Pinckney arranged a treaty with Spain which allowed Americans free navigation of the Mississippi for a three-year period and the right to deposit export goods at New Orleans. In the latter case, Washington's hopes proved too high

system, and thus to undermine what cannot be directly overthrown.—In all the changes to which you may be invited, remember that time and habit are at least as necessary to fix the true character of Governments, as of other human institutions—that experience is the surest standard, by which to test the real tendency of the existing Constitution of a Country—that facility in changes upon the credit of mere hypothesis and opinion exposes to perpetual change, from the endless variety of hypothesis and opinion:—and remember, especially, that, for the efficient management of your common interests, in a country so extensive as ours, a Government of as much vigor as is consistent with the perfect security of Liberty is indispensable.—Liberty itself will find in such a Government, with powers properly distributed and adjusted, its surest Guardian.—It is, indeed, little else than a name, where the Government is too feeble to withstand the enterprises of faction, to confine each member of the society within the limits prescribed by the laws, and to maintain all in the secure and tranquil enjoyment of the rights of person and property.

I have already intimated to you the danger of Parties in the State, with particular reference to the founding of them on Geographical discriminations.—Let me now take a more comprehensive view, and warn you in the most solemn manner against the baneful effects of the Spirit of Party, generally.

This Spirit, unfortunately, is inseparable from our nature, having its root in the strongest passions of the human mind.—It exists under different shapes in all Governments, more or less stifled, controuled, or repressed; but, in those of the popular form, it is seen in its greatest rankness, and is truly their worst enemy.

The alternate domination of one faction over another, sharpened by the spirit of revenge natural to party dissension, which in different ages and countries has perpetrated the most horrid enormities, is itself a frightful despotism.—But this leads at length to a more formal and permanent despotism.—The disorders and miseries, which result, gradually incline the minds of men to seek security and repose in the absolute power of an Individual: and sooner or later the chief of some prevailing faction, more able or more fortunate than his competitors, turns this disposition to the purposes of his own elevation, on the ruins of Public Liberty.

Without looking forward to an extremity of this kind, (which nevertheless ought not to be entirely out of sight), the common and continual mischiefs of the spirit of Party are sufficient to make it the interest and duty of a wise People to discourage and restrain it.—

It serves always to distract the Public Councils, and enfeeble the Public administration.—It agitates the community with ill founded jealousies and false alarms, kindles the animosity of one part against another, foments occasionally riot and insurrection.—It opens the doors to foreign influence and corruption, which find a facilitated access to the Government itself through the channels of party passions. Thus the policy and the will of one country, are subjected to the policy and will of another.

There is an opinion that parties in free countries are useful checks upon the Administration of the Government, and serve to keep alive the Spirit of Liberty.—This within certain limits is probably true—and in Governments of a Monarchical cast, Patriotism may look with indulgence, if not with favour, upon the spirit of party.—But in those of the popular character, in Governments purely elective, it is a spirit not to be encouraged.—From their natural tendency, it is certain there will always be enough of that spirit for every salutary purpose,—and there being constant danger of excess, the effort ought to be, by force of public opinion, to mitigate and assuage it.—A fire not to be quenched; it demands a uniform vigilance to prevent its bursting into a flame, lest, instead of warming, it should consume.

It is important, likewise, that the habits of thinking in a free country should inspire caution in those entrusted with its administration, to confine themselves within their respective constitutional spheres; avoiding in the exercise of the powers of one department to encroach upon another.—The spirit of encroachment tends to consolidate the powers of all the departments in one, and thus to create, whatever the form of government, a real despotism.—A just estimate of that love of power, and proneness to abuse it, which predominates in the human heart, is sufficient to satisfy us of the truth of this position.—The necessity of reciprocal checks in

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27 **baneful effects.** Washington regarded the development of the party system, a result of conflict between Hamilton and Jefferson, as the most unfortunate aspect of his years in office

the exercise of political power, by dividing and distributing it into different depositories, and constituting each the Guardian of the Public Weal against invasions by the others, has been evinced by experiments ancient and modern; some of them in our country and under our own eyes.—To preserve them must be as necessary as to institute them. If in the opinion of the People, the distribution or modification of the Constitutional powers be in any particular wrong, let it be corrected by an amendment in the way which the Constitution designates.—But let there be no change by usurpation; for though this, in one instance, may be the instrument of good, it is the customary weapon by which free governments are destroyed.—The precedent must always greatly overbalance in permanent evil any partial or transient benefit which the use can at any time yield.—

Of all the dispositions and habits, which lead to political prosperity, Religion and morality are indispensable supports.—In vain would that man claim the tribute of Patriotism, who should labour to subvert these great Pillars of human happiness, these firmest props of the duties of Men and Citizens.—The mere Politician, equally with the pious man, ought to respect and to cherish them.—A volume could not trace all their connexions with private and public felicity.—Let it simply be asked where is the security for property, for reputation, for life, if the sense of religious obligation *desert* the oaths, which are the instruments of investigation in Courts of Justice? And let us with caution indulge the supposition, that morality can be maintained without religion. —Whatever may be conceded to the influence of refined education on minds of peculiar structure—reason and experience both forbid us to expect, that national morality can prevail in exclusion of religious principle.—

'T is substantially true, that virtue or morality is a necessary spring of popular government.—The rule indeed extends with more or less force to every species of Free Government.—Who that is a sincere friend to it can look with indifference upon attempts to shake the foundation of the fabric?—

Promote, then, as an object of primary importance, institutions for the general diffusion of knowledge. In proportion as the structure of a government gives force to public opinion, it is essential that public opinion should be enlightened.—

As a very important source of strength and security, cherish public credit.—One method of preserving it is, to use it as sparingly as possible:—avoiding occasions of expense by cultivating peace, but remembering also that timely disbursements to prepare for danger frequently prevent much greater disbursements to repel it—avoiding likewise the accumulation of debt, not only by shunning occasions of expense, but by vigorous exertions in time of Peace to discharge the debts which unavoidable wars may have occasioned, not ungenerously throwing upon posterity the burthen which we ourselves ought to bear. The execution of these maxims belongs to your Representatives, but it is necessary that public opinion should coöperate.—To facilitate to them the performance of their duty, it is essential that you should practically bear in mind, that towards the payment of debts there must be Revenue—that to have Revenue there must be taxes—that no taxes can be devised which are not more or less inconvenient and unpleasant—that the intrinsic embarrassment inseparable from the selection of the proper objects (which is always a choice of difficulties) ought to be a decisive motive for a candid construction of the conduct of the Government in making it, and for a spirit of acquiescence in the measures for obtaining Revenue which the public exigencies may at any time dictate.—

Observe good faith and justice towards all Nations. Cultivate peace and harmony with all.—Religion and Morality enjoin this conduct; and can it be that good policy does not equally enjoin it?—It will be worthy of a free, enlightened, and, at no distant period, a great nation, to give to mankind the magnanimous and too novel example of a People always guided by an exalted justice and benevolence.—Who can doubt that in the course of time and things, the fruits of such a plan would richly repay any temporary advantages, which might be lost by a steady adherence to it? Can it be that Providence has not connected the permanent felicity of a Nation with its virtue? The experiment, at least, is recommended by every sentiment which ennobles human nature.—Alas! is it rendered impossible by its vices?

In the execution of such a plan nothing is more essential than that permanent, inveterate antipathies against particular nations and passionate attachments for others should be excluded; and that in place of them just and amicable feelings towards all should be cultivated.—The Nation, which indulges towards another an habitual

hatred or an habitual fondness, is in some degree a slave. It is a slave to its animosity or to its affection, either of which is sufficient to lead it astray from its duty and its interest.—Antipathy in one nation against another disposes each more readily to offer insult and injury, to lay hold of slight causes of umbrage, and to be haughty and intractable, when accidental or trifling occasions of dispute occur.—Hence frequent collisions, obstinate, envenomed and bloody contests.—The Nation prompted by ill-will and resentment sometimes impels to War the Government, contrary to the best calculations of policy.—The Government sometimes participates in the national propensity, and adopts through passion what reason would reject;—at other times, it makes the animosity of the Nation subservient to projects of hostility instigated by pride, ambition, and other sinister and pernicious motives.—The peace often, sometimes perhaps the Liberty, of Nations has been the victim.—

So likewise a passionate attachment of one Nation for another produces a variety of evils.—Sympathy for the favourite nation, facilitating the illusion of an imaginary common interest in cases where no real common interest exists, and infusing into one the enmities of the other, betrays the former into a participation in the quarrels and wars of the latter, without adequate inducement or justification: It leads also to concessions to the favourite Nation of privileges denied to others, which is apt doubly to injure the Nation making the concessions; by unnecessarily parting with what ought to have been retained, and by exciting jealousy, ill-will, and a disposition to retaliate, in the parties from whom equal privileges are withheld; and it gives to ambitious, corrupted, or deluded citizens, (who devote themselves to the favourite Nation) facility to betray, or sacrifice the interests of their own country, without odium, sometimes even with popularity:—gilding with the appearances of a virtuous sense of obligation, a commendable deference for public opinion, or a laudable zeal for public good, the base or foolish compliances of ambition, corruption or infatuation.—

As avenues to foreign influence in innumerable ways, such attachments are particularly alarming to the truly enlightened and independent Patriot.—How many opportunities do they afford to tamper with domestic factions, to practise the arts of seduction, to mislead public opinion, to influence or awe the public councils! Such an attachment of a small or weak, towards a great and powerful nation, dooms the former to be the satellite of the latter.

Against the insidious wiles of foreign influence, I conjure you to believe me, fellow-citizens, the jealousy of a free people ought to be *constantly* awake, since history and experience prove that foreign influence is one of the most baneful foes of republican Government.—But that jealousy, to be useful, must be impartial; else it becomes the instrument of the very influence to be avoided, instead of a defence against it.—Excessive partiality for one foreign nation and excessive dislike of another, cause those whom they actuate to see danger only on one side, and serve to veil and even second the arts of influence on the other.—Real Patriots, who may resist the intrigues of the favourite, are liable to become suspected and odious; while its tools and dupes usurp the applause and confidence of the people, to surrender their interests.—

The great rule of conduct for us, in regard to foreign Nations, is, in extending our commercial relations, to have with them as little *Political* connection as possible. —So far as we have already formed engagements, let them be fulfilled with perfect good faith.—Here let us stop.—

Europe has a set of primary interests, which to us have none, or a very remote relation.—Hence she must be engaged in frequent controversies, the causes of which are essentially foreign to our concerns.—Hence therefore it must be unwise in us to implicate ourselves, by artificial ties in the ordinary vicissitudes of her politics, or the ordinary combinations and collisions of her friendships, or enmities.

Our detached and distant situation invites and enables us to pursue a different course.—If we remain one People, under an efficient government, the period is not far off, when we may defy material injury from external annoyance; when we may take such an attitude as will cause the neutrality we may at any time resolve upon to be scrupulously respected. When belligerent nations, under the impossibility of making acquisitions upon us, will not lightly hazard the giving us provocation[;] when we may choose peace or war, as our interest guided by our justice shall counsel.

Why forego the advantages of so peculiar a situa-

tion?—Why quit our own to stand upon foreign ground?—Why, by interweaving our destiny with that of any part of Europe, entangle our peace and prosperity in the toils of European ambition, rivalship, interest, humour, or caprice?—

'T is our true policy to steer clear of permanent alliances, with any portion of the foreign world;—so far, I mean, as we are now at liberty to do it—for let me not be understood as capable of patronizing infidelity to existing engagements, (I hold the maxim no less applicable to public than to private affairs, that honesty is always the best policy).—I repeat it therefore let those engagements be observed in their genuine sense.—But in my opinion it is unnecessary and would be unwise to extend them.—

Taking care always to keep ourselves, by suitable establishments, on a respectably defensive posture, we may safely trust to temporary alliances for extraordinary emergencies.—

Harmony, liberal intercourse with all nations, are recommended by policy, humanity, and interest. But even our commercial policy should hold an equal and impartial hand:—neither seeking nor granting exclusive favours or preferences;—consulting the natural course of things;—diffusing and diversifying by gentle means the streams of commerce, but forcing nothing;—establishing with Powers so disposed—in order to give trade a stable course, to define the rights of our Merchants, and to enable the Government to support them—conventional rules of intercourse, the best that present circumstances and mutual opinion will permit; but temporary, and liable to be from time to time abandoned or varied, as experience and circumstances shall dictate; constantly keeping in view that 't is folly in one nation to look for disinterested favors from another,—that it must pay with a portion of its independence for whatever it may accept under that character—that by such acceptance, it may place itself in the condition of having given equivalents for nominal favours and yet of being reproached with ingratitude for not giving more.—There can be no greater error than to expect, or calculate upon real favours from Nation to Nation.—'T is an illusion which experience must cure, which a just pride ought to discard.

In offering to you, my Countrymen, these counsels of an old and affectionate friend, I dare not hope they will make the strong and lasting impression, I could wish,—that they will controul the usual current of the passions, or prevent our Nation from running the course which has hitherto marked the destiny of Nations.—But if I may even flatter myself, that they may be productive of some partial benefit; some occasional good; that they may now and then recur to moderate the fury of party spirit, to warn against the mischiefs of foreign intrigue, to guard against the impostures of pretended patriotism, this hope will be a full recompense for the solicitude for your welfare, by which they have been dictated.—

How far in the discharge of my official duties, I have been guided by the principles which have been delineated, the public Records and other evidences of my conduct must witness to You, and to the world.—To myself the assurance of my own conscience is, that I have at least believed myself to be guided by them.

In relation to the still subsisting War in Europe, my Proclamation of the 22d of April 1793 is the index to my plan.—Sanctioned by your approving voice and by that of Your Representatives in both Houses of Congress, the spirit of that measure has continually governed me:—uninfluenced by any attempts to deter or divert me from it.

After deliberate examination with the aid of the best lights I could obtain, I was well satisfied that our country, under all the circumstances of the case, had a right to take, and was bound in duty and interest, to take a Neutral position.—Having taken it, I determined, as far as should depend upon me, to maintain it, with moderation, perseverance, and firmness.—

The considerations which respect the right to hold this conduct, it is not necessary on this occasion to detail. I will only observe, that, according to my understanding of the matter, that right, so far from being denied by any of the Belligerent Powers, has been virtually admitted by all.—

The duty of holding a neutral conduct may be inferred, without anything more, from the obligation which justice and humanity impose on every Nation, in

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65 **Proclamation,** usually known as the Proclamation of Neutrality. It announced the American intention of dealing fairly with the revolutionary government of France, in accordance with previous treaty obligations so long as those obligations did not involve war

cases in which it is free to act, to maintain inviolate the relations of Peace and Amity towards other Nations.—

The inducements of interest for observing that conduct will best be referred to your own reflections and experience.—With me, a predominant motive has been to endeavour to gain time to our country to settle and mature its yet recent institutions, and to progress without interruption to that degree of strength and consistency, which is necessary to give it, humanly speaking, the command of its own fortune.

Though, in reviewing the incidents of my Administration, I am unconscious of intentional error—I am nevertheless too sensible of my defects not to think it probable that I may have committed many errors.—Whatever they may be, I fervently beseech the Almighty to avert or mitigate the evils to which they may tend.—I shall also carry with me the hope that my country will never cease to view them with indulgence; and that after forty-five years of my life dedicated to its service, with an upright zeal, the faults of incompetent abilities will be consigned to oblivion, as myself must soon be to the mansions of rest.

Relying on its kindness in this as in other things, and actuated by that fervent love towards it, which is so natural to a man, who views in it the native soil of himself and his progenitors for several generations;—I anticipate with pleasing expectation that retreat, in which I promise myself to realize, without alloy, the sweet enjoyment of partaking, in the midst of my fellow-citizens, the benign influence of good Laws under a free Government,—the ever favourite object of my heart, and the happy reward, as I trust, of our mutual cares, labours, and dangers.

1796

Hugh Henry Brackenridge

1748 · 1816

As farm boy, schoolteacher, divinity student, army chaplain, lawyer, legislator, and judge, Hugh Henry Brackenridge, "our first back-country writer," rubbed shoulders with Americans of many persuasions. He did not find democracy an unmixed blessing, but he believed in it, possibly because it offered opportunity to him. He remains perhaps the best contemporary observer of the true "rising glory" of America in the last quarter of the eighteenth century: the freedom of the individual to choose his own occupation and to improve his condition without the handicap of rigid class distinction.

Brackenridge was born in Scotland in 1748 and came to York County, Pennsylvania, then a frontier region, when he was five. At fifteen he was teaching school in Maryland; at the age of twenty he entered the College of New Jersey (now Princeton), where he was a classmate of James Madison and Philip Freneau (p. 436). Before his graduation in 1771, he had dabbled in satirical verse and fiction. Although he returned to schoolteaching, he had literary ambitions, and within a few years published *The Rising Glory of America* (1772), a Commencement poem in which Freneau had had a hand, *A Poem on Divine Revelation* (1774), which he read when he took his M.A. degree, and *The Battle of Bunkers-Hill* (1776), a poetic drama supposedly recited by his pupils in a Maryland academy.

Whig by conviction, he turned his theological studies to good use by becoming a chaplain in 1776-1778 and attacking the Tories in *Six Political Discourses Founded on the Scripture* (1778). Then, for a year, he tried magazine publishing in Philadelphia. When *The United States Magazine* folded up, he was reading law; and by 1785 he was settled in Pittsburgh, with the ambition of becoming a legislator and political leader. The move did not bring him tranquillity, but it deposited a thoughtful democrat with literary tastes in a turbulent center of frontier democracy. The result was *Modern Chivalry*, of which the first volume appeared in 1792, the last in 1815. There is no better record of the society which rebelled against Alexander Hamilton's internal revenue measures in the so-called Whiskey Insurrection of 1791-1794.

Brackenridge's political career as state assemblyman and justice of the state Supreme Court was never smooth, because, seeing justice on both sides, he pleased neither for very long. He could never go all the way with either Federalists or Republicans, with national or local interests; and more than once he found himself defeated at the polls, vilified in the local newspapers, and suspected by his party leaders. His recourse, fortunately, was to satire, both in verse and in prose.

His son remarked that Brackenridge "appeared to live more in the world of books than of men," and there is much evidence of his delight in the classics of all literatures. His particular enthusiasms were Cervantes, Rabelais, Samuel Butler, Swift, Fielding, Le Sage, Smollett, and Sterne—a list which reveals his liking for the earthy and vigorous in fiction and satire. Perhaps because of this taste, *Modern Chivalry* does not seem so weakly imitative as the productions of such men as Timothy Dwight (p. 450), even though it is a picaresque novel obviously modeled on *Don Quixote*, with chapters of author's commentary in the manner of Swift's *The Tale of a Tub* and Fielding's *Tom Jones*. The subject matter dominates the form, and *Modern Chivalry*, though sprawling and uneven, retains vitality.

Modern Chivalry, ed. C. M. Newlin, New York, 1937 • C. M. Newlin, **The Life and Writings of Hugh Henry Brackenridge**, Princeton, 1932 • R. J. Ferguson, **Early Western Pennsylvania Politics**, Pittsburgh, 1938

From

Modern Chivalry

Modern Chivalry: Containing the Adventures of Captain John Farrago, and Teague O'Regan, His Servant was originally published in four installments and six volumes. The first two volumes (Philadelphia, 1792) and the third (Pittsburgh, 1793) describe the frontier's exaltation of the common man, personified by Teague, the ignorant Irish immigrant, without regard to his merits. A fourth volume (Philadelphia, 1797) was based on the Whiskey Insurrection. The fifth and sixth volumes (Carlisle, 1804, 1805) satirize political journalism and the popular distrust of courts and lawyers. A new complete edition, with still further additions, was printed in four volumes in 1815. The three chapters which follow are from Book I and come at the beginning of the story, after the reader has barely been introduced to Captain Farrago, a "man of about fifty-three years of age, good natural sense, and considerable reading; but in some things whimsical."

CHAP. III

The Captain rising early next morning, and setting out on his way, had now arrived at a place where a number of people were convened, for the purpose of electing persons to represent them in the legislature of the state. There was a weaver who was a candidate for this ap-

Text: the 1792 edition • 5 a weaver. William Findley, chosen over Brackenridge as a delegate to the Constitutional Convention in 1787, had been a weaver

pointment, and seemed to have a good deal of interest among the people. But another, who was a man of education, was his competitor. Relying on some talent of speaking which he thought he possessed, he addressed the multitude.

Said he, Fellow citizens, I pretend not to any great abilities; but am conscious to myself that I have the best good will to serve you. But it is very astonishing to me, that this weaver should conceive himself qualified for the trust. For though my acquirements are not great, yet his are still less. The mechanical business which he pursues, must necessarily take up so much of his time, that he cannot apply himself to political studies. I should therefore think it would be more answerable to your dignity, and conducive to your interest, to be represented by a man at least of some letters, than by an illiterate handicraftsman like this. It will be more honourable for himself, to remain at his loom and knot threads, than to come forward in a legislative capacity: because, in the one case, he is in the sphere where God and nature has placed him; in the other, he is like a fish out of water, and must struggle for breath in a new element.

Is it possible he can understand the affairs of government, whose mind has been concentered to the small object of weaving webs; to the price by the yard, the grist of the thread, and such like matters as concern a manufacturer of cloth? The feet of him who weaves, are more occupied than the head, or at least as much; and therefore the whole man must be, at least, but in half accustomed to exercise his mental powers. For these reasons, all other things set aside, the chance is in my favour, with respect to information. However, you will decide, and give your suffrages to him or to me, as you shall judge expedient.

The Captain hearing these observations, and looking at the weaver, could not help advancing, and undertaking to subjoin something in support of what had been just said. Said he, I have no prejudice against a weaver more than another man. Nor do I know any harm in the trade; save that from the sedentary life in a damp place, there is usually a paleness of the countenance: but this is a physical, not a moral evil. Such usually occupy subterranean apartments; not for the purpose, like Demosthenes, of shaving their heads, and writing over eight times the history of Thucydides, and perfecting a stile of oratory; but rather to keep the thread moist; or because this is considered but as an inglorious sort of trade, and is frequently thrust away into cellars, and damp out-houses, which are not occupied for a better use.

But to rise from the cellar to the senate house, would be an unnatural hoist. To come from counting threads, and adjusting them to the splits of a reed, to regulate the finances of a government, would be preposterous; there being no congruity in the case. There is no analogy between knotting threads and framing laws. It would be a reversion of the order of things. Not that a manufacturer of linen or woolen, or other stuff, is an inferior character, but a different one, from that which ought to be employed in affairs of state. It is unnecessary to enlarge on this subject; for you must all be convinced of the truth and propriety of what I say. But if you will give me leave to take the manufacturer aside a little, I think I can explain to him my ideas on the subject; and very probably prevail with him to withdraw his pretensions. The people seeming to acquiesce, and beckoning to the weaver, they drew aside, and the Captain addressed him in the following words:

Mr. Traddle, said he, for that was the name of the manufacturer, I have not the smallest idea of wounding your sensibility; but it would seem to me, it would be more your interest to pursue your occupation, than to launch out into that of which you have no knowledge. When you go to the senate house, the application to you will not be to warp a web; but to make laws for the commonwealth. Now, suppose that the making these laws, requires a knowledge of commerce, or of the interests of agriculture, or those principles upon which the different manufactures depend, what service could you render. It is possible you might think justly enough; but could you speak? You are not in the habit of public speaking. You are not furnished with those common place ideas, with which even very ignorant men can pass for knowing something. There is nothing makes

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27 grist, size or thickness • 45 Demosthenes (383?-322 B.C.), the Athenian orator, is supposed to have trained himself by building a subterranean study, shaving one side of his head so that his appearance would keep him out of society, and copying and recopying the orations which appear at intervals in the history of the Peloponnesian War by Thucydides (471?-401? B.C.)

a man so ridiculous as to attempt what is above his sphere. You are no tumbler, for instance; yet should you give out that you could vault upon a man's back; or turn head over heels, like the wheel of a cart; the stiffness of your joints would encumber you; and you would fall upon your backside to the ground. Such a squash as that would do you damage. The getting up to ride on the state is an unsafe thing to those who are not accustomed to such horsemanship. It is a disagreeable thing for a man to be laughed at, and there is no way of keeping ones self from it but by avoiding all affectation.

While they were thus discoursing, a bustle had taken place among the crowd. Teague hearing so much about elections, and serving the government, took it into his head, that he could be a legislator himself. The thing was not displeasing to the people, who seemed to favour his pretensions; owing, in some degree, to there being several of his countrymen among the croud; but more especially to the fluctuation of the popular mind, and a disposition to what is new and ignoble. For though the weaver was not the most elevated object of choice, yet he was still preferable to this tatter-demalion, who was but a menial servant, and had so much of what is called the brogue on his tongue, as to fall far short of an elegant speaker.

The Captain coming up, and finding what was on the carpet, was greatly chagrined at not having been able to give the multitude a better idea of the importance of a legislative trust; alarmed also, from an apprehension of the loss of his servant. Under these impressions he resumed his address to the multitude. Said he, This is making the matter still worse, gentlemen: this servant of mine is but a bog-trotter; who can scarcely speak the dialect in which your laws ought to be written; but certainly has never read a single treatise on any political subject; for the truth is, he cannot read at all. The young people of the lower class, in Ireland, have seldom the advantage of a good education; especially the descendants of the ancient Irish, who have most of them a great assurance of countenance, but little information, or literature. This young man, whose family name is Oregan, has been my servant for several years. And, except a too great fondness for women, which now and then brings him into scrapes, he has demeaned himself in a manner tolerable enough. But he is totally ignorant of the great principles of legislation; and more especially, the particular interests of the government. A free government is a noble possession to a people: and this freedom consists in an equal right to make laws, and to have the benefit of the laws when made. Though doubtless, in such a government, the lowest citizen may become chief magistrate; yet it is sufficient to possess the right; not absolutely necessary to exercise it. Or even if you should think proper, now and then, to shew your privilege, and exert, in a signal manner, the democratic prerogative, yet is it not descending too low to filch away from me a hireling, which I cannot well spare, to serve your purposes? You are surely carrying the matter too far, in thinking to make a senator of this hostler; to take him away from an employment to which he has been bred, and put him to another, to which he has served no apprenticeship: to set those hands which have been lately employed in currying my horse, to the draughting-bills, and preparing business for the house.

The people were tenacious of their choice, and insisted on giving Teague their suffrages; and by the frown upon their brows, seemed to indicate resentment at what had been said; as indirectly charging them with want of judgment; or calling in question their privilege to do what they thought proper. It is a very strange thing, said one of them, who was a speaker for the rest, that after having conquered Burgoyne and Cornwallis, and got a government of our own, we cannot put in it whom we please. This young man may be your servant, or another man's servant; but if we chuse to make him a delegate, what is that to you. He may not be yet skilled in the matter, but there is a good day a-coming. We will impower him; and it is better to trust a plain man like him, than one of your high flyers, that will make laws to suit their own purposes.

Said the Captain, I had much rather you would send the weaver, though I thought that improper, than to invade my household, and thus detract from me the very person that I have about me to brush my boots, and clean my spurs. The prolocutor of the people gave him to understand that his surmises were useless, for the people

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73 Burgoyne and Cornwallis, British generals. John Burgoyne (1723-1792) surrendered his army of nearly six thousand men at Saratoga, New York, in October 1777; Lord Cornwallis (1738-1805) surrendered over seven thousand men at Yorktown, Virginia, in October 1781

had determined on the choice, and Teague they would have for a representative.

Finding it answered no end to expostulate with the multitude, he requested to speak a word with Teague by himself. Stepping aside, he said to him, composing his voice, and addressing him in a soft manner; Teague, you are quite wrong in this matter they have put into your head. Do you know what it is to be a member of a deliberative body? What qualifications are necessary? Do you understand any thing of geography? If a question should be, to make a law to dig a canal in some part of the state, can you describe the bearing of the mountains, and the course of the rivers? Or if commerce is to be pushed to some new quarter, by the force of regulations, are you competent to decide in such a case? There will be questions of law, and astronomy on the carpet. How you must gape and stare like a fool, when you come to be asked your opinion on these subjects? Are you acquainted with the abstract principles of finance; with the funding public securities; the ways and means of raising the revenue; providing for the discharge of the public debts, and all other things which respect the economy of the government? Even if you had knowledge, have you a facility of speaking. I would suppose you would have too much pride to go to the house just to say, Ay, or No. This is not the fault of your nature, but of your education; having been accustomed to dig turf in your early years, rather than instructing yourself in the classics, or common school books.

When a man becomes a member of a public body, he is like a racoon, or other beast that climbs up the fork of a tree; the boys pushing at him with pitch-forks, or throwing stones, or shooting at him with an arrow, the dogs barking in the mean time. One will find fault with your not speaking; another with your speaking, if you speak at all. They will have you in the news papers, and ridicule you as a perfect beast. There is what they call the caricatura; that is, representing you with a dog's head, or a cat's claw. As you have a red head, they will very probably make a fox of you, or a sorrel horse, or a brindled cow, or the like. It is the devil in hell to be exposed to the squibs and crackers of the gazette wits and publications. You know no more about these matters than a goose; and yet you would undertake rashly, without advice, to enter on the office; nay, contrary to advice. For I would not for a thousand guineas, though I have not the half of it to spare, that the breed of the Oregans should come to this; bringing on them a worse stain than stealing sheep; to which they are addicted. You have nothing but your character, Teague, in a new country to depend upon. Let it never be said, that you quitted an honest livelihood, the taking care of my horse, to follow the new fangled whims of the times, and to be a statesman.

Teague was moved chiefly with the last part of the address, and consented to give up the object.

The Captain, glad of this, took him back to the people, and announced his disposition to decline the honour which they had intended him.

Teague acknowledged that he had changed his mind, and was willing to remain in a private station.

The people did not seem well pleased with the Captain; but as nothing more could be said about the matter, they turned their attention to the weaver, and gave him their suffrages.

CHAP. IV

Captain Farrago leaving this place, proceeded on his way; and at the distance of a mile or two, met a man with a bridle in his hand; who had lost a horse, and had been at a conjurer's to make enquiry, and recover his property.

It struck the mind of the Captain to go to this conjuring person, and make a demand of him, what was the cause that the multitude were so disposed to elevate the low to the highest station. He had rode but about a mile, when the habitation of the conjurer, by the direction and description of the man who had lost the horse had given, began to be in view. Coming up to the door, and enquiring if that was not where conjurer Kolt lived, they were answered Yes. Accordingly alighting, and entering the domicile, all those things took place which usually happen, or are described in cases of this nature, *viz.* there was the conjurer's assistant, who gave the Captain to understand that master had withdrawn a little, but would be in shortly.

In the mean time, the assistant endeavoured to draw from him some account of the occasion of his journey,

38 caricatura: caricature, an exaggerated likeness

which the other readily communicated; and the conjurer, who was listening through a crack in the partition, overheard. Finding it was not a horse or cow, or a piece of linen that was lost, but an abstract question of political philosophy which was to be put, he came from his lurking place, and entered, as if not knowing that any person had been waiting for him.

After mutual salutations, the Captain gave him to understand the object which he had in view by calling on him.

Said the conjurer, This lies not at all in my way. If it had been a dozen of spoons, or a stolen watch, that you had to look for, I could very readily, by the assistance of my art, have assisted you in the recovery; but as to this matter of men's imaginations and attachments in political affairs, I have no more understanding than another man.

It is very strange, said the Captain, that you who can tell by what means a thing is stolen, and the place where it is deposited, though at a thousand miles distance, should know so little of what is going on in the breast of man, as not to be able to develope his secret thoughts, and the motives of his actions.

It is not of our business, said the other; but should we undertake it, I do not see that it would be very difficult to explain all that puzzles you at present. There is no need of a conjurer to tell why it is that the common people are more disposed to trust one of their own class, than those who may affect to be superior. Besides, there is a certain pride in man, which leads him to elevate the low, and pull down the high. There is a kind of creating power exerted in making a senator of an unqualified person; which when the author has done, he exults over the work, and, like the Creator himself when he made the world, sees that "it is very good." Moreover, there is in every government a patrician class, against whom the spirit of the multitude naturally militates: And hence a perpetual war; the aristocrats endeavouring to detrude the people, and the people contending to obtrude themselves. And it is right it should be so; for by this fermentation, the spirit of democracy is kept alive.

The Captain, thanking him for his information, asked him what was to pay; at the same time pulling out half a crown from a green silk purse which he had in his breeches pocket. The conjurer gave him to understand, that as the solution of these difficulties was not within his province, he took nothing for it. The captain expressing his sense of his disinterested service, bade him adieu.

CHAP. V

Containing Reflections

A Democracy is beyond all question the freest government: because under this, every man is equally protected by the laws, and has equally a voice in making them. But I do not say an equal voice; because some men have stronger lungs than others, and can express more forcibly their opinions of public affairs. Others, though they may not speak very loud, yet have a faculty of saying more in a short time; and even in the case of others, who speak little or none at all, yet what they do say containing good sense, comes with greater weight; so that all things considered, every citizen, has not, in this sense of the word, an equal voice. But the right being equal, what great harm if it is unequally exercised? is it necessary that every man should become a statesman? No more than that every man should become a poet or a painter. The sciences, are open to all; but let him only who has taste and genius pursue them. If any man covets the office of a bishop, says St. Paul, he covets a good work. But again, he adds this caution, Ordain not a novice, lest being lifted up with pride, he falls into the condemnation of the devil. It is indeed making a devil of a man to lift him up to a state to which he is not suited. A ditcher is a respectable character, with his over-alls on, and a spade in his hand; but put the same man to those offices which require the head, whereas he has been accustomed to impress with his foot, and there appears a contrast between the man and the occupation.

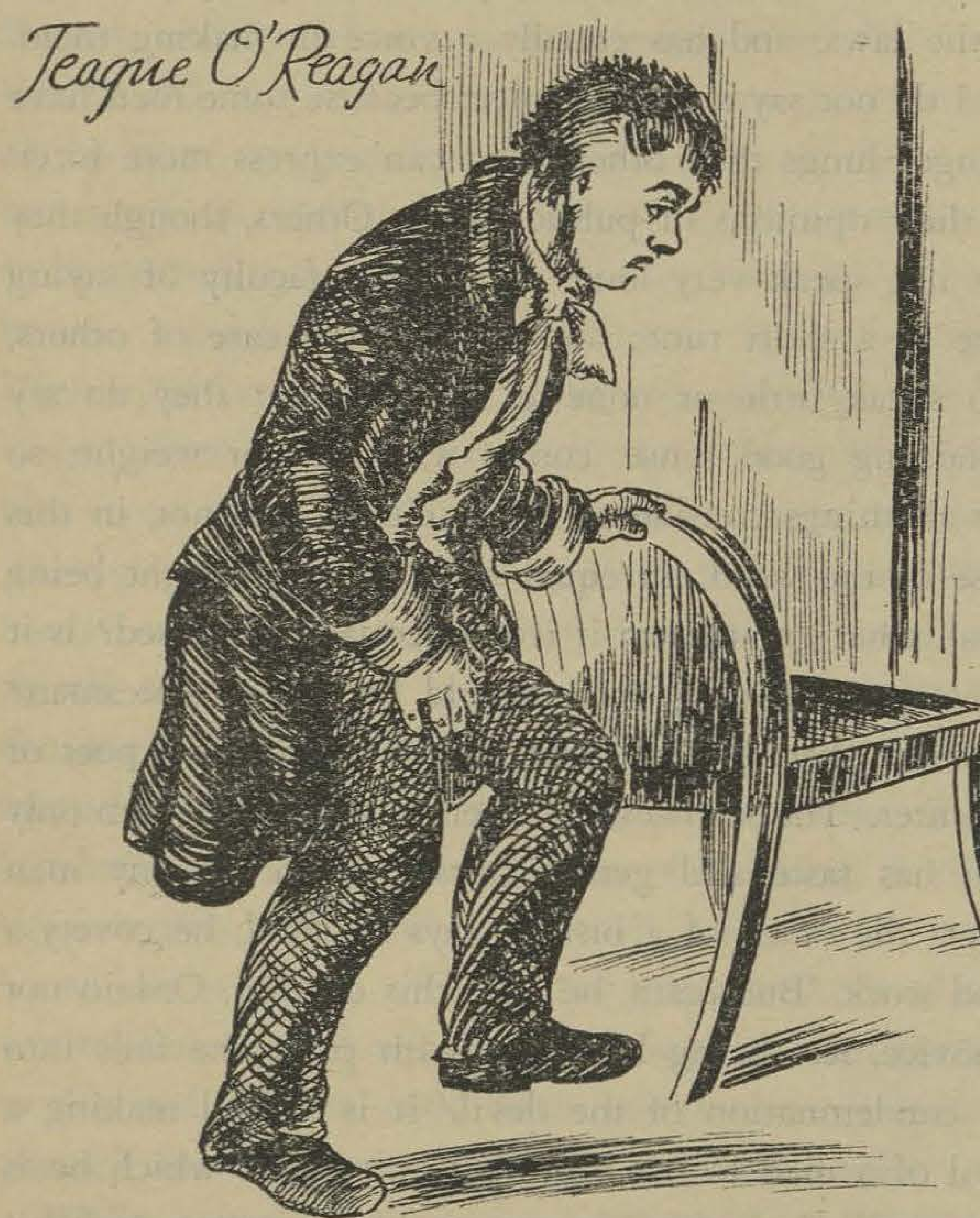
There are individuals in society, who prefer honour to wealth; or cultivate political studies as a branch of literary pursuits; and offer themselves to serve public bodies, in order to have an opportunity of discovering their knowledge, and exercising their judgment. It must be chagrining to these, and hurtful to the public, to see those who have no talent this way; and ought to have no taste, preposterously obtrude themselves upon the government. It is the same as if a brick-layer should

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66 St. Paul, in I Timothy 3:1: "If a man desireth the office of a bishop, he desireth a good work."

usurp the office of a taylor, and come with his square and perpendicular, to make the measure of a pair of breeches.

It is proper that those who cultivate oratory, should go to the house of orators. But for an Ay and No man to be ambitious of that place, is to sacrifice his credit to his vanity.



I would not mean to insinuate that legislators are to be selected from the more wealthy of the citizens, yet a man's circumstances ought to be such as afford him leisure for study and reflection. There is often wealth without taste or talent. I have no idea, that because a man lives in a great house, and has a cluster of bricks or stones about his backside, that he is therefore fit for a legislator. There is so much pride and arrogance with those who consider themselves the first in a government, that it deserves to be checked by the populace, and the evil most usually commences on this side. Men associate with their own persons, the adventitious circumstances of birth and fortune: So that a fellow blowing with fat and repletion, conceives himself superior to the poor lean man, that lodges in an inferior mansion. But as in all cases, so in this, there is a medium. Genius and virtue are independent of rank and fortune; and it is neither the opulent, nor the indigent, but the man of ability and integrity that ought to be called forth to serve his country: and while, on the one hand, the aristocratic part of the government arrogates a right to represent; on the other hand, the democratic contends the point; and from this conjunction and opposition of forces, there is produced a compound resolution, which carries the object in an intermediate direction. When we see therefore, a Teague Oregan lifted up, the philosopher will reflect, that it is to balance some purse-proud fellow, equally as ignorant, that comes down from the sphere of the aristocratic interest.

But every man ought to consider for himself, whether it is his use to be this draw-back, on either side. For as when good liquor is to be distilled, you throw in some material useless in itself to correct the effervescence of the spirit; so it may be his part to act as a sedative. For though we commend the effect, yet still the material retains but its original value.

But as the nature of things is such, let no man, who means well to the commonwealth, and offers to serve it, be hurt in his mind when some one of meaner talents is preferred. The people are a sovereign, and greatly despotic; but, in the main, just.

I have a great mind, in order to elevate the composition, to make quotations from the Greek and Roman history. And I am conscious to myself, that I have read over the writers on the government of Italy and Greece, in ancient, as well as modern times. But I have drawn a great deal more from reflection on the nature of things, than from all the writings I have ever read. Nay, the history of the election, which I have just given, will afford a better lesson to the American mind, than all that is to be found in other examples. We have seen here, a weaver a favoured candidate, and in the next instance, a bog-trotter superseding him. Now it may be said, that this is fiction; but fiction, or no fiction, the nature of the thing will make it a reality. But I return to the adventures of the Captain, whom I have upon my hands; and who, as far as I can yet discover, is a good honest man; and means what is benevolent and useful; though his ideas may not comport with the ordinary manner of thinking, in every particular.

1792

Thomas Jefferson

1743 · 1826

See page 353 for a biographical account of Jefferson.

First Inaugural Address

Jefferson's program as President was set forth simply and directly in his **First Inaugural Address,** delivered in the Senate chamber on March 4, 1801. His eloquent plea for harmony and unity did not save him from the criticism of the Federalists, but even they could hardly question his list of the essential principles of democratic government. A comparison with Washington's **Farewell Address** (p. 374) will show, indeed, that Jefferson was right in believing that the two parties were not so widely separated in their principles as was commonly thought. The brevity and pointedness of Jefferson's phrases, as compared with those of Washington and Hamilton, make his **First Inaugural** one of the most memorable statements of the American concept of a free, self-governing people. It was immediately printed everywhere in the nation, both in the newspapers and separately.

Friends & Fellow Citizens

Called upon to undertake the duties of the first Executive office of our country, I avail myself of the presence of that portion of my fellow citizens which is here assembled to express my grateful thanks for the favor with which they have been pleased to look towards me, to declare a sincere consciousness that the task is above my talents, & that I approach it with those anxious & awful presentiments, which the greatness of the charge, & the weakness of my powers so justly inspire.

A rising nation spread over a wide & fruitful land, traversing all the seas with the rich productions of their industry, engaged in commerce with nations who feel power and forget right, advancing rapidly to destinies beyond the reach of mortal eye; when I contemplate these transcendent objects, & see the honor, the happiness, & the hopes of this beloved country committed to the issue & the auspices of this day, I shrink from the contemplation, & humble myself before the magnitude of the undertaking.

Text: that established by P. L. Ford from the first draft, Works, Vol. IX. For the sake of ease in reading, however, most of the many abbreviations have here been spelled out and a few marks of punctuation supplied in brackets

Utterly indeed should I despair, did not the presence of many whom I here see, remind me, that in the other high authorities provided by our constitution, I shall find resources of wisdom, of virtue & of zeal, on which to rely under all difficulties.

To you then, gentlemen who are charged with the sovereign functions of legislation & to those associated with you, I look with encouragement for that guidance & support which may enable us to steer with safety, the vessel in which we are all embarked amidst the conflicting elements of a troubled sea.

During the contest of opinion through which we have passed, the animation of discussions and of exertions, has sometimes worn an aspect which might impose on strangers unused to think freely, & to speak & to write what they think.

But this being now decided by the voice of the nation, enounced according to the rules of the constitution, all will of course arrange themselves under the will of the law, & unite in common efforts for the common good. All too will bear in mind this sacred principle that though the will of the Majority is in all cases to prevail, that will, to be rightful, must be reasonable: that the Minority possess their equal rights, which equal laws must protect, & to violate would be oppression.

Let us then, fellow citizens, unite with one heart & one mind; let us restore to social intercourse that harmony & affection, without which Liberty, & even Life itself, are but dreary things.

And let us reflect that having banished from our land that religious intolerance under which mankind so long bled & suffered we have yet gained little, if we countenance a political intolerance, as despotic[,] as wicked[,] & capable of as bitter & bloody persecution.

During the throes and convulsions of the antient world, during the agonised spasms of infuriated man, seeking through blood & slaughter his long lost liberty, it was not wonderful that the agitation of the billows should reach even this distant & peaceful shore: that this should be more felt & feared by some, & less by others, & should divide opinions as to measures of safety.

But every difference of opinion, is not a difference of principle. We have called, by different names, brethren of the same principle. We are all republicans: we are all federalists.

If there be any among us who wish to dissolve this union, or to change its republican form, let them stand undisturbed, as monuments of the safety with which error of opinion may be tolerated where reason is left free to combat it.

I know indeed that some honest men have feared that a republican government cannot be strong; that this government is not strong enough. But would the honest patriot, in the full tide of successful experiment abandon a government which has so far kept us free & firm on the theoretic & visionary fear that this government, the world's best hope may, by possibility, want energy to preserve itself?

I trust not. I believe this, on the contrary, the strongest government on earth.

I believe it the only one where every man, at the call of the law, would fly to the standard of the law; would meet invasions of public order, as his own personal concern.

Some times it is said that Man cannot be trusted with the government of himself.—Can he then be trusted with the government of others? Or have we found angels in the form of kings to govern him?—Let History answer this question.

Let us then pursue with courage & confidence our own federal & republican principles[,] our attachment to Union and Representative government.

Kindly separated by nature, & a wide ocean, from the exterminating havoc of one quarter of the globe,

Too high-minded to endure the degradations of the others;

Possessing a chosen country, with room enough for our descendants to the thousandth & thousandth generation;

Entertaining a due sense of our equal right, to the use of our own faculties, to the acquisitions of our own industry, to honor & confidence from our fellow citizens resulting not from birth, but from our actions & their sense of them, enlightened by a benign religion, professed indeed & practiced in various forms, yet all of them

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35 throes and convulsions. The Federalist editors, anxious to find fault, made much capital of the mixed metaphor in this sentence—the "agonised spasms" which change so abruptly to "billows"

inculcating honesty, truth, temperance[,] gratitude, & the love of man, acknowledging & adoring an overruling providence, which by all it's dispensations proves that it delights in the happiness of man here, & his greater happiness hereafter:

With all these blessings, what more is necessary to make us a happy and a prosperous people? Still one thing more, fellow citizens[,] a wise & frugal government, which shall restrain men from injuring one another, shall leave them otherwise free to regulate their own pursuits of industry & improvement, and shall not take from the mouth of labor the bread it has earned.

This is the sum of good government, & this is necessary to close the circle of our felicities.

About to enter[,] fellow citizens[,] on the exercise of duties, which comprehend everything dear & valuable to you, it is proper you should understand what I deem the essential principle of this government and consequently those which ought to shape it's administration.

I will compress them in the narrowest compass they will bear, stating the general principle, but not all it's limitations.

Equal & exact justice to all men, of whatever state or persuasion, religious or political:

Peace, commerce, & honest friendship with all nations, entangling alliances with none:

The support of the State governments in all their rights, as the most competent administrations for our domestic concerns, and the surest bulwarks against anti republican tendencies:

The preservation of the General government, in it's whole constitutional vigor, as the sheet anchor of our peace at home, and safety abroad.

A jealous care of the right of election by the people, a mild & safe corrective of abuses, which are lopped by the sword of revolution, where peacable remedies are unprovided.

Absolute acquiescence in the decisions of the Majority[,] the vital principle of republics, from which is no appeal but to force, the vital principle & immediate parent of despotism.

A well disciplined militia, our best reliance in peace, & for the first moments of war, till regulars may relieve them: The Supremacy of the Civil over the Military authority:

Economy in public expense, that labor may be lightly burthened:

The honest paiment of our debts and sacred preservation of the public faith:

Encouragement of Agriculture, & of Commerce, as it's handmaid:

The diffusion of information, & arraignment of all abuses at the bar of the public reason:

Freedom of Religion, freedom of the press, & freedom of Person under the protection of the Habeas corpus: And trial by juries, impartially selected.

These Principles form the bright constellation which has gone before us, & guided our steps, thro' an age of Revolution and Reformation: The wisdom of our Sages, & blood of our Heroes, have been devoted to their attainment: they should be the Creed of our political faith, the Text of civic instruction, the Touchstone by which to try the services of those we trust; and should we wander from them, in moments of error or alarm, let us hasten to retrace our steps and to regain the road which alone leads to Peace, Liberty & Safety.

I repair then, fellow citizens[,] to the post which you have assigned me.

With experience enough in subordinate stations to know the difficulties of this the greatest of all, I have learnt to expect that it will rarely fall to the lot of imperfect man to retire from this station with the reputation & the favor which bring him into it.

Without pretensions to that high confidence you reposed in our first & greatest revolutionary character whose preeminent services had entitled him to the first place in his country's love, and had destined for him the fairest page in the volume of faithful history, I ask so much confidence only as may give firmness & effect to the legal administration of your affairs.

I shall often go wrong thro' defect of judgment: when right, I shall often be thought wrong by those whose positions will not command a view of the whole ground.

I ask your indulgence for my own errors, which will never be intentional: & your support against the errors

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77 first . . . character, Washington

of others who may condemn what they would not if seen in all it's parts.

The approbation implied by your suffrage, is a great consolation to me for the past; and my future solicitude will be to retain the good opinion of those who have bestowed it in advance, to conciliate that of others, by doing them all the good in my power, and to be instrumental to the happiness & freedom of all.

Relying then on the patronage of your good will, I advance with obedience to the work, ready to retire from it whenever you become sensible how much better choice it is in your power to make.

And may that infinite power which rules the destinies of the universe lead our councils to what is best, and give them a favorable issue for your peace & prosperity.

· 1801

Second Inaugural Address

Jefferson's **Second Inaugural** was planned, according to his own notes, as "a **conte rendu**, or a statement of facts," showing that he had conformed to the principles outlined in the address of 1801. That, he said, was "**promise**: this is **performance**." His remarks were divided under the heads of Foreign Affairs and Domestic Affairs, the latter comprising Taxes, Debts, Louisiana, Religion, Indians, and the Press. "None of these heads," Jefferson noted, "need any commentary but that of the Indians. This is a proper topic not only to promote the work of humanizing our citizens towards these people, but to conciliate to us the good opinion of Europe on the subject of the Indians. This, however, might have been done in half the compass it here occupies. But every respector of science, every friend to political reformation must have observed with indignation the hue & cry raised against philosophy & the rights of man; and it really seems as if they would be overborne & barbarism, bigotry & despotism would recover the ground they have lost by the advance of the public understanding. I have thought the occasion justified some discountenance of these anti-social doctrines, some testimony against them, but not to commit myself in direct warfare on them, I have thought it best to say what is directly applied to the Indians only, but admits by inference a more general extension." The **Second Inaugural**, as a matter of fact, is Jefferson's defense of himself against the charges of his Federalist enemies, particularly the Federalist editors, that he was a demagogue, an enemy of religion, a philosophic dreamer—the kind of man portrayed by such satirists as Washington Irving (p. 538). There is also a pardonable note of pride in the result of the election, in which Jefferson had carried fifteen of the seventeen states and 162 of the 176 votes in the electoral college. The manuscripts show that Jefferson's close friend, secretary of state James Madison, helped in polishing the address. Like the **First Inaugural**, it was probably first printed in the newspapers.

Proceeding, fellow citizens, to that qualification which the constitution requires, before my entrance on the charge again conferred upon me, it is my duty to express the deep sense I entertain of this new proof of confidence from my fellow citizens at large, and the zeal with which it inspires me, so to conduct myself as may best satisfy their just expectations.

On taking this station on a former occasion, I declared the principles on which I believed it my duty to ad-

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Text: that established by P. L. Ford from the original manuscript, Works, Vol. X • 2 **the constitution requires.** An allusion, apparently, to Article II, Section 3, which states that the President "shall from time to time give to the Congress information of the state of the Union."

minister the affairs of our commonwealth. My conscience tells me that I have, on every occasion, acted up to that declaration, according to its obvious import, and to the understanding of every candid mind.

In the transaction of your foreign affairs, we have endeavored to cultivate the friendship of all nations, and especially of those with which we have the most important relations. We have done them justice on all occasions, favored where favor was lawful, and cherished mutual interests and intercourse on fair and equal terms. We are firmly convinced, and we act on that conviction, that with nations, as with individuals, our interests soundly calculated, will ever be found inseparable from our moral duties; and history bears witness to the fact, that a just nation is taken on its word, when recourse is had to armaments and wars to bridle others.

At home, fellow citizens, you best know whether we have done well or ill. The suppression of unnecessary offices, of useless establishments and expenses, enabled us to discontinue our internal taxes. These covering our land with officers, and opening our doors to their intrusions, had already begun that process of domiciliary vexation which, once entered, is scarcely to be restrained from reaching successively every article of produce and property. If among these taxes some minor ones fell which had not been inconvenient, it was because their amount would not have paid the officers who collected them, and because, if they had any merit, the state authorities might adopt them, instead of others less approved.

The remaining revenue on the consumption of foreign articles, is paid cheerfully by those who can afford to add foreign luxuries to domestic comforts, being collected on our seaboards and frontiers only, and incorporated with the transactions of our mercantile citizens, it may be the pleasure and pride of an American to ask, what farmer, what mechanic, what laborer, ever sees a tax-gatherer of the United States? These contributions enable us to support the current expenses of the government, to fulfil contracts with foreign nations, to extinguish the native right of soil within our limits, to extend those limits, and to apply such a surplus to our public debts, as places at a short day their final redemption, and that redemption once effected, the revenue thereby liberated may, by a just repartition among the states, and a corresponding amendment of the constitution, be applied, *in time of peace,* to rivers, canals, roads, arts, manufactures, education, and other great objects within each state. *In time of war,* if injustice, by ourselves or others, must sometimes produce war, increased as the same revenue will be increased by population and consumption, and aided by other resources reserved for that crisis, it may meet within the year all the expenses of the year, without encroaching on the rights of future generations, by burdening them with the debts of the past. War will then be but a suspension of useful works, and a return to a state of peace, a return to the progress of improvement.

I have said, fellow citizens, that the income reserved had enabled us to extend our limits; but that extension may possibly pay for itself before we are called on, and in the meantime, may keep down the accruing interest; in all events, it will repay the advances we have made. I know that the acquisition of Louisiana has been disapproved by some, from a candid apprehension that the enlargement of our territory would endanger its union. But who can limit the extent to which the federative principle may operate effectively? The larger our association, the less will it be shaken by local passions; and in any view, is it not better that the opposite bank of the Mississippi should be settled by our own brethren and children, than by strangers of another family? With which shall we be most likely to live in harmony and friendly intercourse?

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20 **taxes.** Jefferson's financial worries were greatly eased by his choice as secretary of the treasury, the Swiss-born financier Albert Gallatin (1761-1849). Under his careful management the removal of all excise taxes, which had caused such unrest as the Whiskey Insurrection, failed to disturb the pay-as-you-go policy of the Republicans • 41 **native . . . soil.** Jefferson's Indian policy was to move the aborigines to reservations in the West, reimbursing the states—especially those of the Southeast—for ceding their claims beyond the Appalachians. This scheme had much to do with his interest in the purchase of Louisiana and led eventually to the establishment of the Indian Territory in what is now Oklahoma • 42 **extend those limits.** The territory of Louisiana was ceded by France on April 30, 1803, for a consideration of $11,250,000 and the assumption by the United States of claims of American citizens against France to the amount of $3,750,000 • 43 **final redemption.** The national debt in 1804 was $86,000,000, but Gallatin had established a sinking fund and was retiring $8,000,000 of the obligation annually. The War of 1812 interrupted this program, but the debt was wiped out in Andrew Jackson's administration. See note, p. 407

In matters of religion, I have considered that its free exercise is placed by the constitution independent of the powers of the general government. I have therefore undertaken, on no occasion, to prescribe the religious exercises suited to it; but have left them, as the constitution found them, under the direction and discipline of state or church authorities acknowledged by the several religious societies.

The aboriginal inhabitants of these countries I have regarded with the commiseration their history inspires. Endowed with the faculties and the rights of men, breathing an ardent love of liberty and independence, and occupying a country which left them no desire but to be undisturbed, the stream of overflowing population from other regions directed itself on these shores; without power to divert, or habits to contend against, they have been overwhelmed by the current, or driven before it; now reduced within limits too narrow for the hunter's state, humanity enjoins us to teach them agriculture and the domestic arts; to encourage them to that industry which alone can enable them to maintain their place in existence, and to prepare them in time for that state of society, which to bodily comforts adds the improvement of the mind and morals. We have therefore liberally furnished them with the implements of husbandry and household use; we have placed among them instructors in the arts of first necessity; and they are covered with the ægis of the law against aggressors from among ourselves.

But the endeavors to enlighten them on the fate which awaits their present course of life, to induce them to exercise their reason, follow its dictates, and change their pursuits with the change of circumstances, have powerful obstacles to encounter; they are combated by the habits of their bodies, prejudice of their minds, ignorance, pride, and the influence of interested and crafty individuals among them, who feel themselves something in the present order of things, and fear to become nothing in any other. These persons inculcate a sanctimonious reverence for the customs of their ancestors; that whatsoever they did, must be done through all time; that reason is a false guide, and to advance under its counsel, in their physical, moral, or political condition, is perilous innovation; that their duty is to remain as their Creator made them, ignorance being safety, and knowledge full of danger; in short, my friends, among them is seen the action and counter-action of good sense and bigotry; they, too, have their anti-philosophers, who find an interest in keeping things in their present state, who dread reformation, and exert all their faculties to maintain the ascendency of habit over the duty of improving our reason, and obeying its mandates.

In giving these outlines, I do not mean, fellow citizens, to arrogate to myself the merit of the measures; that is due, in the first place, to the reflecting character of our citizens at large, who, by the weight of public opinion, influence and strengthen the public measures; it is due to the sound discretion with which they select from among themselves those to whom they confide the legislative duties; it is due to the zeal and wisdom of the characters thus selected, who lay the foundations of public happiness in wholesome laws, the execution of which alone remains for others; and it is due to the able and faithful auxiliaries, whose patriotism has associated with me in the executive functions.

During this course of administration, and in order to disturb it, the artillery of the press has been levelled against us, charged with whatsoever its licentiousness could devise or dare. These abuses of an institution so important to freedom and science, are deeply to be regretted, inasmuch as they tend to lessen its usefulness, and to sap its safety; they might, indeed, have been corrected by the wholesome punishments reserved and provided by the laws of the several States against falsehood and defamation; but public duties more urgent press on the time of public servants, and the offenders have therefore been left to find their punishment in the public indignation.

Nor was it uninteresting to the world, that an experiment should be fairly and fully made, whether freedom of discussion, unaided by power, is not sufficient for the propagation and protection of truth—whether a government, conducting itself in the true spirit of its constitution, with zeal and purity, and doing no act which it would be unwilling the whole world should witness, can be written down by falsehood and defamation. The experiment has been tried; you have witnessed the scene; our fellow citizens have looked on, cool and collected; they saw the latent source from which these outrages proceeded; they gathered around their public functionaries, and when the constitution called them to the decision by suffrage, they pronounced their verdict,

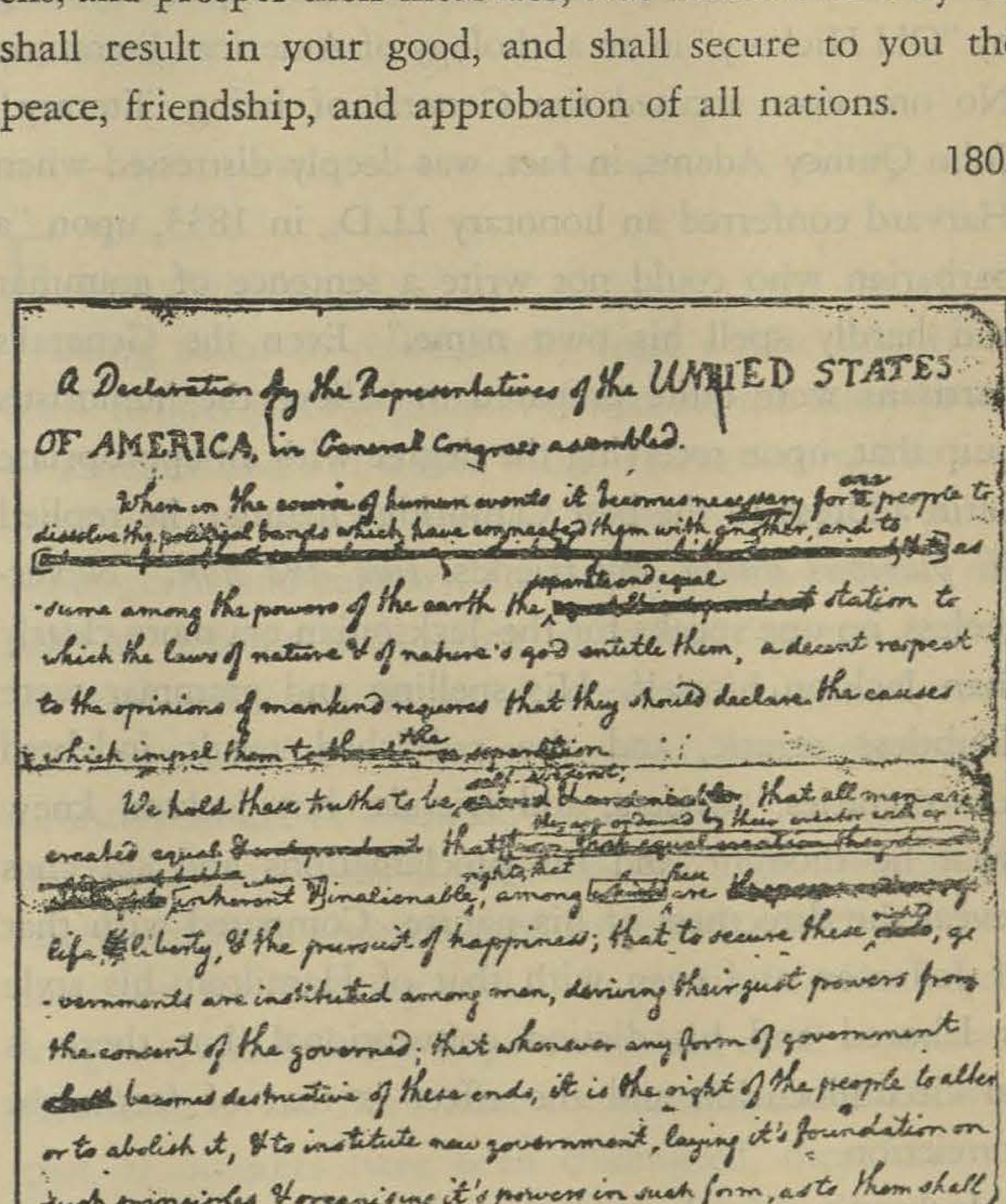
honorable to those who had served them, and consolatory to the friend of man, who believes he may be intrusted with his own affairs.

No inference is here intended, that the laws, provided by the State against false and defamatory publications, should not be enforced; he who has time, renders a service to public morals and public tranquillity, in reforming these abuses by the salutary coercions of the law; but the experiment is noted, to prove that, since truth and reason have maintained their ground against false opinions in league with false facts, the press, confined to truth, needs no other legal restraint; the public judgment will correct false reasonings and opinions, on a full hearing of all parties; and no other definite line can be drawn between the inestimable liberty of the press and its demoralizing licentiousness. If there be still improprieties which this rule would not restrain, its supplement must be sought in the censorship of public opinion.

Contemplating the union of sentiment now manifested so generally, as auguring harmony and happiness to our future course, I offer to our country sincere congratulations. With those, too, not yet rallied to the same point, the disposition to do so is gaining strength; facts are piercing through the veil drawn over them; and our doubting brethren will at length see, that the mass of their fellow citizens, with whom they cannot yet resolve to act, as to principles and measures, think as they think, and desire what they desire; that our wish, as well as theirs, is, that the public efforts may be directed honestly to the public good, that peace be cultivated, civil and religious liberty unassailed, law and order preserved; equality of rights maintained, and that state of property, equal or unequal, which results to every man from his own industry, or that of his fathers. When satisfied of these views, it is not in human nature that they should not approve and support them; in the meantime, let us cherish them with patient affection; let us do them justice, and more than justice, in all competitions of interest; and we need not doubt that truth, reason, and their own interests, will at length prevail, will gather them into the fold of their country, and will complete their entire union of opinion, which gives to a nation the blessing of harmony, and the benefit of all its strength.

I shall now enter on the duties to which my fellow citizens have again called me, and shall proceed in the spirit of those principles which they have approved. I fear not that any motives of interest may lead me astray; I am sensible of no passion which could seduce me knowingly from the path of justice; but the weakness of human nature, and the limits of my own understanding, will produce errors of judgment sometimes injurious to your interests. I shall need, therefore, all the indulgence I have heretofore experienced—the want of it will certainly not lessen with increasing years. I shall need, too, the favor of that Being in whose hands we are, who led our forefathers, as Israel of old, from their native land, and planted them in a country flowing with all the necessaries and comforts of life; who has covered our infancy with his providence, and our riper years with his wisdom and power; and to whose goodness I ask you to join with me in supplications, that he will so enlighten the minds of your servants, guide their councils, and prosper their measures, that whatsoever they do, shall result in your good, and shall secure to you the peace, friendship, and approbation of all nations.

1805


A Declaration by the Representatives of the UNITED STATES OF AMERICA, in General Congress assembled.

When in the course of human events it becomes necessary for one people to dissolve the political bands which have connected them with another, and to assume among the powers of the earth the separate and equal station to which the laws of nature & of nature's god entitle them, a decent respect to the opinions of mankind requires that they should declare the causes which impel them to the separation.

We hold these truths to be self-evident; that all men are created equal; that they are endowed by their creator with inherent & inalienable rights; that among these are life, liberty, & the pursuit of happiness; that to secure these rights, governments are instituted among men, deriving their just powers from the consent of the governed; that whenever any form of government becomes destructive of these ends, it is the right of the people to alter or to abolish it, & to institute new government, laying it's foundation on such principles & organising it's powers in such form, as to them shall seem most likely to effect their safety & happiness. prudence indeed will dictate that governments long established should not be changed for light & transient causes and accordingly all experience hath shewn that mankind are more disposed to suffer while evils are sufferable, than to right themselves by abolishing the forms to which they are accustomed. but

First draft of the Declaration of Independence.

Andrew Jackson

1767 · 1845

Although they were accustomed to surprises from Andrew Jackson, the educated men of his day would have been more than ordinarily astonished to come upon anything by "Old Hickory" in an anthology of American literature. No one ever accused the General of being "literary." John Quincy Adams, in fact, was deeply distressed when Harvard conferred an honorary LL.D., in 1833, upon "a barbarian who could not write a sentence of grammar and hardly spell his own name." Even the General's partisans were quite prepared to believe the humorist's quip that, upon receiving the degree with an appropriate Latin address in the best Cambridge manner, he replied "*E pluribus unum,* my friends, *sine qua non.*" Nevertheless, no one speaks for the Jacksonian era more clearly than Jackson himself. His spelling and grammar were doubtless erratic, and the published result indebted to secretaries, advisers, and friends; but Jackson knew what he thought, and his proclamations and speeches reveal the directness of his nature. Compared with that of Jefferson and even with that of Hamilton, his style is labored and his diction conventional, but there is no circumlocution and the effect is that of forthright conviction.

Jackson's life has fascinated numerous historians, partly because many of its details are still controversial, and partly because it epitomizes the rise of democracy on what was then the frontier. Born in 1767, so close to the border between North and South Carolina that both states have claimed his birthplace, he had almost no formal education except the reading of law in an office at Salisbury, North Carolina. He was admitted to the bar when he was twenty, and in 1788 settled in Tennessee, where he was soon a popular lawyer and a political leader. Common sense, native force, and a liking for a good fight counted for more than learning in the frontier environment; Jackson represented Tennessee in the House of Representatives in 1796-1797, in the Senate in 1797-1798, and from 1798 until 1804 he was a judge in the Superior Court of the state. He then engaged in business for some years, returning to the center of public attention when war was declared against England in 1812. Although his military experience had been confined to militia trainings and some Indian fighting, he had no difficulty in assembling a large body of volunteers, and with these he conducted a successful campaign against the Creek Indians in 1813-1814. Commissioned as a major general in 1814, he quickly drove the English out of Florida, at that time Spanish territory, and proceeded to New Orleans, where a British fleet was expected. A treaty of peace had been signed at Ghent on December 24, 1814, but the news did not reach New Orleans until after the decisive battle of January 8. The British suffered over two thousand casualties; Jackson's army, seventy-one, with only six men killed in the main engagement. The only land victory of the war, it made General Jackson a national hero and symbolized to his people the coming-of-age of the West.

He was now the people's man, with the strength and the weaknesses of the fearlessly independent, resourceful, but undisciplined masses. From 1825, when

the House of Representatives chose John Quincy Adams for President after the electoral college failed to bring in a majority, until 1837, when after two terms Jackson turned over the White House to a successor of his own choice, he dominated American politics as few men ever have. No President, perhaps, has ever had a greater personal following. The effects of his actions, some of which were more intuitive than consistent, are still debatable, but that he spoke and acted for a great era of transition in American life no one has ever questioned.

A Compilation of the Messages and Papers of the Presidents, 1789-1907, ed. J. D. Richardson, 11 vols., New York, 1908 • J. S. Bassett, The Life of Andrew Jackson, 2 vols., New York, 1911 • Marquis James, Andrew Jackson, the Border Captain, Indianapolis, 1933 • Marquis James, Andrew Jackson, Portrait of a President, Indianapolis, 1937

Farewell Address

Jackson's remarks upon his retirement from office were, like Washington's, not entirely his own and were composed for publication rather than for delivery. As early as December 1831, before the end of his first term, he mentioned the possibility of a farewell address in a letter to Martin Van Buren. The actual composition seems to have occupied him during the last months of 1836, with Roger B. Taney, recently appointed Chief Justice of the Supreme Court, as his chief adviser. In January 1837 the paper was ready for submission to the Cabinet; Van Buren, other friends, and Jackson had "proofs" two days before Van Buren's inauguration on March 4. It seems likely that the earliest publication was in a newspaper, but it was also printed separately at various places in 1837. Jackson's enemies among the newspaper editors regarded it as an egotistical imitation of Washington; the New York **American** commented as follows: "Happily it is the last humbug which the mischievous popularity of this illiterate, violent, vain, and iron-willed soldier can impose upon a confiding and credulous people."

The **Farewell Address** is essentially a summary of Jackson's two administrations. The present-day reader may not feel the weight of his arguments for "strict construction" of the Constitution, nor share his warmth on the forgotten issue of the Bank of the United States. Even today, however, Jackson's warnings against sectionalism, monopoly and privilege, the money power, and other selfish points of view have their place in political discussion. Throughout the Address, moreover, may be seen that sure faith in the common man which was the basis of Jackson's popularity and strength. The working spirit of democracy is embodied in one of Jackson's sentences: "Never for a moment believe that the great body of the citizens of any State or States can deliberately intend to do wrong."

Fellow Citizens:

Being about to retire finally from public life, I beg leave to offer you my grateful thanks for the many proofs of kindness and confidence which I have received at your hands. It has been my fortune, in the discharge of public duties, civil and military, frequently to have found myself in difficult and trying situations, where prompt decision and energetic action were necessary, and where the interests of the country required that high responsibilities should be fearlessly encountered: and it is with the deepest emotions of gratitude that I acknowledge the continued and unbroken confidence with which you have sustained me in every trial. My public life has been a long one, and I cannot hope that it has, at all times, been free from errors. But I have the consolation of knowing that, if mistakes have been committed, they have not seriously injured the country I so anxiously endeavored to serve; and, at the moment when I surrender my last public trust, I leave this great people prosperous and happy; in the full enjoyment of liberty and peace; and honored and respected by every nation of the world.

If my humble efforts have, in any degree, contributed to preserve to you these blessings, I have been more than

rewarded by the honors you have heaped upon me; and, above all, by the generous confidence with which you have supported me in every peril, and with which you have continued to animate and cheer my path to the closing hour of my political life. The time has now come, when advanced age and a broken frame warn me to retire from public concerns; but the recollection of the many favors you have bestowed upon me is engraven upon my heart, and I have felt that I could not part from your service without making this public acknowledgment of the gratitude I owe you. And if I use the occasion to offer to you the councils of age and experience, you will, I trust, receive them with the same indulgent kindness which you have so often extended to me; and will, at least, see in them an earnest desire to perpetuate, in this favored land, the blessings of liberty and equal laws.

We have now lived almost fifty years under the constitution framed by the sages and patriots of the Revolution. The conflicts in which the nations of Europe were engaged during a great part of this period; the spirit in which they waged war against each other; and our intimate commercial connections with every part of the civilized world, rendered it a time of much difficulty for the Government of the United States. We have had our seasons of peace and of war, with all the evils which precede or follow a state of hostility with powerful nations. We encountered these trials with our constitution yet in its infancy, and under the disadvantages which a new and untried Government must always feel when it is called upon to put forth its whole strength, without the lights of experience to guide it, or the weight of precedents to justify its measures. But we have passed triumphantly through all these difficulties. Our constitution is no longer a doubtful experiment; and, at the end of nearly half a century, we find that it has preserved unimpaired the liberties of the people, secured the rights of property, and that our country has improved and is flourishing beyond any former example in the history of nations.

In our domestic concerns there is every thing to encourage us; and if you are true to yourselves, nothing can impede your march to the highest point of national prosperity. The States which had so long been retarded in their improvement, by the Indian tribes residing in the midst of them, are at length relieved from the evil; and this unhappy race—the original dwellers in our land—are now placed in a situation where we may well hope that they will share in the blessings of civilization, and be saved from that degradation and destruction to which they were rapidly hastening while they remained in the States; and while the safety and comfort of our own citizens have been greatly promoted by their removal, the philanthropist will rejoice that the remnant of that ill-fated race has been at length placed beyond the reach of injury or oppression, and that the paternal care of the General Government will hereafter watch over them and protect them.

If we turn to our relations with foreign powers, we find our condition equally gratifying. Actuated by the sincere desire to do justice to every nation, and to preserve the blessings of peace, our intercourse with them has been conducted on the part of this Government in the spirit of frankness, and I take pleasure in saying, that it has generally been met in a corresponding temper. Difficulties of old standing have been surmounted by friendly discussion, and the mutual desire to be just; and the claims of our citizens, which had been long withheld, have at length been acknowledged and adjusted, and satisfactory arrangements made for their final payment; and with a limited, and, I trust, a temporary exception, our relations with every foreign power are now of the most friendly character—our commerce continually expanding, and our flag respected in every quarter of the world.

These cheering and grateful prospects, and these multiplied favors, we owe, under Providence, to the adoption of the Federal Constitution. It is no longer a question whether this great country can remain happily united, and flourish under our present form of government. Experience, the unerring test of all human undertakings, has shown the wisdom and foresight of those who formed it; and has proved, that in the union of these States there is a sure foundation for the brightest hopes of freedom, and for the happiness of the people. At every hazard, and by every sacrifice, this Union must be preserved.

Text: Messages of Andrew Jackson: with a Short Sketch of His Life, Concord, New Hampshire, 1837 • 19 **conflicts,** the Napoleonic Wars • 44 **the Indian tribes,** the Chickasaws, Creeks, and Cherokees. Jackson's policy was to move the tribes in Georgia, Alabama, and Mississippi to new lands in the West. Treaties made with Indian chiefs were seldom long respected, however, and in 1838 the bulk of the Cherokees were forcibly deported to what is now Oklahoma • 65 **Difficulties . . . standing.** An allusion, presumably, to the payment of about $5,500,000 by France in 1836. The payment had been awarded by a commission in 1831, and the slowness of settlement caused a temporary break in diplomatic relations

The necessity of watching with jealous anxiety for the preservation of the Union, was earnestly pressed upon his fellow-citizens by the Father of his country, in his farewell address. He has there told us, that "while experience shall not have demonstrated its impracticability, there will always be reason to distrust the patriotism of those who, in any quarter may endeavor to weaken its bonds;" and he has cautioned us, in the strongest terms, against the formation of parties, on geographical discriminations, as one of the means which might disturb our Union, and to which designing men would be likely to resort.

The lessons contained in this invaluable legacy of Washington to his countrymen should be cherished in the heart of every citizen to the latest generation; and, perhaps, at no period of time could they be more usefully remembered than at the present moment. For when we look upon the scenes that are passing around us, and dwell on the pages of his parting address, his paternal counsels would seem to be not merely the offspring of wisdom and foresight, but the voice of prophecy foretelling events and warning us of the evil to come. Forty years have passed since this imperishable document was given to his countrymen. The Federal Constitution was then regarded by him as an experiment, and he speaks of it in his address; but an experiment upon the success of which the best hopes of his country depended, and we all know that he was prepared to lay down his life, if necessary, to secure to it a full and fair trial. The trial has been made. It has succeeded beyond the proudest hopes of those who framed it. Every quarter of this widely extended nation has felt its blessings, and shared in the general prosperity produced in its adoption. But amid this general prosperity and splendid success, the dangers of which he warned us are becoming every day more evident, and the signs of evil are sufficiently apparent to awaken the deepest anxiety in the bosom of the patriot. We behold systematic efforts publicly made to sow the seeds of discord between different parts of the United States, and to place party divisions directly upon geographical distinctions; to excite the *south* against the *north,* and the *north* against the *south,* and to force into the controversy the most delicate and exciting topics;—topics upon which it is impossible that a large portion of the Union can ever speak without strong emotion. Appeals, too, are constantly made to sectional interests, in order to influence the election of the Chief Magistrate, as if it were desired that he should favor a particular quarter of the country, instead of fulfilling the duties of his station with impartial justice to all; and the possible dissolution of the Union has at length become an ordinary and familiar subject of discussion. Has the warning voice of Washington been forgotten? or have designs already been formed to sever the Union? Let it not be supposed that I impute to all those who have taken an active part in these unwise and unprofitable discussions, a want of patriotism or of public virtue. The honorable feeling of State pride, and local attachments, find a place in the bosom of the most enlightened and pure. But while such men are conscious of their own integrity and honesty of purpose, they ought never to forget that the citizens of other States are their political brethren: and that, however mistaken they may be in their views, the great body of them are equally honest and upright with themselves. Mutual suspicions and reproaches may in time create mutual hostility, and artful and designing men will always be found, who are ready to foment these fatal divisions, and to inflame the natural jealousies of different sections of the country. The history of the world is full of such examples, and especially the history of republics.

What have you to gain by division and dissension? Delude not yourselves with the belief that a breach once made may be afterwards repaired. If the Union is once severed, the line of separation will grow wider and wider, and the controversies which are now debated and settled in the halls of legislation, will then be tried in the fields of battle, and determined by the sword. Neither should you deceive yourselves with the hope, that the first line of separation would be the permanent one, and that nothing but harmony and concord would be found in the new associations formed upon the dissolution of this Union. Local interests would still be found there, and unchastened ambition. And if the recollection of common dangers, in which the people of these United States stood side by side against the common foe; the memory of victories won by their united valor; the prosperity and happiness they have enjoyed under the present constitution; the proud name they bear as citizens of this great republic: if all these recollections and proofs of common interests

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38 **systematic efforts.** A hit, probably, at Henry Clay and John C. Calhoun, Jackson's most powerful political enemies, who were notably sectional in their points of view

are not strong enough to bind us together as one people, what tie will hold united the new division of empire, when these bonds have been broken and this Union dissevered? The first line of separation would not last for a single generation; new fragments would be torn off; new leaders would spring up; and this great and glorious republic would soon be broken into a multitude of petty States, without commerce, without credit; jealous of one another; armed for mutual aggression; loaded with taxes to pay armies and leaders; seeking aid against each other from foreign powers; insulted and trampled upon by the nations of Europe, until harrassed with conflicts, and humbled and debased in spirit, they would be ready to submit to the absolute dominion of any military adventurer, and to surrender their liberty for the sake of repose. It is impossible to look on the consequences that would inevitably follow the destruction of this Government, and not feel indignant when we hear cold calculations about the value of the Union, and have so constantly before us a line of conduct so well calculated to weaken its ties.

There is too much at stake to allow pride or passion to influence your decision. Never for a moment believe that the great body of the citizens of any State or States can deliberately intend to do wrong. They may, under the influence of temporary excitement or misguided opinions, commit mistakes; they may be misled for a time by the suggestions of self-interest; but in a community so enlightened and patriotic as the people of the United States, argument will soon make them sensible of their errors; and, when convinced, they will be ready to repair them. If they have no higher or better motives to govern them, they will at least perceive that their own interest requires them to be just to others, as they hope to receive justice at their hands.

But in order to maintain the Union unimpaired, it is absolutely necessary that the laws passed by the constituted authorities should be faithfully executed in every part of the country, and that every good citizen should, at all times stand ready to put down, with the combined force of the nation, every attempt at unlawful resistance, under whatever pretext it may be made, or whatever shape it may assume. Unconstitutional or oppressive laws may no doubt be passed by Congress, either from erroneous views, or the want of due consideration; if they are within the reach of judicial authority, the remedy is easy and peaceful; and if, from the character of the law, it is an abuse of power not within the control of the judiciary, then free discussion and calm appeals to reason and to the justice of the people will not fail to redress the wrong. But until the law shall be declared void by the courts, or repealed by Congress, no individual, or combination of individuals, can be justified in forcibly resisting its execution. It is impossible that any Government can continue to exist upon any other principles. It would cease to be a Government, and be unworthy of the name, if it had not the power to enforce the execution of its own laws within its own sphere of action.

It is true that cases may be imagined disclosing such a settled purpose of usurpation and oppression, on the part of the Government, as would justify an appeal to arms. These, however, are extreme cases, which we have no reason to apprehend in a Government where the power is in the hands of a patriotic people; and no citizen who loves his country would, in any case whatever, resort to forcible resistance, unless he clearly saw that the time had come when a freeman should prefer death to submission; for if such a struggle is once begun, and the citizens of one section of the country arrayed in arms against those of another in doubtful conflict, let the battle result as it may, there will be an end of the Union, and, with it, an end to the hopes of freedom. The victory of the injured would not secure to them the blessings of liberty; it would avenge their wrongs, but they would themselves share in the common ruin.

But the constitution cannot be maintained, nor the Union preserved, in opposition to public feeling, by the mere exertion of the coercive powers confided to the General Government. The foundations must be laid in the affections of the people; in the security it gives to life, liberty, character, and property, in every quarter of the country; and in the fraternal attachment which the citizens of the several States bear to one another as members of one political family, mutually contributing to promote the happiness of each other. Hence the citizens of every State should studiously avoid every thing calculated to wound the sensibility or offend the just pride of the people of other States; and they should frown upon any proceedings within their own borders likely to disturb the tranquility of their political brethren in other portions of the Union. In a country so extensive as the United States, and with pursuits so varied, the internal regulations of the several States must frequently differ from one another in important particulars; and this

difference is unavoidably increased by the varying principles upon which the American colonies were originally planted; principles which had taken deep root in their social relations before the Revolution, and, therefore, of necessity influencing their policy since they became free and independent States. But each State has the unquestionable right to regulate its own internal concerns according to its own pleasure; and while it does not interfere with the rights of the people of other States, or the rights of the Union, every State must be the sole judge of the measures proper to secure the safety of its citizens and promote their happiness; and all efforts on the part of people of other States to cast odium upon their institutions, and all measures calculated to disturb their rights of property, or to put in jeopardy their peace and internal tranquility, are in direct opposition to the spirit in which the Union was formed, and must endanger its safety. Motives of philanthropy may be assigned for this unwarrantable interference; and weak men may persuade themselves for a moment that they are laboring in the cause of humanity, and asserting the rights of the human race; but every one, upon sober reflection, will see that nothing but mischief can come from these improper assaults upon the feelings and rights of others. Rest assured, that the men found busy in this work of discord are not worthy of your confidence, and deserve your strongest reprobation.

In the legislation of Congress, also, and in every measure of the General Government, justice to every portion of the United States should be faithfully observed. No free Government can stand without virtue in the people, and a lofty spirit of patriotism; and if the sordid feelings of mere selfishness shall usurp the place which ought to be filled by public spirit, the legislation of Congress will soon be converted into a scramble for personal and sectional advantages. Under our free institutions, the citizens of every quarter of our country are capable of attaining a high degree of prosperity and happiness, without seeking to profit themselves at the expense of others; and every such attempt must in the end fail to succeed, for the people in every part of the United States are too enlightened not to understand their own rights and interests, and to detect and defeat every effort to gain undue advantages over them; and when such designs are discovered, it naturally provokes resentments which cannot always be easily allayed. Justice, full and ample justice, to every portion of the United States, should be the ruling principle of every freeman, and should guide the deliberations of every public body, whether it be State or national.

It is well known that there have always been those amongst us who wish to enlarge the powers of the General Government; and experience would seem to indicate that there is a tendency on the part of this Government to overstep the boundaries marked out for it by the constitution. Its legitimate authority is abundantly sufficient for all the purposes for which it was created; and its powers being expressly enumerated, there can be no justification for claiming any thing beyond them. Every attempt to exercise power beyond these limits should be promptly and firmly opposed. For one evil example will lead to other measures still more mischievous; and if the principle of constructive powers, or supposed advantages, or temporary circumstances, shall ever be permitted to justify the assumption of a power not given by the constitution, the General Government will before long absorb all the powers of legislation, and you will have, in effect, but one consolidated Government. From the extent of our country, its diversified interests, different pursuits, and different habits, it is too obvious for argument that a single consolidated Government would be wholly inadequate to watch over and protect its interests; and every friend of our free institutions should be always prepared to maintain unimpaired and in full vigor the rights and sovereignty of the States, and to confine the action of the General Government strictly to the sphere of its appropriate duties.

There is, perhaps, no one of the powers conferred on the Federal Government so liable to abuse as the taxing power. The most productive and convenient sources of revenue were necessarily given to it, that it might be able to perform the important duties imposed upon it; and the taxes which it lays upon commerce being concealed from the real payer in the price of the article, they do not so readily attract the attention of the people as smaller sums demanded from them directly by the tax-gatherer. But the tax imposed on goods enhances by so much the price of the commodity to the consumer; and,

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55 **the constitution.** Jackson here presents the "strict construction" view, but he was no die-hard supporter of states' rights. His two administrations, indeed, are notable for their extension of the executive authority, and it has been said that Jackson put the will of the people, as he interpreted it, above all constitutional arrangements

as many of these duties are imposed on articles of necessity, which are daily used by the great body of the people, the money raised by these imposts is drawn from their pockets. Congress has no right, under the constitution, to take money from the people, unless it is required to execute some one of the specific powers intrusted to the Government; and if they raise more than is necessary for such purposes, it is an abuse of the power of taxation, and unjust and oppressive. It may, indeed, happen that the revenue will sometimes exceed the amount anticipated when the taxes were laid. When, however, this is ascertained, it is easy to reduce them; and, in such a case, it is unquestionably the duty of the Government to reduce them, for no circumstances can justify it in assuming a power not given to it by the constitution, nor in taking away the money of the people when it is not needed for the legitimate wants of the Government.

Plain as these principles appear to be, you will yet find that there is a constant effort to induce the General Government to go beyond the limits of its taxing power, and to impose unnecessary burdens upon the people. Many powerful interests are continually at work to procure heavy duties on commerce, and to swell the revenue beyond the real necessities of the public service; and the country has already felt the injurious effects of their combined influence. They succeeded in obtaining a tariff of duties bearing most oppressively on the agricultural and laboring classes of society, and producing a revenue that could not be usefully employed within the range of the powers conferred upon Congress; and, in order to fasten upon the people this unjust and unequal system of taxation, extravagant schemes of internal improvement were got up, in various quarters, to squander the money, and to purchase support. Thus, one unconstitutional measure was intended to be upheld by another, and the abuse of the power of taxation was to be maintained by usurping the power of expending the money in internal improvements. You cannot have forgotten the severe and doubtful struggle through which we passed, when the Executive Department of the Government, by its veto, endeavored to arrest this prodigal scheme of injustice, and to bring back the legislation of Congress to the boundaries prescribed by the constitution. The good sense and practical judgment of the people, when the subject was brought before them, sustained the course of the Executive; and this plan of unconstitutional expenditure for the purposes of corrupt influence is, I trust, finally overthrown.

The result of this decision has been felt in the rapid extinguishment of the public debt, and the large accumulation of a surplus in the treasury, notwithstanding the tariff was reduced, and is now very far below the amount originally contemplated by its advocates. But, rely upon it, the design to collect an extravagant revenue, and to burden you with taxes beyond the economical wants of the Government, is not yet abandoned. The various interests which have combined together to impose a heavy tariff, and to produce an overflowing treasury, are too strong, and have too much at stake to surrender the contest. The corporations and wealthy individuals who are engaged in large manufacturing establishments, desire a high tariff to increase their gains. Designing politicians will support it, to conciliate their favor, and to obtain the means of profuse expenditure, for the purpose of purchasing influence in other quarters; and since the people have decided that the Federal Government cannot be permitted to employ its income in internal improvements, efforts will be made to seduce and mislead the citizens of the several States, by holding out to them the deceitful prospect of benefits to be derived from a surplus revenue collected by the General Government, and annually divided among the States. And if, encouraged by these fallacious hopes, the States should disregard the principles of economy which ought to characterize every republican Government, and should indulge in lavish expenditures exceeding their resources, they will, before long, find themselves oppressed with debts which they are unable to pay, and the temptation will become irresistible to support a high tariff, in order to obtain a surplus for distribution. Do not allow yourselves, my fellow-citizens, to be misled on this subject. The Federal Government cannot collect a surplus for such purposes, without violating the principles of the constitution, and assuming powers which have not been granted. It is, moreover, a system of injustice, and, if persisted in, will inevitably lead to corruption, and must end in ruin. The

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26 **tariff.** Jackson favored a tariff to protect essential industries until he was elected President; his comments here show that he grew wary with experience • 41 **veto,** the Maysville Veto of 1830, which halted federal aid for local improvements. The question at issue was whether or not to appropriate federal funds to buy stock in a Kentucky road company

surplus revenue will be drawn from the pockets of the people, from the farmer, the mechanic, and the laboring classes of society; but who will receive it when distributed among the States, where it is to be disposed of by leading State politicians who have friends to favor, and political partisans to gratify? It will certainly not be returned to those who paid it, and who have most need of it, and are honestly entitled to it. There is but one safe rule, and that is, to confine the General Government rigidly within the sphere of its appropriate duties. It has no power to raise a revenue, or impose taxes, except for the purposes enumerated in the constitution; and if its income is found to exceed these wants, it should be forthwith reduced, and the burdens of the people so far lightened.

In reviewing the conflicts which have taken place between different interests in the United States, and the policy pursued since the adoption of our present form of government, we find nothing that has produced such deep-seated evil as the course of legislation in relation to the currency. The constitution of the United States unquestionably intended to secure to the people a circulating medium of gold and silver. But the establishment of a national bank by Congress, with the privilege of issuing paper money receivable in the payment of the public dues, and the unfortunate course of legislation in the several States upon the same subject, drove from general circulation the constitutional currency, and substituted one of paper in its place.

It was not easy for men engaged in the ordinary pursuits of business, whose attention had not been particularly drawn to the subject, to foresee all the consequences of a currency exclusively of paper; and we ought not, on that account, to be surprised at the facility with which laws were obtained to carry into effect the paper system. Honest, and even enlightened men, are sometimes misled by the specious and plausible statements of the designing. But experience has now proved the mischiefs and dangers of a paper currency, and it rests with you to determine whether the proper remedy shall be applied.

The paper system being founded on public confidence, and having of itself no intrinsic value, it is liable to great and sudden fluctuations; thereby rendering property insecure, and the wages of labor unsteady and uncertain. The corporations which create the paper money cannot be relied upon to keep the circulating medium uniform in amount. In times of prosperity, when confidence is high, they are tempted, by the prospect of gain, or by the influence of those who hope to profit by it, to extend their issues of paper beyond the bounds of discretion and the reasonable demands of business. And when these issues have been pushed on, from day to day, until public confidence is at length shaken, then a reaction takes place, and they immediately withdraw the credits they have given; suddenly curtail their issues; and produce an unexpected and ruinous contraction of the circulating medium, which is felt by the whole community. The banks, by this means, save themselves, and the mischievous consequences of their imprudence or cupidity are visited upon the public. Nor does the evil stop here. These ebbs and flows in the currency, and these indiscreet extensions of credit, naturally engender a spirit of speculation injurious to the habits and character of the people. We have already seen its effects in the wild spirit of speculation in the public lands, and

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20 **legislation . . . currency.** The First Bank of the United States had been organized in 1791, largely because Hamilton believed that the government ought not to assume the right of issuing its own currency. Although the Bank of the United States did provide a uniform currency, in which there was general confidence, it also seemed to some to foreshadow the concentration of financial power in one place; for that reason Congress refused to renew the Bank's charter when it expired in 1811. Five years later Alexander J. Dallas, secretary of the treasury under President Madison, supported the founding of the Second Bank of the United States, largely because the currency of the state banks, often issued without adequate security, was found unsatisfactory. The Second Bank was chartered for twenty years, or until 1836. The renewing of its charter became the major political issue of Jackson's first term, after he questioned its constitutionality in his first annual message, adding that the Bank had "failed in the great end of establishing a uniform and sound currency." Behind his statement lay the decision of the Bank, in 1818, to redeem its notes only at its central office in Philadelphia—an obvious hardship in the eyes of residents of the hinterland. Jackson vetoed a bill for a new charter in 1832, and the campaign of that year was fought on the Bank issue. The "money power," represented by the Bank and Nicholas Biddle, its president, was soundly beaten. In 1833, after a bitter political battle, Jackson succeeded in ordering the transfer of government funds from the Bank to the larger state institutions, and three years later all banks of deposit were required to furnish security for government moneys in their possession and to redeem any bank notes they might issue in specie, i.e., coin. Nevertheless, at the time Jackson turned over his office to Van Buren, the country was overflowing with poorly secured paper money • 66 **wild . . . speculation.** Jackson issued the specie circular of July 11, 1836, which ordered all payments for public lands to be in gold or silver

various kinds of stock, which, within the last year or two, seized upon such a multitude of our citizens, and threatened to pervade all classes of society, and to withdraw their attention from the sober pursuits of honest industry. It is not by encouraging this spirit that we shall best preserve public virtue and promote the true interests of our country. But if your currency continues as exclusively paper as it now is, it will foster this eager desire to amass wealth without labor; it will multiply the number of dependants on bank accommodations and bank favors; the temptation to obtain money at any sacrifice will become stronger and stronger, and inevitably lead to corruption, which will find its way into your public councils, and destroy, at no distant day, the purity of your Government. Some of the evils which arise from this system of paper, press with peculiar hardship upon the class of society least able to bear it. A portion of this currency frequently becomes depreciated or worthless, and all of it is easily counterfeited, in such a manner as to require peculiar skill and much experience to distinguish the counterfeit from the genuine note. These frauds are most generally perpetrated in the smaller notes, which are used in the daily transactions of ordinary business: and the losses occasioned by them are commonly thrown upon the laboring classes of society, whose situation and pursuits put it out of their power to guard themselves from these impositions, and whose daily wages are necessary for their subsistence. It is the duty of every Government so to regulate its currency as to protect this numerous class as far as practicable from the impositions of avarice and fraud. It is more especially the duty of the United States, where the Government is emphatically the Government of the people, and where this respectable portion of our citizens are so proudly distinguished from the laboring classes of all other nations, by their independent spirit, their love of liberty, their intelligence, and their high tone of moral character. Their industry, in peace, is the source of our wealth; and their bravery, in war, has covered us with glory; and the Government of the United States will but ill discharge its duties if it leaves them a prey to such dishonest impositions. Yet it is evident that their interests cannot be effectually protected, unless silver and gold are restored to circulation.

These views alone, of the paper currency, are sufficient to call for immediate reform; but there is another consideration which should still more strongly press it upon your attention.

Recent events have proved that the paper money system of this country may be used as an engine to undermine your free institutions; and that those who desire to engross all power in the hands of the few, and to govern by corruption or force, are aware of its power, and prepared to employ it. Your banks now furnish your only circulating medium, and money is plenty or scarce, according to the quantity of notes issued by them. While they have capitals not greatly disproportioned to each other, they are competitors in business, and no one of them can exercise dominion over the rest; and although, in the present state of the currency, these banks may and do operate injuriously upon the habits of business, the pecuniary concerns, and the moral tone of society; yet, from their number and dispersed situation, they cannot combine for the purposes of political influence; and whatever may be the dispositions of some of them, their power of mischief must necessarily be confined to a narrow space, and felt only in their immediate neighborhoods.

But when the charter for the Bank of the United States was obtained from Congress, it perfected the schemes of the paper system, and gave to its advocates the position they have struggled to obtain, from the commencement of the Federal Government down to the present hour. The immense capital, and peculiar privileges bestowed upon it, enabled it to exercise despotic sway over the other banks in every part of the country. From its superior strength, it could seriously injure, if not destroy, the business of any one of them which might incur its resentment; and it openly claimed for itself the power of regulating the currency throughout the United States. In other words, it asserted (and it undoubtedly possessed) the power to make money plenty or scarce, at its pleasure, at any time, and in any quarter of the Union, by controlling the issues of other banks, and permitting an expansion, or compelling a general contraction, of the circulating medium, according to its own will. The other banking institutions were sensible of its strength, and they soon generally became its obedient instruments, ready, at all times, to execute its mandates; and with the banks necessarily went, also, that numerous

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48 **Recent events**, the financial distress of 1833-1834, which Jackson's supporters believed had been artificially produced by the refusal of the Bank of the United States to lend money. The private correspondence of Biddle appears to sustain this charge

class of persons in our commercial cities, who depend altogether on bank credits for their solvency and means of business; and who are, therefore, obliged, for their own safety, to propitiate the favor of the money power by distinguished zeal and devotion in its service. The result of the ill-advised legislation which established this great monopoly was, to concentrate the whole moneyed power of the Union, with its boundless means of corruption, and its numerous dependants, under the direction and command of one acknowledged head; thus organizing this particular interest as one body, and securing to it unity and concert of action throughout the United States, and enabling it to bring forward, upon any occasion, its entire and undivided strength to support or defeat any measure of the Government. In the hands of this formidable power, thus perfectly organized, was also placed unlimited dominion over the amount of the circulating medium, giving it the power to regulate the value of property and the fruits of labor in every quarter of the Union; and to bestow prosperity, or bring ruin, upon any city or section of the country, as might best comport with its own interest or policy.

We are not left to conjecture how the moneyed power, thus organized, and with such a weapon in its hands, would be likely to use it. The distress and alarm which pervaded and agitated the whole country, when the Bank of the United States waged war upon the people, in order to compel them to submit to its demands, cannot yet be forgotten. The ruthless and unsparing temper with which whole cities and communities were oppressed, individuals impoverished and ruined, and a scene of cheerful prosperity suddenly changed into one of gloom and despondency, ought to be indelibly impressed on the memory of the people of the United States. If such was its power in a time of peace, what would it not have been in a season of war, with an enemy at your doors? No nation but the freemen of the United States could have come out victorious from such a contest; yet, if you had not conquered, the Government would have passed from the hands of the many to the hands of the few; and this organized money power, from its secret conclave, would have dictated the choice of your highest officers, and compelled you to make peace or war, as best suited their own wishes. The forms of your government might, for a time, have remained; but its living spirit would have departed from it.

The distress and sufferings inflicted on the people by the bank, are some of the fruits of that system of policy which is continually striving to enlarge the authority of the Federal Government beyond the limits fixed by the constitution. The powers enumerated in that instrument do not confer on Congress the right to establish such a corporation as the Bank of the United States; and the evil consequences which followed may warn us of the danger of departing from the true rule of construction, and of permitting temporary circumstances, or the hope of better promoting the public welfare, to influence, in any degree, our decisions upon the extent of the authority of the General Government. Let us abide by the constitution as it is written, or amend it in the constitutional mode, if it is found to be defective.

The severe lessons of experience will, I doubt not, be sufficient to prevent Congress from again chartering such a monopoly, even if the constitution did not present an insuperable objection to it. But you must remember, my fellow-citizens, that eternal vigilance by the people is the price of liberty; and that you must pay the price if you wish to secure the blessing. It behooves you, therefore, to be watchful in your State, as well as in the Federal Government. The power which the moneyed interest can exercise, when concentrated under a single head, and with our present system of currency, was sufficiently demonstrated in the struggle made by the Bank of the United States. Defeated in the General Government, the same class of intriguers and politicians will now resort to the States, and endeavor to obtain there the same organization, which they failed to perpetuate in the Union; and with specious and deceitful plans of public advantages, and State interests and State pride, they will endeavor to establish, in the different States, one moneyed institution with overgrown capital, and exclusive privileges sufficient to enable it to control the operations of the other banks. Such an institution will be pregnant with the same evils produced by the Bank of the United States, although its sphere of action is more confined; and in the State in which it is chartered, the money power will be able to embody its whole strength, and to move together with undivided force, to accomplish any object it may wish to attain. You have already had abundant evidence of its power to inflict injury upon the agricultural, mechanical, and laboring classes of society; and over those whose engagements in trade or speculation render them dependant on bank facilities, the dominion of the State monopoly will be absolute, and their obedience unlimited.

With such a bank and a paper currency, the money power would, in a few years, govern the State and control its measures; and if a sufficient number of States can be induced to create such establishments, the time will soon come when it will again take the field against the United States, and succeed in perfecting and perpetuating its organization by a charter from Congress.

It is one of the serious evils of our present system of banking, that it enables one class of society—and that by no means a numerous one—by its control over the currency, to act injuriously upon the interests of all the others, and to exercise more than its just proportion of influence in political affairs. The agricultural, the mechanical, and the laboring classes, have little or no share in the direction of the great moneyed corporations; and from their habits and the nature of their pursuits, they are incapable of forming extensive combinations to act together with united force. Such concert of action may sometimes be produced in a single city, or in a small district of country, by means of personal communications with each other; but they have no regular or active correspondence with those who are engaged in smaller pursuits in distant places; they have but little patronage to give to the press, and exercise but a small share of influence over it; they have no crowd of dependants about them, who hope to grow rich without labor, by their countenance and favor, and who are, therefore, always ready to execute their wishes. The planter, the farmer, the mechanic, and the laborer, all know that their success depends upon their own industry and economy, and that they must not expect to become suddenly rich by the fruits of their toil. Yet these classes of society form the great body of the people of the United States; they are the bone and sinew of the country; men who love liberty and desire nothing but equal rights and equal laws, and who, moreover, hold the great mass of our national wealth, although it is distributed in moderate amounts among the millions of freemen who possess it. But, with overwhelming numbers and wealth on their side, they are in constant danger of losing their fair influence in the Government, and with difficulty maintain their just rights against the incessant efforts daily made to encroach upon them. The mischief springs from the power which the moneyed interest derives from a paper currency, which they are able to control; from the multitude of corporations, with exclusive privileges, which they have succeeded in obtaining in the different States, and which are employed altogether for their benefit; and unless you become more watchful in your States, and check this spirit of monopoly and thirst for exclusive privileges, you will, in the end, find that the most important powers of Government have been given or bartered away, and the control over your dearest interests has passed into the hands of these corporations.

The paper money system, and its natural associates, monopoly and exclusive privileges, have already struck their roots deep in the soil; and it will require all your efforts to check its further growth, and to eradicate the evil. The men who profit by the abuses, and desire to perpetuate them, will continue to besiege the halls of legislation in the General Government as well as in the States, and will seek, by every artifice, to mislead and deceive the public servants. It is to yourselves that you must look for safety, and the means of guarding and perpetuating your free institutions. In your hands is rightfully placed the sovereignty of the country, and to you every one placed in authority is ultimately responsible. It is always in your power to see that the wishes of the people are carried into faithful execution, and their will, when once made known, must sooner or later be obeyed. And while the people remain, as I trust they ever will, uncorrupted and incorruptible, and continue watchful and jealous of their rights, the Government is safe, and the cause of freedom will continue to triumph over all its enemies.

But it will require steady and persevering exertions on your part to rid yourselves of the iniquities and mischiefs of the paper system, and to check the spirit of monopoly and other abuses which have sprung up with it, and of which it is the main support. So many interests are united to resist all reform on this subject, that you must not hope the conflict will be a short one, nor success easy. My humble efforts have not been spared, during my administration of the Government, to restore the constitutional currency of gold and silver; and something, I trust, has been done towards the accomplishment of this most desirable object. But enough yet remains to require all your energy and perseverance. The power, however, is in your hands, and the remedy must and will be applied, if you determine upon it.

While I am thus endeavoring to press upon your attention the principles which I deem of vital importance

in the domestic concerns of the country, I ought not to pass over, without notice, the important considerations which should govern your policy towards foreign powers. It is, unquestionably, our true interest to cultivate the most friendly understanding with every nation, and to avoid, by every honorable means, the calamities of war; and we shall best attain this object by frankness and sincerity in our foreign intercourse, by the prompt and faithful execution of treaties, and by justice and impartiality in our conduct to all. But no nation, however desirous of peace, can hope to escape occasional collisions with other powers; and the soundest dictates of policy require that we should place ourselves in a condition to assert our rights, if a resort to force should ever become necessary. Our local situation, our long line of seacoast, indented by numerous bays, with deep rivers opening into the interior, as well as our extended and still increasing commerce, point to the navy as our natural means of defense. It will, in the end, be found to be the cheapest and most effectual; and now is the time, in a season of peace, and with an overflowing revenue, that we can, year after year, add to its strength, without increasing the burdens of the people. It is your true policy. For your navy will not only protect your rich and flourishing commerce in distant seas, but will enable you to reach and annoy the enemy, and will give to defense its greatest efficiency, by meeting danger at a distance from home. It is impossible, by any line of fortifications, to guard every point from attack against a hostile force advancing from the ocean and selecting its object: but they are indispensable to protect cities from bombardment; dock yards and naval arsenals from destruction; to give shelter to merchant vessels in time of war, and to single ships or weaker squadrons when pressed by superior force. Fortifications of this description cannot be too soon completed and armed, and placed in a condition of the most perfect preparation. The abundant means we now possess cannot be applied in any manner more useful to the country; and when this is done, and our naval force sufficiently strengthened, and our militia armed, we need not fear that any nation will wantonly insult us, or needlessly provoke hostilities. We shall more certainly preserve peace, when it is well understood that we are prepared for war.

In presenting to you, my fellow-citizens, these parting counsels, I have brought before you the leading principles upon which I endeavored to administer the Government in the high office with which you twice honored me. Knowing that the path of freedom is continually beset by enemies, who often assume the disguise of friends, I have devoted the last hours of my public life to warn you of the dangers. The progress of the United States, under our free and happy institutions, has surpassed the most sanguine hopes of the founders of the republic. Our growth has been rapid beyond all former example, in numbers, in wealth, in knowledge, and all the useful arts which contribute to the comforts and convenience of man; and from the earliest ages of history to the present day, there never have been thirteen millions of people associated together in one political body who enjoyed so much freedom and happiness as the people of these United States. You have no longer any cause to fear danger from abroad; your strength and power are well known throughout the civilized world, as well as the high and gallant bearing of your sons. It is from within, among yourselves, from cupidity, from corruption, from disappointed ambition, and inordinate thirst for power, that factions will be formed and liberty endangered. It is against such designs, whatever disguise the actors may assume, that you have especially to guard yourselves. You have the highest of human trusts committed to your care. Providence has showered on this favored land blessings without number, and has chosen you as the guardians of freedom to preserve it for the benefits of the human race. May He, who holds in his hands the destinies of nations, make you worthy of the favors he has bestowed, and enable you, with pure hearts and pure hands, and sleepless vigilance, to guard and defend to the end of time the great charge he has committed to your keeping.

My own race is nearly run; advanced age and failing health warn me that before long I must pass beyond the reach of human events, and cease to feel the vicissitudes of human affairs. I thank God that my life has been spent in a land of liberty, and that he has given me a heart to love my country with the affection of a son. And filled with gratitude for your constant and unwavering kindness, I bid you a last and affectionate farewell.

1836-1837 • 1837

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38 **abundant means.** The national debt of the United States had been paid in full in 1835



Thomas Paine

1737 · 1809

See page 326 for a biographical account of Paine.

From

The Age of Reason

When Paine was arrested in Paris in December 1793, a part of **The Age of Reason** was in the hands of his printer, and on his way to prison he was allowed to turn over the remainder of the manuscript of Part I to Joel Barlow. A few copies were printed in January 1794. Part II, begun under the shadow of the guillotine and finished in the home of James Monroe, was added, and the whole work was published in 1795.

Paine's outspoken Deism (see p. 216 for a discussion of Deism) and anticlericalism were tempered by an earnest belief in a benevolent God and the perfectibility of man; he was neither an atheist nor a supporter of such mummery as the worship of an actress as representative of the Goddess of Reason—one of the actual incidents of the French Revolution. His book, indeed, was written partly

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Panel (l. to r.): William Ellery Channing • Last day of a camp meeting in the woods • Peter Cartwright

to protest against the excesses of the Reign of Terror under Robespierre. It appeared, however, almost simultaneously with a new wave of evangelical fervor in America (see Peter Cartwright, pp. 430-435), and was used to embarrass the Jeffersonian Republicans, whose opponents linked infidelity with political radicalism for the purpose of getting votes. To the orthodox, Paine's attack on some of the most cherished doctrines of Christianity was sheer blasphemy.

The modern reader will wonder chiefly at Paine's persistently literal interpretation of the Bible and his unquestioning assumption that human beings wish to be rational in their beliefs. In both respects he was a child of his time, the eighteenth century, which ordinarily demanded order and consistency, and was thoroughly committed to the mathematical world-view of Sir Isaac Newton, who pictured the universe as a smooth-running, rationally conducted machine.

It has been my intention, for several years past, to publish my thoughts upon Religion. I am well aware of the difficulties that attend the subject; and, from that consideration, had reserved it to a more advanced period of life. I intended it to be the last offering I should make to my fellow-citizens of all nations; and that at a time when the purity of the motive that induced me to it could not admit of a question, even by those who might disapprove of the work.

The circumstance that has now taken place in France, of the total abolition of the whole national order of priesthood and of everything appertaining to compulsive systems of religion, and compulsive articles of faith, has not only precipitated my intention, but rendered a work of this kind exceedingly necessary; lest, in the general wreck of superstition, of false systems of government, and false theology, we lose sight of morality, of humanity, and of the theology that is true.

As several of my colleagues, and others of my fellow-citizens of France, have given me the example of making their voluntary and individual profession of faith, I also will make mine; and I do this with all that sincerity and frankness with which the mind of man communicates with itself.

I believe in one God, and no more; and I hope for happiness beyond this life.

I believe in the equality of man, and I believe that religious duties consist in doing justice, loving mercy, and endeavoring to make our fellow-creatures happy.

But, lest it should be supposed that I believe many other things in addition to these, I shall, in the progress of this work, declare the things I do not believe, and my reasons for not believing them.

I do not believe in the creed professed by the Jewish church, by the Roman church, by the Greek church, by the Turkish church, by the Protestant church, nor by any church that I know of. My own mind is my own church.

All national institutions of churches—whether Jewish, Christian, or Turkish—appear to me no other than human inventions set up to terrify and enslave mankind and monopolize power and profit.

I do not mean by this declaration to condemn those who believe otherwise. They have the same right to their belief as I have to mine. But it is necessary to the happiness of man, that he be mentally faithful to himself. Infidelity does not consist in believing, or in disbelieving; it consists in professing to believe what he does not believe.

It is impossible to calculate the moral mischief, if I may so express it, that mental lying has produced in society. When a man has so far corrupted and prostituted the chastity of his mind, as to subscribe his professional belief to things he does not believe, he has prepared himself for the commission of every other crime. He takes up the trade of a priest for the sake of gain, and, in order to *qualify* himself for that trade, he begins with a perjury. Can we conceive anything more destructive to morality than this?

Soon after I had published the pamphlet, COMMON SENSE, in America, I saw the exceeding probability that a Revolution in the System of Government would be followed by a revolution in the system of religion. The adulterous connection of church and state, wherever it had taken place, whether Jewish, Christian, or Turkish, had so effectually prohibited, by pains and penalties, every discussion upon established creeds, and upon first principles of religion, that until the system of govern-

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Text: that established by Professor Peach on the basis of the 1795 edition • 10 **The circumstance,** a reference to the acts of the National Convention between 1792 and the time of writing

ment should be changed those subjects could not be brought fairly and openly before the world; but that whenever this should be done, a revolution in the system of religion would follow. Human inventions and priest-craft would be detected, and man would return to the pure, unmixed, and unadulterated belief of one God, and no more.

Every national church or religion has established itself by pretending some special mission from God, communicated to certain individuals. The Jews have their Moses; the Christians their Jesus Christ, their apostles and saints; and the Turks their Mahomet—as if the way to God was not open to every man alike.

Each of those churches show certain books which they call *revelation,* or the word of God. The Jews say that their word of God was given by God to Moses face to face; the Christians say that their word of God came by divine inspiration; and the Turks say that their word of God (the Koran) was brought by an angel from heaven. Each of those churches accuse the other of unbelief; and, for my own part, I disbelieve them all.

As it is necessary to affix right ideas to words, I will, before I proceed further into the subject, offer some observations on the word *revelation.* Revelation, when applied to religion, means something communicated *immediately* from God to man.

No one will deny or dispute the power of the Almighty to make such a communication, if he pleases. But admitting, for the sake of a case, that something has been revealed to a certain person, and not revealed to any other person, it is revelation to that person only. When he tells it to a second person, a second to a third, a third to a fourth, and so on, it ceases to be a revelation to all those persons. It is a revelation to the first person only, and *hearsay* to every other; and, consequently, they are not obliged to believe it.

It is a contradiction in terms and ideas to call anything a revelation that comes to us at secondhand, either verbally or in writing. Revelation is necessarily limited to the first communication. After this, it is only an account of something which that person says was a revelation made to him; and though he may find himself obliged to believe it, it cannot be incumbent upon me to believe it in the same manner, for it was not a revelation to *me,* and I have only his word for it that it was made to *him.*

When Moses told the children of Israel that he received the two tables of the commandments from the hand of God, they were not obliged to believe him, because they had no other authority for it than his telling them so; and I have no other authority for it than some historian telling me so. The Commandments carry no internal evidence of divinity with them. They contain some good moral precepts, such as any man qualified to be a lawgiver, or legislator, could produce himself, without having recourse to supernatural intervention.

When I am told that the Koran was written in heaven, and brought to Mahomet by an angel, the account comes to near the same kind of hearsay evidence and second-hand authority as the former. I did not see the angel myself, and therefore I have a right not to believe it.

When also I am told that a woman, called the Virgin Mary said, or gave out, that she was with child without any cohabitation with a man, and that her betrothed husband, Joseph, said, that an angel told him so, I have a right to believe them or not; such a circumstance required a much stronger evidence than their bare word for it; but we have not even this; for neither Joseph nor Mary wrote any such matter themselves. It is only reported by others that *they said so.* It is hearsay upon hearsay, and I do not chuse to rest my belief upon such evidence.

It is, however, not difficult to account for the credit that was given to the story of Jesus Christ being the Son of God. He was born at a time when the heathen mythology had still some fashion and repute in the world, and that mythology had prepared the people for the belief of such a story. Almost all the extraordinary men that ever lived under the heathen mythology were reputed to be the sons of some of their gods. It was not a new thing, at that time, to believe a man to have been celestially begotten; the intercourse of gods with women was then a matter of familiar opinion. Their Jupiter, according to their accounts, had cohabited with hundreds; the story therefore had nothing in it either new, wonderful, or obscene; it was conformable to the opinions that then prevailed among the people called Gentiles, or mythologists, and it was those people only that believed it. The Jews, who had kept strictly to the belief of one God and no more, and who had always rejected the heathen mythology, never credited the story.

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56 supernatural intervention. "It is, however, necessary to except the declaration which says that God visits the sins of the fathers upon the children. This is contrary to every principle of moral justice."—Paine

It is curious to observe how the theory of what is called the Christian church sprung out of the tail of the heathen mythology. A direct incorporation took place, in the first instance, by making the reputed founder to be celestially begotten. The trinity of gods that then followed was no other than a reduction of the former plurality, which was about twenty or thirty thousand. The statue of Mary succeeded the statue of Diana of Ephesus. The deification of heroes changed into the canonization of saints. The mythologists had gods for everything; the Christian mythologists had saints for everything. The church became as crouded with the one as the pantheon had been with the other; and Rome was the place of both. The Christian theory is little else than the idolatry of the ancient mythologists, accommodated to the purposes of power and revenue; and it yet remains to reason and philosophy to abolish the amphibious fraud.

Nothing that is here said can apply, even with the most distant disrespect, to the real character of Jesus Christ. He was a virtuous and an amiable man. The morality that he preached and practiced was of the most benevolent kind; and though similar systems of morality had been preached by Confucius, and by some of the Greek philosophers, many years before; by the Quakers since, and by many good men in all ages, it has not been exceeded by any.

Jesus Christ wrote no account of himself, of his birth, parentage, or anything else. Not a line of what is called the New Testament is of his writing. The history of him is altogether the work of other people; and as to the account given of his resurrection and ascension, it was the necessary counterpart to the story of his birth. His historians, having brought him into the world in supernatural manner, were obliged to take him out again in the same manner, or the first part of the story must have fallen to the ground.

The wretched contrivance with which this latter part is told exceeds everything that went before it. The first part, that of the miraculous conception, was not a thing that admitted of publicity; and therefore the tellers of this part of the story, had this advantage, that though they might not be credited they could not be detected. They could not be expected to prove it, because it was not one of those things that admitted of proof, and it was impossible that the person of whom it was told could prove it himself.

But the resurrection of a dead person from the grave, and his ascension through the air, is a thing very different, as to the evidence it admits of, to the invisible conception of a child in the womb. The resurrection and ascension, supposing them to have taken place, admitted of public and ocular demonstration, like that of the ascension of a balloon, or the sun at noonday, to all Jerusalem at least. A thing which everybody is required to believe, requires that the proof and evidence of it should be equal to all, and universal; and as the public visibility of this last related act was the only evidence that could give sanction to the former part, the whole of it falls to the ground because that evidence never was given. Instead of this, a small number of persons, not more than eight or nine, are introduced as proxies for the whole world, to say they *saw it,* and all the rest of the world are called upon to believe it. But it appears that Thomas did not believe the resurrection; and, as they say, would not believe without having ocular and manual demonstration himself. *So neither will I;* and the reason is equally as good for me, and for every other person, as for Thomas.

It is in vain to palliate or disguise this matter. The story, so far as relates to the supernatural part, has every mark of fraud and imposition stamped upon the face of it. Who were the authors of it is as impossible for us now to know, as it is for us to be assured that the books in which the account is related were written by the persons whose names they bear. The best surviving evidence we now have respecting this affair is the Jews. They are regularly descended from the people who lived in the times this resurrection and ascension is said to have happened, and they say, *it is not true.* It has long appeared to me a strange inconsistency to cite the Jews as a proof of the truth of the story. It is the same as if a man were to say, I will prove the truth of what I have told you by producing the people who say it is false.

That such a person as Jesus Christ existed, and that he was crucified, which was the mode of execution at that day, are historical relations strictly within the limits of probability. He preached most excellent morality, and the equality of man; but he preached also against the corruptions and avarice of the Jewish priests; and

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8 **Diana of Ephesus,** whose shrine was one of the seven wonders of the ancient world. See Acts 19 • 24 **Confucius,** the Chinese philosopher (551?-478 B.C.) • 64 **Thomas.** See John 20:24-29; whence the epithet, "doubting Thomas"

this brought upon him the hatred and vengeance of the whole order of priest-hood. The accusation which those priests brought against him was that of sedition and conspiracy against the Roman government, to which the Jews were then subject and tributary; and it is not improbable that the Roman government might have some secret apprehension of the effects of his doctrine as well as the Jewish priests; neither is it improbable that Jesus Christ had in contemplation the delivery of the Jewish nation from the bondage of the Romans. Between the two, however, this virtuous reformer and revolutionist lost his life.

It is upon this plain narrative of facts, together with another case I am going to mention, that the Christian mythologists, calling themselves the Christian church, have erected their fable, which for absurdity and extravagance is not exceeded by anything that is to be found in the mythology of the ancients.

The ancient mythologists tell that the race of Giants made war against Jupiter, and that one of them threw an hundred rocks against him at one throw; that Jupiter defeated him with thunder, and confined him afterwards under Mount Etna; and that every time the Giant turns himself, Mount Etna belches fire. It is here easy to see that the circumstance of the mountain, that of its being a volcano, suggested the idea of the fable; and that the fable is made to fit and wind itself up with that circumstance.

The Christian mythologists tell that their Satan made war against the Almighty, who defeated him, and confined him afterwards, not under a mountain, but in a pit. It is here easy to see that the first fable suggested the idea of the second; for the fable of Jupiter and the Giants was told many hundred years before that of Satan.

Thus far the ancient and the Christian mythologists differ very little from each other. But the latter have contrived to carry the matter much farther. They have contrived to connect the fabulous part of the story of Jesus Christ, with the fable originating from Mount Etna; and, in order to make all the parts of the story ty together, they have taken to their aid the tradition of the Jews; for the Christian mythology is made up partly from the ancient mythology and partly from the Jewish traditions.

The Christian mythologists, after having confined Satan in a pit, were obliged to let him out again, to bring on the sequel of the fable. He is then introduced into the garden of Eden in the shape of a snake, or a serpent, and in that shape he enters into familiar conversation with Eve, who is not in any way surprised to hear a snake talk, and the issue of this *tête-à-tête* is, that he persuades her to eat an apple, and the eating of that apple, damns all mankind.

After giving Satan this triumph over the whole creation, one would have supposed that the church mythologists would have been kind enough to send him back again to the pit; or, if they had not done this, that they would have put a mountain upon him (for they say their faith can remove a mountain) or have him put *under* a mountain, as the former mythologists had done, to prevent his getting again among the women and doing more mischief. But instead of this, they leave him at large without even obliging him to give his parole. The secret of which is, that they could not do without him; and after being at the trouble of making him, they bribed him to stay. They promised him ALL the Jews, ALL the Turks by anticipation, nine-tenths of the world beside, and Mahomet into the bargain. After this, who can doubt the bountifulness of the Christian mythology?

Having thus made an insurrection and a battle in heaven, in which none of the combatants could be either killed or wounded—put Satan into the pit—let him out again—given him a triumph over the whole creation—damned all mankind by the eating of an apple, these Christian mythologists bring the two ends of their fable together. They represent this virtuous and amiable man, Jesus Christ, to be at once both God and man, and also the Son of God, celestially begotten on purpose to be sacrificed, because they say, that Eve in her longing had eaten an apple.

Putting aside everything that might excite laughter by its absurdity, or detestation by its prophaneness, and confining ourselves merely to an examination of the parts, it is impossible to conceive a story more derogatory to the Almighty, more inconsistent with his wisdom, more contradictory to his power, than this story is.

In order to make for it a foundation to rise upon, the inventors were under the necessity of giving to the being

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44 Jewish traditions, especially as found in the Cabala, or mystic books of the Jews, some of which are related to the Apocrypha. The idea of Satan is largely non-Biblical

whom they call Satan a power equally as great, if not greater, than they attribute to the Almighty. They have not only given him the power of liberating himself from the pit, after what they call his fall, but they have made that power increase afterwards to infinity. Before this fall, they represent him only as an angel of limited existence, as they represent the rest. After his fall, he becomes, by their account, omnipresent. He exists everywhere, and at the same time. He occupies the whole immensity of space.

Not content with this deification of Satan, they represent him as defeating, by strategem, in the shape of an animal of the creation, all the power and wisdom of the Almighty. They represent him as having compelled the Almighty to the *direct necessity* either of surrendering the whole of the creation to the government and sovereignty of this Satan or of capitulating for its redemption by coming down upon earth and exhibiting himself upon a cross in the shape of a man.

Had the inventors of this story told it the contrary way—that is, had they represented the Almighty as compelling Satan to exhibit *himself* on a cross in the shape of a snake, as a punishment for his new transgression, the story would have been less absurd, less contradictory. But, instead of this, they make the transgressor triumph and the Almighty fall.

That many good men have believed this strange fable, and lived very good lives under that belief (for credulity is not a crime) is what I have no doubt of. In the first place, they were educated to believe it, and they would have believed anything else in the same manner. There are also many who have been so enthusiastically enraptured by what they conceived to be the infinite love of God to man in making a sacrifice of himself, that the vehemence of the idea has forbidden and deterred them from examining into the absurdity and prophaneness of the story. The more unnatural anything is, the more is it capable of becoming the object of dismal admiration.

But if objects for gratitude and admiration are our desire, do they not present themselves every hour to our eyes? Do we not see a fair creation prepared to receive us the instant we were born—a world furnished to our hands that cost us nothing? Is it we that light up the sun, that pour down the rain, and fill the earth with abundance? Whether we sleep or wake the vast machinery of the universe still goes on. Are these things, and the blessings they indicate in future, nothing to us? Can our gross feelings be excited by no other subjects than tragedy and suicide? Or is the gloomy pride of man become so intolerable that nothing can flatter it but the sacrifice of the Creator?

I know that this bold investigation will alarm many, but it would be paying too great a compliment to their credulity to forbear it upon that account. The times and the subject demand it to be done. The suspicion that the theory of what is called the Christian church is fabulous is becoming very extensive in all countries; and it will be a consolation to men staggering under that suspicion, and doubting what to believe and what to disbelieve, to see the subject freely investigated. I therefore pass on to an examination of the books called the Old and the New Testament. . . .

[Most of the remainder of Part I, and a large portion of Part II, here omitted, either display the "true theology" which Paine found in the works of creation, or attack the divine authority of the Bible by citation of conflicting texts and "absurd" stories. His chief argument is that mystery, miracle, and prophecy have been used in all ages to impose priesthood upon mankind. His positive Deism is summarized in the "Conclusion" to Part II, the latter part of which follows.]

Of all the systems of religion that ever were invented, there is none more derogatory to the Almighty, more unedifying to man, more repugnant to reason, and more contradictory in itself, than this thing called Christianity. Too absurd for belief, too impossible to convince, and too inconsistent for practice, it renders the heart torpid or produces only atheists and fanatics. As an engine of power, it serves the purpose of despotism; and as a means of wealth, the avarice of priests; but so far as respects the good of man in general, it leads to nothing here or hereafter.

The only religion that has not been invented, and that has in it every evidence of divine originality, is pure and simple Deism. It must have been the first, and will probably be the last, that man believes. But pure and simple Deism does not answer the purpose of despotic governments. They cannot lay hold of religion as an engine, but by mixing it with human inventions, and making their own authority a part; neither does it answer

the avarice of priests but by incorporating themselves and their functions with it, and becoming, like the government, a party in the system. It is that that forms the otherwise mysterious connection of church and state; the church human, and the state tyrannic.

Were man impressed as fully and strongly as he ought to be with the belief of a God, his moral life would be regulated by the force of that belief; he would stand in awe of God and of himself, and would not do the thing that could not be concealed from either. To give this belief the full opportunity of force, it is necessary that it act alone. This is Deism.

But when, according to the Christian trinitarian scheme, one part of God is represented by a dying man, and another part, called the Holy Ghost, by a flying pigeon, it is impossible that belief can attach itself to such wild conceits.

It has been the scheme of the Christian church, and of all the other invented systems of religion, to hold man in ignorance of the Creator, as it is of government to hold him in ignorance of his rights. The systems of the one are as false as those of the other, and are calculated for mutual support. The study of theology, as it stands for Christian churches, is the study of nothing; it is founded on nothing; it rests on no principles; it proceeds by no authorities, it has no data; it can demonstrate nothing, and admits of no conclusion. Not any thing can be studied as a science without our being in possession of the principles upon which it is founded; and as this is not the case with Christian theology, it is therefore the study of nothing.

Instead, then, of studying theology, as is now done, out of the Bible and Testament, the meanings of which books are always controverted, and the authenticity of which is disproved, it is necessary that we refer to the Bible of the creation. The principles we discover there are eternal, and of divine origin; they are the foundation of all the science that exists in the world, and must be the foundation of theology.

We can know God only through his works. We cannot have a conception of any one attribute but by following some principle that leads to it. We have only a confused idea of his powers if we have not the means of comprehending something of its immensity. We can have no idea of his wisdom but by knowing the order and manner in which it acts. The principles of science lead to this knowledge; for the Creator of man is the Creator of science; and it is through that medium that man can see God, as it were, face to face.

Could a man be placed in a situation, and endowed with the power of vision, to behold at one view, and to contemplate deliberately, the structure of the universe; to mark the movements of the several planets, the cause of their varying appearances, the unerring order in which they revolve, even to the remotest comet; their connection and dependence on each other, and to know the system of laws established by the Creator that governs and regulates the whole; he would then conceive, far beyond what any church theology can teach him, the power, the wisdom, the vastness, the munificence of the Creator. He would then see that all the knowledge man has of science, and that all the mechanical arts by which he renders his situation comfortable here, are derived from that source; his mind, exalted by the scene and convinced by the fact, would increase in gratitude as it increased in knowledge; his religion or his worship would become united with his improvement as a man; any employment he followed that had connection with the principles of the creation, as everything of agriculture, of science, and of the mechanical arts has, would teach him more of God and of the gratitude he owes to him than any theological Christian sermon he now hears.

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17 **wild conceits.** "The book called the book of Matthew says (iii, 16) that the **Holy Ghost descended in the shape of a dove.** It might as well have said a goose; the creatures are equally harmless, and the one is as much a nonsensical lie as the other. Acts ii, 2, 3, says that it descended in a mighty rushing wind, in the shape of cloven tongues; perhaps it was cloven feet. Such absurd stuff is only fit for tales of witches and wizards."—Paine • 31 **the study of nothing.** "The Bible-makers have undertaken to give us, in the first chapter of Genesis, an account of the creation; and in doing this they have demonstrated nothing but their ignorance. They make there to have been three days and three nights, evenings, and mornings, before there was any sun; when it is the presence or absence of the sun that is the cause of day and night—and what is called his rising and setting, that of morning and evening. Besides it is a puerile and pitiful idea to suppose the Almighty to say, 'Let there be light.' It is the imperative manner of speaking that a conjuror uses when he says to his cups and balls, 'Presto! be gone' and most probably has been taken from it, as Moses and his rod are a conjuror and his wand. Longinus calls this expression the sublime; and by the same rule the conjuror is sublime too; for the manner of speaking is expressively and grammatically the same. When authors and critics talk of the sublime, they see not how nearly it borders on the ridiculous. The sublime of the critics, like some parts of Edmund Burke's sublime and beautiful, is like a windmill just visible in a fog, which imagination might distort into a flying mountain, or an archangel, or a flock of wild geese."—Paine

Great objects inspire great thoughts; great munificence excites great gratitude; but the groveling tales and doctrines of the Bible and the Testament are fit only to excite contempt.

Though man cannot arrive, at least in this life, at the actual scene I have described, he can demonstrate it because he has a knowledge of the principles upon which the creation is constructed. We know that the greatest works can be represented in model, and that the universe can be represented by the same means. The same principles by which we measure an inch or an acre of ground will measure to millions in extent. A circle of an inch diameter has the same geometrical properties as a circle that would circumscribe the universe. The same properties of a triangle that will demonstrate upon paper the course of a ship, will do it on the ocean, and, when applied to what are called the heavenly bodies, will ascertain to a minute the time of an eclipse, though those bodies are millions of miles distant from us. This knowledge is of divine origin, and it is from the Bible of the creation that man has learned it, and not from the stupid Bible of the church that teacheth man nothing.

All the knowledge man has of science and of machinery, by the aid of which his existence is rendered comfortable upon earth, and without which he would be scarcely distinguishable in appearance and condition from a common animal, comes from the great machine and structure of the universe. The constant and unwearied observations of our ancestors upon the movements and revolutions of the heavenly bodies, in what are supposed to have been the early ages of the world, have brought this knowledge upon earth. It is not Moses and the prophets nor Jesus Christ, nor his apostles that have done it. The Almighty is the great mechanic of the creation; the first philosopher and original teacher of all science. Let us then learn to reverence our master, and not forget the labor of our ancestors.

Had we, at this day, no knowledge of machinery, and were it possible that man could have a view, as I have before described, of the structure and machinery of the universe, he would soon conceive the idea of constructing some at least of the mechanical works we now have; and the idea so conceived would progressively advance in practice. Or could a model of the universe, such as is called orrery, be presented before him and put in motion, his mind would arrive at the same idea. Such an object and such a subject would, whilst it improved him in knowledge useful to himself as a man and a member of society, as well as entertaining, afford far better matter for impressing him with a knowledge of and a belief in the Creator, and of the reverence and gratitude that a man owes to him, than the stupid texts of the Bible and the Testament, from which, be the talents of the preacher what they may, only stupid sermons can be preached. If man must preach, let him preach something that is edifying, and from the texts that are known to be true.

The Bible of the Creation is inexhaustible in texts. Every part of the science, whether connected with the geometry of the universe, with the systems of animal and vegetable life, or with the properties of inanimate matter, is a text as well for devotion as for philosophy—for gratitude as for human improvement. It will perhaps be said that if such a revolution in the system of religion takes place, every preacher ought to be a philosopher. *Most certainly;* and every house of devotion a school of science.

It has been by wandering from the immutable laws of science and the light of reason, and setting up an invented thing called revealed religion, that so many wild and blasphemous conceits have been formed of the Almighty. The Jews have made him the assassin of the human species, to make room for the religion of the Jews. The Christians have made him the murderer of himself, and the founder of a new religion, to supersede and expel the Jewish religion. And to find pretense and admission for these things, they must have supposed his power or his wisdom imperfect, or his will changeable; and the changeableness of the will is the imperfection of the judgment. The philosopher knows that the laws of the Creator have never changed with respect either to the principles of science or the properties of matter. Why, then, is it to be supposed they have changed with respect to man?

I here close the subject. I have shown in all the foregoing parts of this work that the bible and testament are impositions and forgeries; and I leave the evidence I have produced in proof of it to be refuted, if anyone can do it; and I leave the ideas that are suggested in the conclusion of the work to rest on the mind of the reader; certain, as I am, that when opinions are free, either in matters of government or religion, truth will finally and powerfully prevail.

1793·1794-1795

William Ellery Channing

1780 · 1842

William Ellery Channing entered Harvard College in 1794, just in time to encounter the unrest which was leading to the conservative reaction against the French Revolution. In later years he recalled that the "old foundations of social order, loyalty, tradition, habit, reverence for antiquity, were everywhere shaken, if not subverted. The authority of the past was gone. The old forms were outgrown, and new ones had not taken their place. The tone of books and conversation was presumptuous and daring. The tendency of all classes was to scepticism." That last decade of the eighteenth century was indeed a trying era. In 1796 the Harvard Corporation thought it wise to provide every student with a copy of Richard Watson's *Apology for the Bible,* ablest of the replies to Paine's *The Age of Reason,* and at New Haven Timothy Dwight (p. 450) discoursed to Yale seniors on *The Nature, and Danger, of Infidel Philosophy* (1798). Religion and politics were poised precariously between old ways and new.

Channing gradually emerged as the spokesman for almost every liberal humanitarian doctrine of his age. More intellectual than Dwight, temperamentally averse to controversy, and for the most of his life an invalid, Channing had leadership thrust upon him, the kind of leadership that comes sometimes to studious, thoughtful men who are also unselfish and fearless. Slowly and coolly he spoke out his convictions: that human values and the moral law laid down by God are essentially the same; that personal liberty and absolute freedom of speech are the basis of political health; that slavery and war should be abolished; that the working classes should be protected and educated by the state. Fear of the future, in this world or the next, had no place in his thoughts.

To this position Channing came only gradually. He was born at Newport, Rhode Island, in 1780. After his graduation from Harvard in 1798 he spent a year and a half as a tutor in the home of Daniel Meade Randolph of Richmond, Virginia. There he was disturbed by his glimpses of the institution of slavery but impressed by the political preoccupations of John Marshall and other Virginians. Under their influence he read works he had not encountered at Harvard: modern history, the Deistic writers of the early eighteenth century, and the political radicals—Mary Wollstonecraft, Jean Jacques Rousseau, and William Godwin. When he returned to New England in July 1800, he was, in his quiet way, a perfectionist with a strong sense of social duty.

At Newport and at Cambridge he studied theology with unusual earnestness and independence. In 1803, he was ordained as minister of the Federal Street Church, Boston, where he was soon renowned for his concern with charity and his willingness to bring controversial topics into his pulpit. In 1810, for example, he denounced the military despotism of Napoleon, and in 1812 he spoke out against the declaration of war against England. Self-defense, however, he regarded as a righteous cause, and he stood for resistance when New England was threatened with invasion in 1814.

As early as 1806 Channing was thinking of himself

as a "liberal" Christian, and he probably did not share the concern of the conservative, orthodox Congregationalists when Henry Ware, a Unitarian, was appointed to the Hollis professorship of divinity at Harvard in 1805. Particularly disturbed by a proposal to erect "ecclesiastical tribunals" for the purpose, presumably, of reading the liberals out of the Congregational Church, Channing, in *The System of Exclusion and Denunciation in Religion Considered* (1815), defended the position of the "Liberal Christians," although he did not like that name. By 1819 he was ready to state his doctrine positively, and *Unitarian Christianity* marks the break with the conservative faction. Channing was thereafter the acknowledged leader of a new church. He helped organize the American Unitarian Association in 1825, preached many ordination sermons before Unitarian societies, and was one of the chief contributors to *The Christian Examiner,* which became one of the most influential religious reviews of the period. In its pages appeared such famous essays as "The Moral Argument Against Calvinism" (1820), "Remarks on the Character and Writings of John Milton" (1826), and "The Importance and Means of a National Literature" (1830).

Channing's literary theories, and his anticipation of many of the fundamental positions of the Transcendentalists, are well expressed in a single paragraph from his private journal, composed at about the time of *Unitarian Christianity.* "Good preaching never enraptures an audience by beauties of style, elocution, or gesture," he wrote. "An easy, unbalanced, unlabored style should be the common mode of expression. This will give relief and prominence to more important parts, and insure variety. Composition should resemble nature. Dazzling objects soon fatigue the eye. Simple truth, in plain, perspicuous words, should form the body of the discourse, and all appeals of peculiarly solemnizing, melting, invigorating character should be introduced in the way of transition. By simple truth, staleness and tameness are not meant, for there should always be richness of thought. A sermon should never be a barren sand-level of commonplaces, but a fresh, fertile field, verdant and well watered. In style, as in music, there should be a key, which should change with the topic. Let clearness, dignity, unstrained vigor, elevation without turgidness, purity without primness, pathos without whining, characterize my style. Let me study to be filled with the spirit of the truth I am to utter, and I shall speak as I ought. A slow, distinct, and rather low enunciation should form the ground of delivery. It is better to require exertion on the part of the hearer, than to stun him with clamor."

The Works of William E. Channing, D.D., 6 vols., Boston, 1841-1843 • W. H. Channing, The Life of William Ellery Channing, D.D., Centenary Memorial Edition, Boston, 1880

Unitarian Christianity

Discourse at the Ordination of the Rev. Jared Sparks

The following sermon, delivered at Baltimore in 1819, began a theological controversy in which the chief works were attacks by Moses Stuart and Leonard Woods of the Andover Theological Seminary and defenses by Andrews Norton and Henry Ware of the liberal faction. Jared Sparks (1789-1866), at whose ordination the discourse was delivered, left the Baltimore pulpit in 1823, and later distinguished himself as an editor, historian, and president of Harvard (1849-1853). It will be observed that Channing does not preach directly upon his text, although he retains a systematic method reminiscent of earlier sermons. The simplicity and clarity are typical of all his best work.

1 THES. v. 21: "Prove all things; hold fast that which is good."

The peculiar circumstances of this occasion not only justify, but seem to demand a departure from the course

generally followed by preachers at the introduction of a brother into the sacred office. It is usual to speak of the nature, design, duties, and advantages of the Christian ministry; and on these topics I should now be happy to insist, did I not remember that a minister is to be given this day to a religious society, whose peculiarities of opinion have drawn upon them much remark, and may I not add, much reproach. Many good minds, many sincere Christians, I am aware, are apprehensive that the solemnities of this day are to give a degree of influence to principles which they deem false and injurious. The fears and anxieties of such men I respect; and, believing that they are grounded in part on mistake, I have thought it my duty to lay before you, as clearly as I can, some of the distinguishing opinions of that class of Christians in our country, who are known to sympathize with this religious society. I must ask your patience, for such a subject is not to be despatched in a narrow compass. I must also ask you to remember, that it is impossible to exhibit, in a single discourse, our views of every doctrine of Revelation, much less the differences of opinion which are known to subsist among ourselves. I shall confine myself to topics, on which our sentiments have been misrepresented, or which distinguish us most widely from others. May I not hope to be heard with candor? God deliver us all from prejudice and unkindness, and fill us with the love of truth and virtue.

There are two natural divisions under which my thoughts will be arranged. I shall endeavour to unfold, 1st, The principles which we adopt in interpreting the Scriptures. And 2dly, Some of the doctrines, which the Scriptures, so interpreted, seem to us clearly to express.

I. We regard the Scriptures as the records of God's successive revelations to mankind, and particularly of the last and most perfect revelation of his will by Jesus Christ. Whatever doctrines seem to us to be clearly taught in the Scriptures, we receive without reserve or exception. We do not, however, attach equal importance to all the books in this collection. Our religion, we believe, lies chiefly in the New Testament. The dispensation of Moses, compared with that of Jesus, we consider as adapted to the childhood of the human race, a preparation for a nobler system, and chiefly useful now as serving to confirm and illustrate the Christian Scriptures. Jesus Christ is the only master of Christians, and whatever he taught, either during his personal ministry, or by his inspired Apostles, we regard as of divine authority, and profess to make the rule of our lives.

This authority, which we give to the Scriptures, is a reason, we conceive, for studying them with peculiar care, and for inquiring anxiously into the principles of interpretation, by which their true meaning may be ascertained. The principles adopted by the class of Christians in whose name I speak, need to be explained, because they are often misunderstood. We are particularly accused of making an unwarrantable use of reason in the interpretation of Scripture. We are said to exalt reason above revelation, to prefer our own wisdom to God's. Loose and undefined charges of this kind are circulated so freely, that we think it due to ourselves, and to the cause of truth, to express our views with some particularity.

Our leading principle in interpreting Scripture is this, that the Bible is a book written for men, in the language of men, and that its meaning is to be sought in the same manner as that of other books. We believe that God, when he speaks to the human race, conforms, if we may so say, to the established rules of speaking and writing. How else would the Scriptures avail us more, than if communicated in an unknown tongue?

Now all books, and all conversation, require in the reader or hearer the constant exercise of reason; or their true import is only to be obtained by continual comparison and inference. Human language, you well know, admits various interpretations; and every word and every sentence must be modified and explained according to the subject which is discussed, according to the purposes, feelings, circumstances, and principles of the writer, and according to the genius and idioms of the language which he uses. These are acknowledged principles in the interpretation of human writings; and a man, whose words we should explain without reference to these principles, would reproach us justly with a criminal want of candor, and an intention of obscuring or distorting his meaning.

Were the Bible written in a language and style of

Text: Works, Vol. III, 8th ed., 1848 • 8 much reproach. Unitarianism, although not openly professed by many clergymen, had long been regarded as a dangerous heresy in New England and had been vigorously attacked in The Panoplist since 1815

its own, did it consist of words, which admit but a single sense, and of sentences wholly detached from each other, there would be no place for the principles now laid down. We could not reason about it, as about other writings. But such a book would be of little worth; and perhaps, of all books, the Scriptures correspond least to this description. The Word of God bears the stamp of the same hand, which we see in his works. It has infinite connexions and dependences. Every proposition is linked with others, and is to be compared with others; that its full and precise import may be understood. Nothing stands alone. The New Testament is built on the Old. The Christian dispensation is a continuation of the Jewish, the completion of a vast scheme of providence, requiring great extent of view in the reader. Still more, the Bible treats of subjects on which we receive ideas from other sources besides itself; such subjects as the nature, passions, relations, and duties of man; and it expects us to restrain and modify its language by the known truths, which observation and experience furnish on these topics.

We profess not to know a book, which demands a more frequent exercise of reason than the Bible. In addition to the remarks now made on its infinite connexions, we may observe, that its style nowhere affects the precision of science, or the accuracy of definition. Its language is singularly glowing, bold, and figurative, demanding more frequent departures from the literal sense, than that of our own age and country, and consequently demanding more continual exercise of judgment.—We find, too, that the different portions of this book, instead of being confined to general truths, refer perpetually to the times when they were written, to states of society, to modes of thinking, to controversies in the church, to feelings and usages which have passed away, and without the knowledge of which we are constantly in danger of extending to all times, and places, what was of temporary and local application.—We find, too, that some of these books are strongly marked by the genius and character of their respective writers, that the Holy Spirit did not so guide the Apostles as to suspend the peculiarities of their minds, and that a knowledge of their feelings, and of the influences under which they were placed, is one of the preparations for understanding their writings. With these views of the Bible, we feel it our bounden duty to exercise our reason upon it perpetually, to compare, to infer, to look beyond the letter to the spirit, to seek in the nature of the subject, and the aim of the writer, his true meaning; and, in general, to make use of what is known, for explaining what is difficult, and for discovering new truths. . . .

II. Having thus stated the principles according to which we interpret Scripture, I now proceed to the second great head of this discourse, which is, to state some of the views we derive from that sacred book, particularly those which distinguish us from other Christians.

1. In the first place, we believe in the doctrine of God's UNITY, or that there is one God, and one only. To this truth we give infinite importance, and we feel ourselves bound to take heed, lest any man spoil us of it by vain philosophy. The proposition, that there is one God, seems to us exceedingly plain. We understand by it, that there is one being, one mind, one person, one intelligent agent, and one only, to whom underived and infinite perfection and dominion belong. We conceive, that these words could have conveyed no other meaning to the simple and uncultivated people, who were set apart to be the depositaries of this great truth, and who were utterly incapable of understanding those hairbreadth distinctions between being and person, which the sagacity of later ages has discovered. We find no intimation, that this language was to be taken in an unusual sense, or that God's unity was a quite different thing from the oneness of other intelligent beings. . . .

2. Having thus given our views of the unity of God, I proceed in the second place to observe, that we believe in the unity of Jesus Christ. We believe that Jesus is one mind, one soul, one being, as truly one as we are, and equally distinct from the one God. We complain of the doctrine of the Trinity, that, not satisfied with making God three beings, it makes Jesus Christ two beings, and thus introduces infinite confusion into our conceptions of his character. This corruption of Christianity, alike repugnant to common sense and to the general strain of Scripture, is a remarkable proof of the power of a false philosophy in disfiguring the simple truth of Jesus.

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51 truths. . . . Seven paragraphs, in defense of human reason, are here omitted • **74 intelligent beings. . . .** Six paragraphs, an argument that the Trinitarian doctrine subverts the unity of God, are omitted

According to this doctrine, Jesus Christ, instead of being one mind, one conscious intelligent principle, whom we can understand, consists of two souls, two minds; the one divine, the other human; the one weak, the other almighty; the one ignorant, the other omniscient. Now we maintain, that this is to make Christ two beings. To denominate him one person, one being, and yet to suppose him made up of two minds, infinitely different from each other, is to abuse and confound language, and to throw darkness over all our conceptions of intelligent natures. According to the common doctrine, each of these two minds in Christ has its own consciousness, its own will, its own perceptions. They have, in fact, no common properties. The divine mind feels none of the wants and sorrows of the human, and the human is infinitely removed from the perfection and happiness of the divine. Can you conceive of two beings in the universe more distinct? We have always thought that one person was constituted and distinguished by one consciousness. The doctrine, that one and the same person should have two consciousnesses, two wills, two souls, infinitely different from each other, this we think an enormous tax on human credulity.

We say, that if a doctrine, so strange, so difficult, so remote from all the previous conceptions of men, be indeed a part and an essential part of revelation, it must be taught with great distinctness, and we ask our brethren to point to some plain, direct passage, where Christ is said to be composed of two minds infinitely different, yet constituting one person. We find none. Other Christians, indeed, tell us, that this doctrine is necessary to the harmony of the Scriptures, that some texts ascribe to Jesus Christ human, and others divine properties, and that to reconcile these, we must suppose two minds, to which these properties may be referred. In other words, for the purpose of reconciling certain difficult passages, which a just criticism can in a great degree, if not wholly, explain, we must invent an hypothesis vastly more difficult, and involving gross absurdity. We are to find our way out of a labyrinth, by a clue which conducts us into mazes infinitely more inextricable.

Surely, if Jesus Christ felt that he consisted of two minds, and that this was a leading feature of his religion, his phraseology respecting himself would have been colored by this peculiarity. The universal language of men is framed upon the idea, that one person is one person, is one mind, and one soul; and when the multitude heard this language from the lips of Jesus, they must have taken it in its usual sense, and must have referred to a single soul all which he spoke, unless expressly instructed to interpret it differently. But where do we find this instruction? Where do you meet, in the New Testament, the phraseology which abounds in Trinitarian books, and which necessarily grows from the doctrine of two natures in Jesus? Where does this divine teacher say, "This I speak as God, and this as man; this is true only of human mind, this only of my divine"? Where do we find in the Epistles a trace of this strange phraseology? Nowhere. It was not needed in that day. It was demanded by the errors of a later age.

We believe, then, that Christ is one mind, one being, and, I add, a being distinct from the one God. That Christ is not the one God, not the same being with the Father, is a necessary inference from our former head, in which we saw that the doctrine of three persons in God is a fiction. But on so important a subject, I would add a few remarks. We wish, that those from whom we differ, would weigh one striking fact. Jesus, in his preaching, continually spoke of God. The word was always in his mouth. We ask, does he, by this word, ever mean himself? We say, never. On the contrary, he most plainly distinguishes between God and himself, and so do his disciples. How this is to be reconciled with the idea, that the manifestation of Christ, as God, was a primary object of Christianity, our adversaries must determine.

If we examine the passages in which Jesus is distinguished from God, we shall see, that they not only speak of him as another being, but seem to labor to express his inferiority. He is continually spoken of as the Son of God, sent of God, receiving all his powers from God, working miracles because God was with him, judging justly because God taught him, having claims on our belief, because he was anointed and sealed by God, and as able of himself to do nothing. The New Testament is filled with this language. Now we ask, what impression this language was fitted and intended to make? Could any, who heard it, have imagined that Jesus was the very God to whom he was so industriously declared to be inferior; the very Being by whom he was sent,

and from whom he professed to have received his message and power? Let it here be remembered, that the human birth, and bodily form, and humble circumstances, and mortal sufferings of Jesus, must all have prepared men to interpret, in the most unqualified manner, the language in which his inferiority to God was declared. Why, then, was this language used so continually, and without limitation, if Jesus were the Supreme Deity, and if this truth were an essential part of his religion? I repeat it, the human condition and sufferings of Christ tended strongly to exclude from men's minds the idea of his proper Godhead; and, of course, we should expect to find in the New Testament perpetual care and effort to counteract this tendency, to hold him forth as the same being with his Father, if this doctrine were, as is pretended, the soul and centre of his religion. We should expect to find the phraseology of Scripture cast into the mould of this doctrine, to hear familiarly of God the Son, of our Lord God Jesus, and to be told, that to us there is one God, even Jesus. But, instead of this, the inferiority of Christ pervades the New Testament. It is not only implied in the general phraseology, but repeatedly and decidedly expressed, and unaccompanied with any admonition to prevent its application to his whole nature. Could it, then, have been the great design of the sacred writers to exhibit Jesus as the Supreme God?

I am aware that these remarks will be met by two or three texts, in which Christ is called God, and by a class of passages, not very numerous, in which divine properties are said to be ascribed to him. To these we offer one plain answer. We say, that it is one of the most established and obvious principles of criticism, that language is to be explained according to the known properties of the subject to which it is applied. Every man knows, that the same words convey very different ideas, when used in relation to different beings. Thus, Solomon *built* the temple in a different manner from the architect whom he employed; and God *repents* differently from man. Now we maintain, that the known properties and circumstances of Christ, his birth, sufferings, and death, his constant habit of speaking of God as a distinct being from himself, his praying to God, his ascribing to God all his power and offices, these acknowledged properties of Christ, we say, oblige us to interpret the comparatively few passages which are thought to make him the Supreme God, in a manner consistent with his distinct and inferior nature. It is our duty to explain such texts by the rule which we apply to other texts, in which human beings are called gods, and are said to be partakers of the divine nature, to know and possess all things, and to be filled with all God's fulness. These latter passages we do not hesitate to modify, and restrain, and turn from the most obvious sense, because this sense is opposed to the known properties of the beings to whom they relate; and we maintain, that we adhere to the same principle, and use no greater latitude, in explaining, as we do, the passages which are thought to support the Godhead of Christ.

Trinitarians profess to derive some important advantages from their mode of viewing Christ. It furnishes them, they tell us, with an infinite atonement, for it shows them an infinite being suffering for their sins. The confidence with which this fallacy is repeated astonishes us. When pressed with the question, whether they really believe, that the infinite and unchangeable God suffered and died on the cross, they acknowledge that this is not true, but that Christ's human mind alone sustained the pains of death. How have we, then, an infinite sufferer? This language seems to us an imposition on common minds, and very derogatory to God's justice, as if this attribute could be satisfied by a sophism and a fiction.

We are also told, that Christ is a more interesting object, that his love and mercy are more felt, when he is viewed as the Supreme God, who left his glory to take humanity and to suffer for men. That Trinitarians are strongly moved by this representation, we do not mean to deny; but we think their emotions altogether founded on a misapprehension of their own doctrines. They talk of the second person of the Trinity's leaving his glory and his Father's bosom, to visit and save the world. But this second person, being the unchangeable and infinite God, was evidently incapable of parting with the least degree of his perfection and felicity. At the

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62 **infinite atonement.** The doctrine of the atonement had long been one of the central problems in New England theology and has always led to wide diversity of opinion. Did Christ suffer death on the cross to expiate the sins of the human race or to satisfy the honor of God? The interpretation of the atonement involves one's whole conception of God and of the processes of salvation

moment of his taking flesh, he was as intimately present with his Father as before, and equally with his Father filled heaven, and earth, and immensity. This Trinitarians acknowledge; and still they profess to be touched and overwhelmed by the amazing humiliation of this immutable being! But not only does their doctrine, when fully explained, reduce Christ's humiliation to a fiction, it almost wholly destroys the impressions with which his cross ought to be viewed. According to their doctrine, Christ was comparatively no sufferer at all. It is true, his human mind suffered; but this, they tell us, was an infinitely small part of Jesus, bearing no more proportion to his whole nature, than a single hair of our heads to the whole body, or than a drop to the ocean. The divine mind of Christ, that which was most properly himself, was infinitely happy, at the very moment of the suffering of his humanity. Whilst hanging on the cross, he was the happiest being in the universe, as happy as the infinite Father; so that his pains, compared with his felicity, were nothing. This Trinitarians do, and must, acknowledge. It follows necessarily from the immutableness of the divine nature, which they ascribe to Christ; so that their system, justly viewed, robs his death of interest, weakens our sympathy with his sufferings, and is, of all others, most unfavorable to a love of Christ, founded on a sense of his sacrifices for mankind. We esteem our own views to be vastly more affecting. It is our belief, that Christ's humiliation was real and entire, that the whole Saviour, and not a part of him, suffered, that his crucifixion was a scene of deep and unmixed agony. As we stand round his cross, our minds are not distracted, nor our sensibility weakened, by contemplating him as composed of incongruous and infinitely differing minds, and as having a balance of infinite felicity. We recognize in the dying Jesus but one mind. This, we think, renders his sufferings, and his patience and love in bearing them, incomparably more impressive and affecting than the system we oppose.

3. Having thus given our belief on two great points, namely, that there is one God, and that Jesus Christ is a being distinct from, and inferior to, God, I now proceed to another point, on which we lay still greater stress. We believe in the *moral perfection of God*. We consider no part of theology so important as that which treats of God's moral character; and we value our views of Christianity chiefly as they assert his amiable and venerable attributes.

It may be said, that, in regard to this subject, all Christians agree, that all ascribe to the Supreme Being infinite justice, goodness, and holiness. We reply, that it is very possible to speak of God magnificently, and to think of him meanly; to apply to his person high-sounding epithets, and to his government, principles which make him odious. The Heathens called Jupiter the greatest and the best; but his history was black with cruelty and lust. We cannot judge of men's real ideas of God by their general language, for in all ages they have hoped to soothe the Deity by adulation. We must inquire into their particular views of his purposes, of the principles of his administration, and of his disposition towards his creatures.

We conceive that Christians have generally leaned towards a very injurious view of the Supreme Being. They have too often felt, as if he were raised, by his greatness and sovereignty, above the principles of morality, above those eternal laws of equity and rectitude, to which all other beings are subjected. We believe, that in no being is the sense of right so strong, so omnipotent, as in God. We believe that his almighty power is entirely submitted to his perceptions of rectitude; and this is the ground of our piety. It is not because he is our Creator merely, but because he created us for good and holy purposes; it is not because his will is irresistible, but because his will is the perfection of virtue, that we pay him allegiance. We cannot bow before a being, however great and powerful, who governs tyrannically. We respect nothing but excellence, whether on earth or in heaven. We venerate not the loftiness of God's throne, but the equity and goodness in which it is established.

We believe that God is infinitely good, kind, benevolent, in the proper sense of these words; good in disposition, as well as in act; good, not to a few, but to all; good to every individual, as well as to the general system.

We believe, too, that God is just; but we never forget, that his justice is the justice of a good being, dwelling

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63 injurious . . . Being. The point made here was expanded by Channing in "The Moral Argument Against Calvinism"

in the same mind, and acting in harmony, with perfect benevolence. By this attribute, we understand God's infinite regard to virtue or moral worth, expressed in a moral government; that is, in giving excellent and equitable laws, and in conferring such rewards, and inflicting such punishments, as are best fitted to secure their observance. God's justice has for its end the highest virtue of the creation, and it punishes for this end alone, and thus it coincides with benevolence; for virtue and happiness, though not the same, are inseparably conjoined.

God's justice thus viewed, appears to us to be in perfect harmony with his mercy. According to the prevalent systems of theology, these attributes are so discordant and jarring, that to reconcile them is the hardest task, and the most wonderful achievement, of infinite wisdom. To us they seem to be intimate friends, always at peace, breathing the same spirit, and seeking the same end. By God's mercy, we understand not a blind instinctive compassion, which forgives without reflection, and without regard to the interests of virtue. This, we acknowledge, would be incompatible with justice, and also with enlightened benevolence. God's mercy, as we understand it, desires strongly the happiness of the guilty, but only through their penitence. It has a regard to character as truly as his justice. It defers punishment, and suffers long, that the sinner may return to his duty, but leaves the impenitent and unyielding, to the fearful retribution threatened in God's Word.

To give our views of God in one word, we believe in his Parental character. We ascribe to him, not only the name, but the dispositions and principles of a father. We believe that he has a father's concern for his creatures, a father's desire for their improvement, a father's equity in proportioning his commands to their powers, a father's joy in their progress, a father's readiness to receive the penitent, and a father's justice for the incorrigible. We look upon this world as a place of education, in which he is training men by prosperity and adversity, by aids and obstructions, by conflicts of reason and passion, by motives to duty and temptations to sin, by a various discipline suited to free and moral beings, for union with himself, and for a sublime and ever-growing virtue in heaven.

Now, we object to the systems of religion, which prevail among us, that they are adverse, in a greater or less degree, to these purifying, comforting, and honorable views of God; that they take from us our Father in heaven, and substitute for him a being, whom we cannot love if we would, and whom we ought not to love if we could. We object, particularly on this ground, to that system, which arrogates to itself the name of Orthodoxy, and which is now industriously propagated through our country. This system indeed takes various shapes, but in all it casts dishonor on the Creator. According to its old and genuine form, it teaches, that God brings us into life wholly depraved, so that under the innocent features of our childhood is hidden a nature averse to all good and propense to all evil, a nature which exposes us to God's displeasure and wrath, even before we have acquired power to understand our duties, or to reflect upon our actions. According to a more modern exposition, it teaches, that we came from the hands of our Maker with such a constitution, and are placed under such influences and circumstances, as to render certain and infallible the total depravity of every human being, from the first moment of his moral agency; and it also teaches, that the offence of the child, who brings into life this ceaseless tendency to unmingled crime, exposes him to the sentence of everlasting damnation. Now, according to the plainest principles of morality, we maintain, that a natural constitution of the mind, unfailingly disposing it to evil and to evil alone, would absolve it from guilt; that to give existence under this condition would argue unspeakable cruelty; and that to punish the sin of this unhappily constituted child with endless ruin, would be a wrong unparalleled by the most merciless despotism.

This system also teaches, that God selects from this corrupt mass a number to be saved, and plucks them, by a special influence, from the common ruin; that the rest of mankind, though left without that special grace which their conversion requires, are commanded to repent, under penalty of aggravated woe; and that forgiveness is promised them, on terms which their very constitution infallibly disposes them to reject, and in rejecting which they awfully enhance the punishments of hell. These proffers of forgiveness and exhortations of amendment,

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51 that system, Calvinism

to beings born under a blighting curse, fill our minds with a horror which we want words to express.

That this religious system does not produce all the effects on character, which might be anticipated, we most joyfully admit. It is often, very often, counteracted by nature, conscience, common sense, by the general strain of Scripture, by the mild example and precepts of Christ, and by the many positive declarations of God's universal kindness and perfect equity. But still we think that we see its unhappy influence. It tends to discourage the timid, to give excuses to the bad, to feed the vanity of the fanatical, and to offer shelter to the bad feelings of the malignant. By shocking, as it does, the fundamental principles of morality, and by exhibiting a severe and partial Deity, it tends strongly to pervert the moral faculty, to form a gloomy, forbidding, and servile religion, and to lead men to substitute censoriousness, bitterness, and persecution, for a tender and impartial charity. We think, too, that this system, which begins with degrading human nature, may be expected to end in pride; for pride grows out of a consciousness of high distinctions, however obtained, and no distinction is so great as that which is made between the elected and abandoned of God.

The false and dishonorable views of God, which have now been stated, we feel ourselves bound to resist unceasingly. Other errors we can pass over with comparative indifference. But we ask our opponents to leave to us a GOD, worthy of our love and trust, in whom our moral sentiments may delight, in whom our weaknesses and sorrows may find refuge. We cling to the Divine perfections. We meet them everywhere in creation, we read them in the Scriptures, we see a lovely image of them in Jesus Christ; and gratitude, love, and veneration call on us to assert them. Reproached, as we often are, by men, it is our consolation and happiness, that one of our chief offences is the zeal with which we vindicate the dishonored goodness and rectitude of God.

4. Having thus spoken of the unity of God; of the unity of Jesus, and his inferiority to God; and of the perfections of the Divine character; I now proceed to give our views of the mediation of Christ, and of the purposes of his mission. With regard to the great object which Jesus came to accomplish, there seems to be no possibility of mistake. We believe, that he was sent by the Father to effect a moral, or spiritual deliverance of mankind; that is, to rescue men from sin and its consequences, and to bring them to a state of everlasting purity and happiness. We believe, too, that he accomplishes this sublime purpose by a variety of methods; by his instructions respecting God's unity, parental character, and moral government, which are admirably fitted to reclaim the world from idolatry and impiety, to the knowledge, love, and obedience of the Creator; by his promises of pardon to the penitent, and of divine assistance to those who labor for progress in moral excellence; by the light which he has thrown on the path of duty; by his own spotless example, in which the loveliness and sublimity of virtue shine forth to warm and quicken, as well as guide us to perfection; by his threatenings against incorrigible guilt; by his glorious discoveries of immortality; by his sufferings and death; by that signal event, the resurrection, which powerfully bore witness to his divine mission, and brought down to men's senses a future life; by his continual intercession, which obtains for us spiritual aid and blessings; and by the power with which he is invested of raising the dead, judging the world, and conferring the everlasting rewards promised to the faithful.

We have no desire to conceal the fact, that a difference of opinion exists among us, in regard to an interesting part of Christ's mediation; I mean, in regard to the precise influence of his death on our forgiveness. Many suppose, that this event contributes to our pardon, as it was a principal means of confirming his religion, and of giving it a power over the mind; in other words, that it procures forgiveness by leading to that repentance and virtue, which is the great and only condition on which forgiveness is bestowed. Many of us are dissatisfied with this explanation, and think that the Scriptures ascribe the remission of sins to Christ's death, with an emphasis so peculiar, that we ought to consider this event as having a special influence in removing punishment, though the Scriptures may not reveal the way in which it contributes to this end.

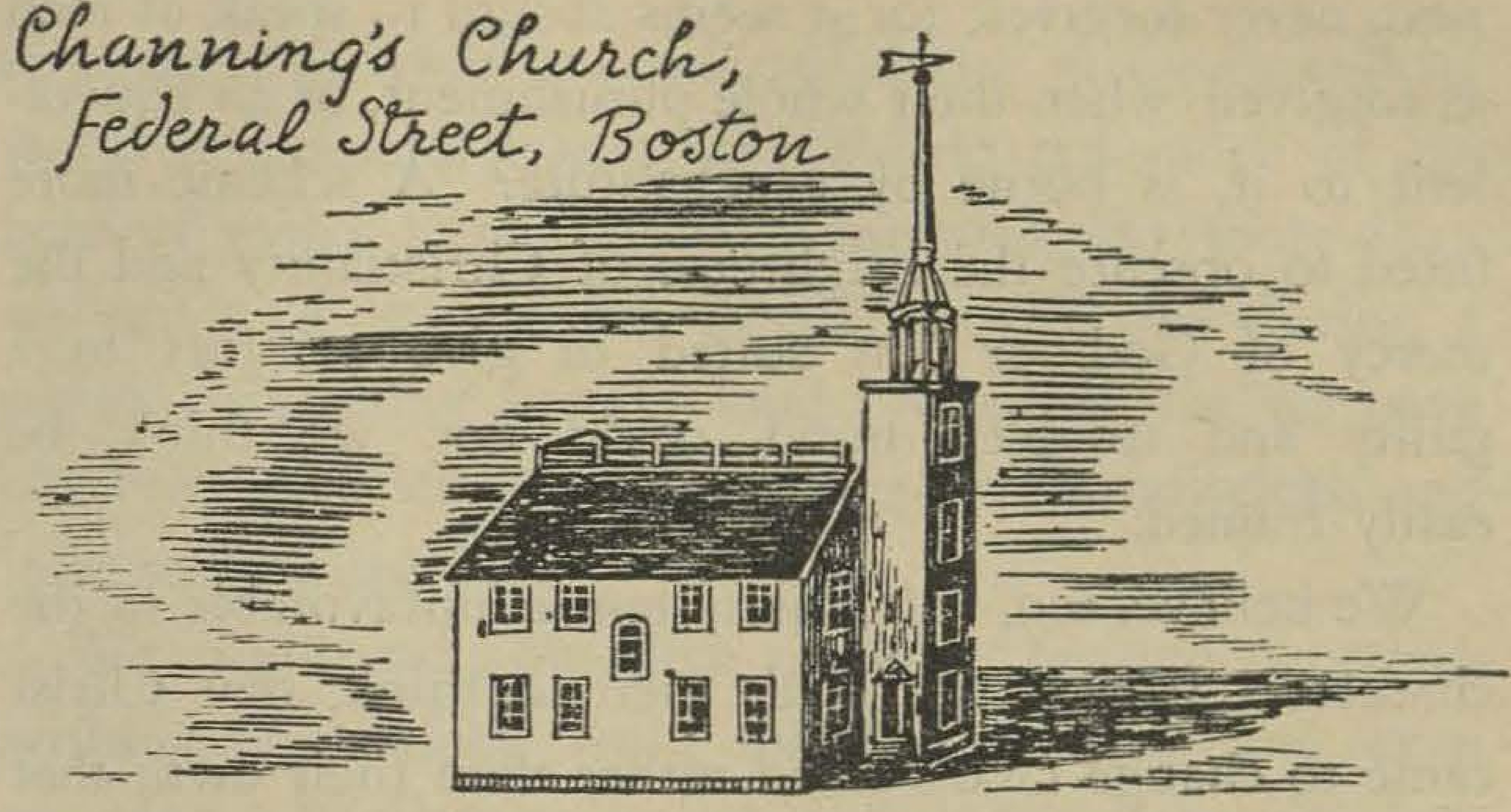
Whilst, however, we differ in explaining the connexion between Christ's death and human forgiveness, a connexion which we all gratefully acknowledge, we agree in rejecting many sentiments which prevail in

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70 **a difference of opinion,** on the doctrine of the atonement

regard to his mediation. The idea, which is conveyed to common minds by the popular system, that Christ's death has an influence in making God placable, or merciful, in awakening his kindness towards men, we reject with strong disapprobation. We are happy to find, that this very dishonorable notion is disowned by intelligent Christians of that class from which we differ. We recollect, however, that, not long ago, it was common to hear of Christ, as having died to appease God's wrath, and to pay the debt of sinners to his inflexible justice; and we have a strong persuasion that the language of popular religious books, and the common mode of stating the doctrine of Christ's mediation, still communicate very degrading views of God's character. They give to multitudes the impression, that the death of Jesus produces a change in the mind of God towards man, and that in this its efficacy chiefly consists. No error seems to us more pernicious. We can endure no shade over the pure goodness of God. We earnestly maintain, that Jesus, instead of calling forth, in any way or degree, the mercy of the Father, was sent by that mercy, to be our Saviour; that he is nothing to the human race, but what he is by God's appointment; that he communicates nothing but what God empowers him to bestow; that our Father in heaven is originally, essentially, and eternally placable, and disposed to forgive; and that his unborrowed, underived, and unchangeable love is the only fountain of what flows to us through his Son. We conceive, that Jesus is dishonored, not glorified, by ascribing to him an influence, which clouds the splendor of Divine benevolence.

We farther agree in rejecting, as unscriptural and absurd, the explanation given by the popular system, of the manner in which Christ's death procures forgiveness for men. This system used to teach as its fundamental principle, that man, having sinned against an infinite Being, has contracted infinite guilt, and is consequently exposed to an infinite penalty. We believe, however, that this reasoning, if reasoning it may be called, which overlooks the obvious maxim, that the guilt of a being must be proportioned to his nature and powers, has fallen into disuse. Still the system teaches, that sin, of whatever degree, exposes to endless punishment, and that the whole human race, being infallibly involved by their nature in sin, owe this awful penalty to the justice of their Creator. It teaches, that this penalty cannot be



remitted, in consistency with the honor of the divine law, unless a substitute be found to endure it or to suffer an equivalent. It also teaches, that, from the nature of the case, no substitute is adequate to this work, save the infinite God himself; and accordingly, God, in his second person, took on him human nature, that he might pay to his own justice the debt of punishment incurred by men, and might thus reconcile forgiveness with the claims and threatenings of his law. Such is the prevalent system. Now, to us, this doctrine seems to carry on its front strong marks of absurdity; and we maintain that Christianity ought not to be encumbered with it, unless it be laid down in the New Testament fully and expressly. We ask our adversaries, then, to point to some plain passages where it is taught. We ask for one text, in which we are told, that God took human nature that he might make an infinite satisfaction to his own justice; for one text, which tells us, that human guilt requires an infinite substitute; that Christ's sufferings owe their efficacy to their being borne by an infinite being; or that his divine nature gives infinite value to the sufferings of the human. Not *one word* of this description can we find in the Scriptures; not a text, which even hints at these strange doctrines. They are altogether, we believe, the fictions of theologians. Christianity is in no degree responsible for them. We are astonished at their prevalence. What can be plainer, than that God cannot, in any sense, be a sufferer, or bear a penalty in the room of his creatures? How dishonorable to him is the supposition, that his justice is now so severe, as to exact infinite punishment for the sins of frail and feeble men, and now so easy and yielding, as to accept the limited pains of Christ's human soul, as a full equivalent for the endless woes due from the world? How plain is it also, according to this doctrine, that God, instead of being plenteous in forgive-

ness, never forgives; for it seems absurd to speak of men as forgiven, when their whole punishment, or an equivalent to it, is borne by a substitute? A scheme more fitted to obscure the brightness of Christianity and the mercy of God, or less suited to give comfort to a guilty and troubled mind, could not, we think, be easily framed.

We believe, too, that this system is unfavorable to the character. It naturally leads men to think, that Christ came to change God's mind rather than their own; that the highest object of his mission was to avert punishment, rather than to communicate holiness; and that a large part of religion consists in disparaging good works and human virtue, for the purpose of magnifying the value of Christ's vicarious sufferings. In this way, a sense of the infinite importance and indispensable necessity of personal improvement is weakened, and high-sounding praises of Christ's cross seem often to be substituted for obedience to his precepts. For ourselves, we have not so learned Jesus. Whilst we gratefully acknowledge, that he came to rescue us from punishment, we believe, that he was sent on a still nobler errand, namely, to deliver us from sin itself, and to form us to a sublime and heavenly virtue. We regard him as a Saviour, chiefly as he is the light, physician, and guide of the dark, diseased, and wandering mind. No influence in the universe seems to us so glorious, as that over the character; and no redemption so worthy of thankfulness, as the restoration of the soul to purity. Without this, pardon, were it possible, would be of little value. Why pluck the sinner from hell, if a hell be left to burn in his own breast? Why raise him to heaven, if he remain a stranger to its sanctity and love? With these impressions, we are accustomed to value the Gospel chiefly as it abounds in effectual aids, motives, excitements to a generous and divine virtue. In this virtue, as in a common centre, we see all its doctrines, precepts, promises meet; and we believe, that faith in this religion is of no worth, and contributes nothing to salvation, any farther than as it uses these doctrines, precepts, promises, and the whole life, character, sufferings, and triumphs of Jesus, as the means of purifying the mind, of changing it into the likeness of his celestial excellence.

5. Having thus stated our views of the highest object of Christ's mission, that it is the recovery of men to virtue, or holiness, I shall now, in the last place, give our views of the nature of Christian virtue, or true holiness. We believe that all virtue has its foundation in the moral nature of man, that is, in conscience, or his sense of duty, and in the power of forming his temper and life according to conscience. We believe that these moral faculties are the grounds of responsibility, and the highest distinctions of human nature, and that no act is praiseworthy, any farther than it springs from their exertion. We believe, that no dispositions infused into us without our own moral activity, are of the nature of virtue, and therefore, we reject the doctrine of irresistible divine influence on the human mind, moulding it into goodness, as marble is hewn into a statue. Such goodness, if this word may be used, would not be the object of moral approbation, any more than the instinctive affections of inferior animals, or the constitutional amiableness of human beings.

By these remarks, we do not mean to deny the importance of God's aid or Spirit; but by his Spirit, we mean a moral, illuminating, and persuasive influence, not physical, not compulsory, not involving a necessity of virtue. We object, strongly, to the idea of many Christians respecting man's impotence and God's irresistible agency on the heart, believing that they subvert our responsibility and the laws of our moral nature, that they make men machines, that they cast on God the blame of all evil deeds, that they discourage good minds, and inflate the fanatical with wild conceits of immediate and sensible inspiration.

Among the virtues, we give the first place to the love of God. We believe, that this principle is the true end and happiness of our being, that we were made for union with our Creator, that his infinite perfection is the only sufficient object and true resting-place for the insatiable desires and unlimited capacities of the human mind, and that, without him, our noblest sentiments, admiration, veneration, hope, and love, would wither and decay. We believe, too, that the love of God is not only essential to happiness, but to the strength and perfection of all the virtues; that conscience, without the sanction of God's authority and retributive justice, would be a weak director; that benevolence, unless nourished by communion with his goodness, and encouraged by his smile, could not thrive amidst the selfishness and thanklessness of the world; and that self-government, without a sense of the divine inspection, would hardly

extend beyond an outward and partial purity. God, as he is essentially goodness, holiness, justice, and virtue, so he is the life, motive, and sustainer of virtue in the human soul.

But, whilst we earnestly inculcate the love of God, we believe that great care is necessary to distinguish it from counterfeits. We think that much which is called piety is worthless. Many have fallen into the error, that there can be no excess in feelings which have God for their object; and, distrusting as coldness that self-possession, without which virtue and devotion lose all their dignity, they have abandoned themselves to extravagances, which have brought contempt on piety. Most certainly, if the love of God be that which often bears its name, the less we have of it the better. If religion be the shipwreck of understanding, we cannot keep too far from it. On this subject, we always speak plainly. We cannot sacrifice our reason to the reputation of zeal. We owe it to truth and religion to maintain, that fanaticism, partial insanity, sudden impressions, and ungovernable transports, are any thing rather than piety.

We conceive, that the true love of God is a moral sentiment, founded on a clear perception, and consisting in a high esteem and veneration, of his moral perfections. Thus, it perfectly coincides, and is in fact the same thing, with the love of virtue, rectitude, and goodness. You will easily judge, then, what we esteem the surest and only decisive signs of piety. We lay no stress on strong excitements. We esteem him, and him only a pious man, who practically conforms to God's moral perfections and government; who shows his delight in God's benevolence, by loving and serving his neighbour; his delight in God's justice, by being resolutely upright; his sense of God's purity, by regulating his thoughts, imagination, and desires; and whose conversation, business, and domestic life are swayed by a regard to God's presence and authority. In all things else men may deceive themselves. Disordered nerves may give them strange sights, and sounds, and impressions. Texts of Scripture may come to them as from Heaven. Their whole souls may be moved, and their confidence in God's favor be undoubting. But in all this there is no religion. The question is, Do they love God's commands, in which his character is fully expressed, and give up to these their habits and passions? Without this, ecstasy is a mockery. One surrender of desire to God's will, is worth a thousand transports. We do not judge of the bent of men's minds by their raptures, any more than we judge of the natural direction of a tree during a storm. We rather suspect loud profession, for we have observed, that deep feeling is generally noiseless, and least seeks display.

We would not, by these remarks, be understood as wishing to exclude from religion warmth, and even transport. We honor, and highly value, true religious sensibility. We believe, that Christianity is intended to act powerfully on our whole nature, on the heart as well as the understanding and the conscience. We conceive of heaven as a state where the love of God will be exalted into an unbounded fervor and joy; and we desire, in our pilgrimage here, to drink into the spirit of that better world. But we think, that religious warmth is only to be valued, when it springs naturally from an improved character, when it comes unforced, when it is the recompense of obedience, when it is the warmth of a mind which understands God by being like him, and when, instead of disordering, it exalts the understanding, invigorates conscience, gives a pleasure to common duties, and is seen to exist in connexion with cheerfulness, judiciousness, and a reasonable frame of mind. When we observe a fervor, called religious, in men whose general character expresses little refinement and elevation, and whose piety seems at war with reason, we pay it little respect. We honor religion too much to give its sacred name to a feverish, forced, fluctuating zeal, which has little power over the life.

Another important branch of virtue, we believe to be love to Christ. The greatness of the work of Jesus, the spirit with which he executed it, and the sufferings which he bore for our salvation, we feel to be strong claims on our gratitude and veneration. We see in nature no beauty to be compared with the loveliness of his character, nor do we find on earth a benefactor to whom we owe an equal debt. We read his history with delight, and learn from it the perfection of our nature. We are

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29 We . . . excitements. Late in life, asked whether or not he had ever experienced conversion, Channing replied, "I should say not, unless the whole of my life may be called, as it truly has been a process of conversion." He merits comparison in this respect with Edwards, Chauncy, and Cartwright (see pp. 159-184, 184-188, 430-435)

particularly touched by his death, which was endured for our redemption, and by that strength of charity which triumphed over his pains. His resurrection is the foundation of our hope of immortality. His intercession gives us boldness to draw nigh to the throne of grace, and we look up to heaven with new desire, when we think, that, if we follow him here, we shall there see his benignant countenance, and enjoy his friendship for ever.

I need not express to you our views on the subject of the benevolent virtues. We attach such importance to these, that we are sometimes reproached with exalting them above piety. We regard the spirit of love, charity, meekness, forgiveness, liberality, and beneficence, as the badge and distinction of Christians, as the brightest image we can bear of God, as the best proof of piety. On this subject, I need not, and cannot enlarge; but there is one branch of benevolence which I ought not to pass over in silence, because we think that we conceive of it more highly and justly than many of our brethren. I refer to the duty of candor, charitable judgment, especially towards those who differ in religious opinion. We think, that in nothing have Christians so widely departed from their religion, as in this particular. We read with astonishment and horror, the history of the church; and sometimes when we look back on the fires of persecution, and on the zeal of Christians, in building up walls of separation, and in giving up one another to perdition, we feel as if we were reading the records of an infernal, rather than a heavenly kingdom. An enemy to every religion, if asked to describe a Christian, would, with some show of reason, depict him as an idolater of his own distinguishing opinions, covered with badges of party, shutting his eyes on the virtues, and his ears on the arguments, of his opponents, arrogating all excellence to his own sect and all saving power to his own creed, sheltering under the name of pious zeal the love of domination, the conceit of infallibility, and the spirit of intolerance, and trampling on men's rights under the pretence of saving their souls.

We can hardly conceive of a plainer obligation on beings of our frail and fallible nature, who are instructed in the duty of candid judgment, than to abstain from condemning men of apparent conscientiousness and sincerity, who are chargeable with no crime but that of differing from us in the interpretation of the Scriptures, and differing, too, on topics of great and acknowledged obscurity. We are astonished at the hardihood of those, who, with Christ's warnings sounding in their ears, take on them the responsibility of making creeds for his church, and cast out professors of virtuous lives for imagined errors, for the guilt of thinking for themselves. We know that zeal for truth is the cover for this usurpation of Christ's prerogative; but we think that zeal for truth, as it is called, is very suspicious, except in men, whose capacities and advantages, whose patient deliberation, and whose improvements in humility, mildness, and candor, give them a right to hope that their views are more just than those of their neighbors. Much of what passes for a zeal for truth, we look upon with little respect, for it often appears to thrive most luxuriantly where other virtues shoot up thinly and feebly; and we have no gratitude for those reformers, who would force upon us a doctrine which has not sweetened their own tempers, or made them better men than their neighbours.

We are accustomed to think much of the difficulties attending religious inquiries; difficulties springing from the slow development of our minds, from the power of early impressions, from the state of society, from human authority, from the general neglect of the reasoning powers, from the want of just principles of criticism and of important helps in interpreting Scripture, and from various other causes. We find, that on no subject have men, and even good men, ingrafted so many strange conceits, wild theories, and fictions of fancy, as on religion; and remembering, as we do, that we ourselves are sharers of the common frailty, we dare not assume infallibility in the treatment of our fellow-Christians, or encourage in common Christians, who have little time for investigation, the habit of denouncing and contemning other denominations, perhaps more enlightened and virtuous than their own. Charity, forbearance, a delight in the virtues of different sects, a backwardness to censure and condemn, these are virtues, which, however poorly practised by us, we admire and recommend; and we would rather join ourselves to the church in which they abound, than to any other communion, however elated with the belief of its own orthodoxy, however strict in guarding its creed, however burning with zeal against imagined error.

I have thus given the distinguishing views of those Christians in whose names I have spoken. We have embraced this system, not hastily or lightly, but after

much deliberation; and we hold it fast, not merely because we believe it to be true, but because we regard it as purifying truth, as a doctrine according to godliness, as able to "work mightily" and to "bring forth fruit" in them who believe. That we wish to spread it, we have no desire to conceal; but we think, that we wish its diffusion, because we regard it as more friendly to practical piety and pure morals than the opposite doctrines, because it gives clearer and nobler views of duty, and stronger motives to its performance, because it recommends religion at once to the understanding and the heart, because it asserts the lovely and venerable attributes of God, because it tends to restore the benevolent spirit of Jesus to his divided and afflicted church, and because it cuts off every hope of God's favor, except that which springs from practical conformity to the life and precepts of Christ. We see nothing in our views to give offence, save their purity, and it is their purity which makes us seek and hope their extension through the world.

My friend and brother;—You are this day to take upon you important duties; to be clothed with an office, which the Son of God did not disdain; to devote yourself to that religion, which the most hallowed lips have preached, and the most precious blood sealed. We trust that you will bring to this work a willing mind, a firm purpose, a martyr's spirit, a readiness to toil and suffer for the truth, a devotion of your best powers to the interests of piety and virtue. I have spoken of the doctrines which you will probably preach; but I do not mean, that you are to give yourself to controversy. You will remember, that good practice is the end of preaching, and will labor to make your people holy livers, rather than skilful disputants. Be careful, lest the desire of defending what you deem truth, and of repelling reproach and misrepresentation, turn you aside from your great business, which is to fix in men's minds a living conviction of the obligation, sublimity, and happiness of Christian virtue. The best way to vindicate your sentiments, is to show, in your preaching and life, their intimate connexion with Christian morals, with a high and delicate sense of duty, with candor towards your opposers, with inflexible integrity, and with an habitual reverence for God. If any light can pierce and scatter the clouds of prejudice, it is that of a pure example. My brother, may your life preach more loudly than your lips. Be to this people a pattern of all good works, and may your instructions derive authority from a well-grounded belief in your hearers, that you speak from the heart, that you preach from experience, that the truth which you dispense has wrought powerfully in your own heart, that God, and Jesus, and heaven, are not merely words on your lips, but most affecting realities to your mind, and springs of hope and consolation, and strength, in all your trials. Thus laboring, may you reap abundantly, and have a testimony of your faithfulness, not only in your own conscience, but in the esteem, love, virtues, and improvements of your people.

To all who hear me, I would say, with the Apostle, Prove all things, hold fast that which is good. Do not, brethren, shrink from the duty of searching God's Word for yourselves, through fear of human censure and denunciation. Do not think, that you may innocently follow the opinions which prevail around you, without investigation, on the ground, that Christianity is now so purified from errors, as to need no laborious research. There is much reason to believe, that Christianity is at this moment dishonored by gross and cherished corruptions. If you remember the darkness which hung over the Gospel for ages; if you consider the impure union, which still subsists in almost every Christian country, between the church and state, and which enlists men's selfishness and ambition on the side of established error; if you recollect in what degree the spirit of intolerance has checked free inquiry, not only before, but since the Reformation; you will see that Christianity cannot have freed itself from all the human inventions, which disfigured it under the Papal tyranny. No. Much stubble is yet to be burned; more rubbish to be removed; many gaudy decorations, which a false taste has hung around Christianity, must be swept away; and the earth-born fogs, which have long shrouded it, must be scattered, before this divine fabric will rise before us in its native and awful majesty, in its harmonious proportions, in its mild and celestial splendors. This glorious reformation in the church, we hope, under God's blessing, from the progress of the human intellect, from the moral progress of society, from the consequent decline of prejudice and bigotry, and, though last not least, from the subversion of human authority in matters of religion, from the fall of those hierarchies, and other

human institutions, by which the minds of individuals are oppressed under the weight of numbers, and a Papal dominion is perpetuated in the Protestant church. Our earnest prayer to God is, that he will overturn, and overturn, and overturn the strongholds of spiritual usurpation, until HE shall come, whose right it is to rule the minds of men; that the conspiracy of ages against the liberty of Christians may be brought to an end; that the servile assent, so long yielded to human creeds, may give place to honest and devout inquiry into the Scriptures; and that Christianity, thus purified from error, may put forth its almighty energy, and prove itself, by its ennobling influence on the mind, to be indeed "the power of God unto salvation."

1819

Peter Cartwright

1785 · 1872

About 1800, thanks to the camp meeting, an ingenious new method of bringing religion to the sparsely settled frontier, eastern Tennessee and Kentucky felt the first effects of a great religious revival. In the next few years it attained enormous proportions and probably had a greater effect upon the religious life of America than did the "Great Awakening" (see pp. 19-20) sixty years earlier. In tumultuous open-air gatherings, marked by "jerks," "shouting," and other obvious signs of emotional release, what was then the West adopted by acclamation an evangelical faith in which there was much excitement and little subtlety. It dramatized the good life as open battle with sin—drinking, fighting, vice, and unbelief; it promised the repentant sinner rewards appropriate to good behavior.

From the new demand that religion should be exciting and dramatic the Methodists profited most, because they perfected an organization which was the quintessence of drama—the circuit-rider system. Peter Cartwright, perhaps the most colorful of the circuit riders, was converted to Methodism in 1801. He was then a large-framed and spirited sixteen-year-old, uneducated except in the wiles of card-playing and dance steps. Born in Virginia, he had moved with his family to Kentucky when he was five and had grown up in Logan County, near the Tennessee border. Physically powerful, quick-witted, and, after his conversion, naïvely certain of what was good and what was evil, he was soon a preacher made for his time and place. "I do not wish," he wrote in later life, "to undervalue education, but really I have seen so many of these educated preachers who forcibly reminded me of lettuce growing under the shade of a peach-tree, or like a gosling that had got the straddles by wading in the dew, that I turn away sick and faint." Like many of his fellow workers and successors, Cartwright was a believer in direct methods when sweet persuasion failed; he could fight guile with guile, but he rather enjoyed using his fists. "In general," he once remarked, "I have made it a rule not to back down to the devil or his imps, whether he appears in male or female form."

From the time he was eighteen Cartwright traveled

his appointed circuit, in Tennessee or Ohio or Kentucky. In 1824, distressed by slavery, he asked to be transferred to Illinois, where he was a leader in his church and in politics for nearly fifty years. Twice he was elected to the state legislature; in 1846 he was defeated in a campaign for election to the national House of Representatives by an "infidel" opponent, Abraham Lincoln. Methodism he defined as the preaching of the gospel by itinerant preachers, and he distrusted any move toward a settled ministry and any apparent desertion of the Bible. Doctrinally he was unimportant, although he occasionally attacked the theology of competing denominations, notably in a famous letter "To the Right Honorable, the Devil," whom he pictures as enjoying the predestinarian preaching of the Presbyterians. In practical religion or morality, however, he was a guiding light, famous for his shrewdness and his mother wit. His writing, although far from polished, is direct, vivid, and dramatic.

Autobiography of Peter Cartwright, the Backwoods Preacher, ed. W. P. Strickland, New York, 1856 • Fifty Years as a Presiding Elder, ed. Rev. W. S. Hooper, Cincinnati, 1871

From the *Autobiography*

Cartwright's autobiography is a long, ill-organized, often ungrammatical book, in which anecdotes are inserted with little apparent art. In the Preface he expressed his regret that he had not kept a journal, as he had once started to do, and thus avoided many imperfections and inaccuracies. Nevertheless, his account of his experiences very probably retains the qualities which made his sermons famous, especially his flair for effective illustration and his use of dialogue, suspense, and climax.

At the close of this conference year, 1806, I met the Kentucky preachers at Lexington, and headed by William Burke, about twenty of us started for conference, which was held in East Tennessee, at Ebenezer Church, Nollichuckie, September 15th. Our membership had increased to twelve thousand six hundred and seventy; our net increase was about eight hundred.

This year another presiding-elder district was added to the Western Conference, called the Mississippi District. The number of our traveling preachers increased from thirty-eight to forty-nine. Bishop Asbury attended the Conference. There were thirteen of us elected and ordained deacons. According to the printed Minutes, this was placed in 1807, but it was in the fall of 1806. Two years before there were eighteen of us admitted on trial; that number, in this short space of time, had fallen to thirteen; the other five were discontinued at their own request, or from sickness, or were reduced to suffering circumstances, and compelled to desist from traveling for want of the means of support.

I think I received about forty dollars this year, but many of our preachers did not receive half that amount. These were hard times in those Western wilds; *many*, very *many*, pious and useful preachers, were literally starved into a location. I do not mean that they were starved for want of food; for although it was rough, yet the preachers generally got enough to eat. But they did not generally receive in a whole year money enough to get them a suit of clothes; and if people, and preachers too, had not dressed in home-spun clothing, and the good

Text: the edition of 1856, edited by W. P. Strickland • 2 **William Burke** (1770-1855), first secretary of the Western Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church, 1800-1811 • 5 **Nollichuckie**, a river and settlement in the present Greene County, east of Knoxville • 11 **Bishop Asbury**, Francis Asbury (1745-1816), the chief organizer of the Methodist Church in America

sisters had not made and presented their preachers with clothing, they generally must retire from itinerant life, and go to work and clothe themselves. Money was very scarce in the country at this early day, but some of the best men God ever made, breasted the storms, endured poverty, and triumphantly planted Methodism in this Western world.

When we were ordained deacons at this Conference, Bishop Asbury presented me with a parchment certifying my ordination in the following words, namely:

"Know all by these presents, That I, Francis Asbury, *Bishop of the Methodist Episcopal Church* in America, under the protection of Almighty God, and with a single eye to his glory, by the imposition of my hands and prayer, have this day set apart Peter Cartwright for the office of a DEACON in the said Methodist Episcopal Church; a man whom I judge to be well qualified for that work; and do hereby recommend him to all whom it may concern, as a proper person to administer the ordinances of baptism, marriage, and the burial of the dead, in the absence of an elder, and to feed the flock of Christ, so long as his spirit and practice are such as become the Gospel of Christ, and he continueth to hold fast the form of sound words, according to the established doctrine of the Gospel.

"In testimony whereof, I have hereunto set my hand and seal this sixteenth day of September, in the year of our Lord one thousand eight hundred and six.

"FRANCIS ASBURY."

I had traveled from Zanesville, in Ohio, to East Tennessee to conference, a distance of over five hundred miles; and when our appointments were read out, I was sent to Marietta Circuit, almost right back, but still further east. Marietta was at the mouth of the Muskingum River, where it emptied into the Ohio. The circuit extended along the north bank of the Ohio, one hundred and fifty miles, crossed over the Ohio River, at the mouth of the Little Kanawha, and up that stream to Hughes River, then east to Middle Island. I suppose it was three hundred miles round. I had to cross the Ohio River four times every round.

It was a poor and hard circuit at that time. Marietta and the country round were settled at an early day by a colony of Yankees. At the time of my appointment I had never seen a Yankee, and I had heard dismal stories about them. It was said they lived almost entirely on pumpkins, molasses, fat meat, and bohea tea; moreover, that they could not bear loud and zealous sermons, and they had brought on their learned preachers with them, and they read their sermons, and were always criticising us poor backwoods preachers. When my appointment was read out, it distressed me greatly. I went to Bishop Asbury and begged him to supply my place, and let me go home. The old father took me in his arms, and said,

"O no, my son; go in the name of the Lord. It will make a man of you."

Ah, thought I, if this is the way to make men, I do not want to be a man. I cried over it bitterly, and prayed too. But on I started, cheered by my presiding elder, Brother J. Sale. If ever I saw hard times, surely it was this year; yet many of the people were kind, and treated me friendly. I had hard work to keep soul and body together. The first Methodist house I came to, I found the brother a Universalist. I crossed over the Muskingum River to Marietta. The first Methodist family I stopped with there, the lady was a member of the Methodist Episcopal Church, but a thorough Universalist. She was a thin-faced, Roman-nosed, loquacious Yankee, glib on the tongue, and you may depend on it, I had a hard race to keep up with her, though I found it a good school, for it set me to reading my Bible. And here permit me to say, of all the isms that I ever heard of, they were here. These descendants of the Puritans were generally educated, but their ancestors were rigid predestinarians; and as they were sometimes favored with a little light on their moral powers, and could just "see men as trees walking," they jumped into Deism, Universalism, Unitarianism, etc., etc. I verily believe it was the best school I ever entered. They waked me up on all sides; Methodism was feeble, and I had to battle or run, and I resolved on the former.

There was here in Marietta a preacher by the name of A. Sargent; he had been a Universalist preacher, but finding such a motley gang, as I have above mentioned, he thought (and thought correctly too) that they were proper subjects for his imposture. Accordingly, he as-

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47 bohea tea, black tea • **64 Universalist,** a believer in the doctrine that all men will eventually repent of their sins, and so all will be saved. Individuals of many denominations (Charles Chauncy, for example) leaned toward this doctrine in the late eighteenth century; after 1779, separate Universalist churches were established in America

sumed the name of Halcyon Church, and proclaimed himself the millennial messenger. He professed to see visions, fall into trances, and to converse with angels. His followers were numerous in the town and country. The Presbyterian and Congregational ministers were afraid of him. He had men preachers and women preachers. The Methodists had no meeting-house in Marietta. We had to preach in the court-house when we could get a chance. We battled pretty severely. The Congregationalists opened their Academy for me to preach in. I prepared myself, and gave battle to the Halcyons. This made a mighty commotion. In the meantime we had a camp-meeting in the suburbs of Marietta. Brother Sale, our presiding elder, was there. Mr. Sargent came, and hung around and wanted to preach, but Brother Sale never noticed him. I have said before that he professed to go into trances and have visions. He would swoon away, fall, and lay a long time; and when he would come to, he would tell what mighty things he had seen and heard.



On Sunday night, at our camp-meeting, Sargent got some powder, and lit a cigar, and then walked down to the bank of the river, one hundred yards, where stood a large stump. He put his powder on the stump, and touched it with his cigar. The flash of the powder was seen by many at the camp; at least the light. When the powder flashed, down fell Sargent; there he lay a good while. In the meantime, the people found him lying there, and gathered around him. At length he came to, and said he had a message from God to us Methodists. He said God had come down to him in a flash of light, and he fell under the power of God, and thus received his vision.

Seeing so many gathered around him there, I took a light, and went down to see what was going on. As soon as I came near the stump, I smelled the sulphur of the powder; and stepping up to the stump, there was clearly the sign of powder, and hard by lay the cigar with which he had ignited it. He was now busy delivering his message. I stepped up to him, and asked him if an angel had appeared to him in that flash of light.

He said, "Yes."

Said I, "Sargent, did not that angel smell of brimstone?"

"Why," said he, "do you ask me such a foolish question?"

"Because," said I, "if an angel has spoken to you at all, he was from the lake that burneth with fire and brimstone!" and raising my voice, I said, "I smell sulphur now!" I walked up to the stump, and called on the people to come and see for themselves. The people rushed up, and soon saw through the trick, and began to abuse Sargent for a vile imposter. He soon left, and we were troubled no more with him or his brimstone angels.

I will beg leave to remark here, that while I was battling successfully against the Halcyons, I was treated with great respect by the Congregational minister and his people, and the Academy was always open for me to preach in; but as soon as I triumphed over and vanquished them, one of the elders of the Congregational Church waited on me, and informed me that it was not convenient for me to preach any more in their Academy. I begged the privilege to make one more appointment in the Academy, till I could get some other place to preach in. This favor, as it was only one more time, was granted.

I then prepared myself; and when my appointed day rolled around, the house was crowded; and I leveled my whole Arminian artillery against their Calvinism; and challenged their minister, who was present, to public debate; but he thought prudence the better part of valor, and declined. This effort secured me many friends, and some persecution; but my way was opened, and we raised a little class, and had a name among the living.

I will here mention a special case of wild fanaticism

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2 **millennial**, pertaining to the thousand years of Satan's bondage mentioned in Revelation 20. The pertinent verse is the sixth: "Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection: on such the second death hath no power, but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with him a thousand years" • 70 **Arminian.** See p. 15

that took place with one of these Halcyon preachers while I was on this circuit. He worked himself up into the belief that he could live so holy in this life, that his animal nature would become immortal, and that he would never die; and he conceived that he had gained this immortality, and could live without eating. In despite of all arguments and persuasion of his friends, he refused to eat or drink. He stood it sixteen days and nights, and then died a suicidal death. His death put a stop to this foolish delusion, and threw a damper over the whole Halcyon fanaticism.

I will here state something like the circumstances I found myself in, at the close of my labors on this hard circuit. I had been from my father's house about three years; was five hundred miles from my home; my horse had gone blind; my saddle was worn out; my bridle reins had been eaten up and replaced, (after a sort) at least a dozen times; and my clothes had been patched till it was difficult to detect the original. I had concluded to try to make my way home, and get another outfit. I was in Marietta, and had just seventy-five cents in my pocket. How I would get home and pay my way I could not tell.

But it was of no use to parley about it; go I must, or do worse; so I concluded to go as far as I could, and then stop and work for more means, till I got home. I had some few friends on the way, but not many; so I cast ahead.

My first day's travel was through my circuit. At about thirty-five miles' distance there lived a brother, with whom I intended to stay all night. I started, and late in the evening, within five miles of my stopping-place, fell in with a widow lady, not a member of the Church, who lived several miles off my road. She had attended my appointments in that settlement all the year. After the usual salutations, she asked me if I was leaving the circuit.

I told her I was, and had started for my father's.

"Well," said she, "how are you off for money? I expect you have received but little on this circuit."

I told her I had but seventy-five cents in the world. She invited me home with her, and told me she would give me a little to help me on. But I told her I had my places fixed to stop every night till I got to Maysville; and if I went home with her, it would derange all my stages, and throw me among strangers. She then handed me a dollar, saying it was all she had with her, but if I would go home with her she would give me more. I declined going with her, thanked her for the dollar, bade her farewell, moved on, and reached my lodging-place.

By the time I reached the Ohio River, opposite Maysville, my money was all gone. I was in trouble about how to get over the river, for I had nothing to pay my ferriage.

I was acquainted with Brother J. Armstrong, a merchant in Maysville, and concluded to tell the ferryman that I had no money, but if he would ferry me over, I could borrow twenty-five cents from Armstrong, and would pay him. Just as I got to the bank of the river he landed, on my side, with a man and a horse; and when the man reached the bank, I saw it was Colonel M. Shelby, brother to Governor Shelby, of Kentucky. He was a lively exhorter in the Methodist Episcopal Church, and an old acquaintance and neighbor of my father's.

When he saw me he exclaimed:

"Peter! is that you?"

"Yes, Moses," said I, "what little is left of me."

"Well," said he, "from your appearance you must have seen hard times. Are you trying to get home?"

"Yes," I answered.

"How are you off for money, Peter?" said he.

"Well, Moses," said I, "I have not a cent in the world."

"Well," said he, "here are three dollars, and I will give you a bill of the road and a letter of introduction till you get down into the barrens, at the Pilot Knobb."

You may be sure my spirits greatly rejoiced. So I passed on very well for several days and nights on the colonel's money and credit, but when I came to the first tavern beyond the Pilot Knobb my money was out. What to do I did not know, but I rode up and asked for quarters. I told the landlord I had no money; had been three years from home, and was trying to get back to my father's. I also told him I had a little old watch, and a few good books in my saddle-bags, and I would compensate him in some way. He bade me alight and be easy.

On inquiry I found this family had lived here from an early day, totally destitute of the Gospel and all re-

62 Governor Shelby, Isaac Shelby (1750-1826), first governor of Kentucky, 1792-1796

ligious privileges. There were three rooms in this habitation, below—the dining-room, and a back bedroom, and the kitchen. The kitchen was separated from the other lower rooms by a thin, plank partition, set up on an end; and the planks had shrunk and left considerable cracks between them.

When we were about to retire to bed, I asked the landlord if he had any objection to our praying before we laid down. He said, "None at all;" and stepped into the kitchen, as I supposed, to bring in the family. He quickly returned with a candle in his hand, and said, "Follow me." I followed into the back bedroom. Whereupon he set down the candle, and bade me good night, saying, "There, you can pray as much as you please."

I stood, and felt foolish. He had completely ousted me; but it immediately occurred to me that I would kneel down and pray with full and open voice; so down I knelt, and commenced praying audibly. I soon found, from the commotion created in the kitchen, that they were taken by surprise as much as I had been. I distinctly heard the landlady say, "He is crazy, and will kill us all this night. Go, husband, and see what is the matter." But he was slow to approach; and when I ceased praying he came in, and asked me what was the cause of my acting in this strange way. I replied, "Sir, did you not give me the privilege to pray as much as I pleased?" "Yes," said he, "but I did not expect you would pray out." I told him I wanted the family to hear prayer, and as he had deprived me of that privilege, I knew of no better way to accomplish my object than to do as I had done, and I hoped he would not be offended.

I found he thought me deranged, but we fell into a free conversation on the subject of religion, and, I think, I fully satisfied him that I was not beside myself, but spoke forth the words of truth with soberness.

Next morning I rose early, intending to go fifteen miles to an acquaintance for breakfast, but as I was getting my horse out of the stable the landlord came out, and insisted that I should not leave till after breakfast. I yielded, but he would not have anything for my fare, and urged me to call on him if ever I traveled that way again. I will just say here, that in less than six months I called on this landlord, and he and his lady were happily converted, dating their conviction from the extraordinary circumstances of the memorable night I spent with them.

I found other friends on my journey till I reached Hopkinsville, Christian County, within thirty miles of my father's, and I had just six and a quarter cents left. This was a new and dreadfully wicked place. I put up at a tavern kept by an old Mr. M'. The landlord knew my father. I told him I had not money to pay my bill, but as soon as I got home I would send it to him. He said, "Very well," and made me welcome. His lady was a sister of the apostate Dr. Allen whom I have elsewhere mentioned.

Shortly after I laid down I fell asleep. Suddenly I was aroused by a piercing scream, or screams, of a female. I supposed that somebody was actually committing murder. I sprung from my bed, and, after getting half dressed, ran into the room from whence issued the piercing screams, and called out, "What's the matter here?" The old gentleman replied, that his wife was subject to spasms, and often had them. I commenced a conversation with her about religion. I found she was under deep concern about her soul. I asked if I might pray for her. "O, yes," she replied, "for there is no one in this place that cares for my soul."

I knelt and prayed, and then commenced singing, and directed her to Christ as an all-sufficient Saviour, and prayed again. She suddenly sprung out of the bed and shouted, "Glory to God! he has blessed my soul." It was a happy time indeed. The old gentleman wept like a child. We sung and shouted, prayed and praised, nearly all night. Next morning the old landlord told me my bill was paid tenfold, and that all he charged me was, every time I passed that way, to call and stay with them.

Next day I reached home with the six and a quarter cents unexpended. Thus I have given you a very imperfect little sketch of the early travel of a Methodist preacher in the Western Conference. My parents received me joyfully. I tarried with them several weeks. My father gave me a fresh horse, a bridle and saddle, some new clothes, and forty dollars in cash. Thus equipped, I was ready for another three years' absence.

1856

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55 the apostate Dr. Allen, one of two Baptist ministers mentioned by Cartwright in Chap. 3. One embraced the "blasphemous doctrine" of Universalism; the other "took to open drunkenness, and with him his salvation by water expired." Which one was Allen is not clear



Philip Freneau

1752 · 1832

Philip Freneau's relatively high rank in American literary history is based upon three different aspects of his work, none of which would by itself justify his being regarded as almost a major writer. Taken together, however, his poems of romantic fancy, his ballads and satires in behalf of American independence, and his work as editor in the interest of Jeffersonian Republicanism reveal a fluent, versatile, and sometimes powerful man of letters. That he never attained the height of genius was perhaps as much an accident of his time as of his talent.

In his youth Freneau had the advantages of wealth, as they were understood at that time in New York and New Jersey. When he entered Princeton at sixteen, he was well grounded in Latin and hoped to prepare for the ministry. In college, as the close friend of James Madison (later the fourth President of the United States), Hugh Henry Brackenridge (see p. 382), and William Bradford (later second attorney general of the United States), Freneau acquired Whig principles and literary ambitions. He began to write, imitating the classics and the English poets. In collaboration with Brackenridge he wrote part of a novel, "Father Bombo's Pilgrimage to Mecca in Arabia," and a Commencement poem, *The Rising Glory of America.* He had every reason to think the future would hold great things for him.

The next decade, however, brought unusual problems as well as the commonplace one of making a living (for Freneau's family resources steadily dwindled after his father's death in 1767). Theology proved unsatisfying; two ventures at teaching even more so. There was no livelihood in literature, although both the Commence-

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Panel (l. to r.): The Boston, Plymouth, and Sandwich mail stage • After a husking bee in New England • Summer scene

ment poem and one other, *The American Village*, were printed in 1772. For the next two years or more Freneau's movements are obscure. He was evidently restless, for, although he turned up in New York in 1775, writing satires against General Gage and the British, he was off the next year to the West Indies. For about two years he lived on Santa Cruz, in the Virgin Islands, writing some of his most fanciful poems: "The Jamaica Funeral," "The Beauties of Santa Cruz," and "The House of Night." In 1778, after several voyages to Bermuda and at least one tour of the lower Gulf of Mexico, he started back for New Jersey. His ship was captured off the Carolinas by the British, but he was permitted to land near his home and promptly enlisted in the militia. Capture, apparently, had brought the war close home to him. The *United States Magazine*, edited by Brackenridge, soon printed some of Freneau's best West Indian poems, together with "King George the Third's Soliloquy," but his work as a propagandist did not become important until 1780. By that time he had left the army to become a blockade runner and had made two more trips to the West Indies. He was starting out on a fourth voyage, this time as third mate, when he was captured and confined for six weeks on prison and hospital ships in New York Harbor. That experience made Freneau a boiling, bitter, hate-marked patriot, and *The British Prison-Ship* (1781) was followed by a flood of propaganda, most of it published in the *Freeman's Journal*, a Philadelphia weekly. In satire and in ballads he expressed the hopes and the hates of his countrymen.

The war over, Freneau turned again to the sea to make his living, and between 1784 and 1790 was engaged chiefly in coastwise shipping, most of the time as ship's captain. In port, at Charleston, Philadelphia, or New York, he occasionally offered a new poem to a newspaper or magazine, and he presumably found some satisfaction in seeing in his cabin *The Poems of Philip Freneau* (Philadelphia, 1786) and *The Miscellaneous Works of Mr. Philip Freneau Containing His Essays and Additional Poems* (Philadelphia, 1788).

In April 1790 Freneau married and settled in New York, to try once more to make his living as a writer. While editing the *Daily Advertiser*, he made plans to establish a country paper of his own in New Jersey. Through the influence of James Madison, however, he was offered a part-time clerkship as translator in the Department of State, under Jefferson. In October 1791, encouraged by Madison and Jefferson, Freneau founded in Philadelphia the *National Gazette*, designed to rival the strongly Federalist *Gazette of the United States*, and to provide a focal point for the opposition to the policies of Alexander Hamilton. Freneau and his friends regarded the financial measures of Hamilton as favorable to the wealthy and dangerous to the common people; his frankness in saying so soon plunged him into the midst of the bitterest incidents attending the birth of party politics in the United States. He supported Jefferson with all the force of direct attack, satire, and abuse, and came to epitomize to Hamilton and his party the rabble-rousing journalist. "That rascal Freneau!" Washington is reported to have exclaimed. In the end Freneau's enthusiasm for the French Revolution and his support of Citizen Genêt, after that gentleman had alienated even Jefferson, lost him support, and the *National Gazette* expired in the fall of 1793. There can be no doubt, however, of Freneau's mighty contribution to the establishment of party government and party journalism.

During the last thirty-nine years of his life, Freneau was in almost constant financial difficulty. His chief editorial ventures were on the *Jersey Chronicle* of Mount Pleasant in 1795-1796, where he published his "Tomo Cheeki" essays and failed to collect from his subscribers, and a New York periodical, *The Time-Piece; and Literary Companion*, in 1797-1798. In 1803-1807 he was forced once more to return to the sea. Before his death in a blizzard in 1832, he published three more collections of his work.

Although Freneau was obviously imitative in his forms and themes—most of the famous English poets of the eighteenth century were among his literary mentors—he is remembered for his discovery of American plants and birds, for his primitivistic idealization of the Indian, for his feeling for the sea, on which he spent so much of his life. As a precursor of Bryant, Emerson, Poe, Whittier, and Longfellow, he has historic interest; but he is memorable also for his revelation of himself—a man who lived in stirring, restless, difficult times, fighting, not always judiciously, for the ways of life in which he believed.

The Poems of Philip Freneau, ed. F. L. Pattee, 3 vols., Princeton, 1902-1907 • Poems of Freneau, ed. H. H. Clark, New York, 1929 • Lewis Leary, That Rascal Freneau: A Study in Literary Failure, New Brunswick, New Jersey, 1941

The Power of Fancy

"The Power of Fancy" is perhaps the most interesting of the poems which Freneau wrote as an undergraduate at Princeton. The many literary allusions emphasize his reading of the classics, and the delight in distant places exemplifies his romantic tendency. His concept of poetic fancy, which is characteristic of eighteenth-century thought, was probably derived from the "Ode to Fancy" by Joseph Warton (1722-1800), one of the earliest of English "romantic" poets (see H. H. Clark, "Literary Influences on Philip Freneau," **Studies in Philology**, January 1925). Freneau's enthusiasm for Milton, and especially for "Il Penseroso," is more self-evident (see T. P. Haviland, "A Measure for the Early Freneau's Debt to Milton," **Publications of the Modern Language Association**, December 1940).

WAKEFUL, vagrant, restless thing,
Ever wandering on the wing,
Who thy wondrous source can find,
FANCY, regent of the mind;
A spark from Jove's resplendent throne,
But thy nature all unknown.
  THIS spark of bright, celestial flame,
From Jove's seraphic altar came,
And hence alone in man we trace,
Resemblance to the immortal race.
  Ah! what is all this mighty WHOLE,
These suns and stars that round us roll!
What are they all, where'er they shine,
But *Fancies* of the Power Divine!
What is this *globe,* these *lands,* and *seas,*
And *heat,* and *cold,* and *flowers,* and *trees,*
And *life,* and *death,* and *beast,* and *man,*
And *time,*—that with the *sun* began—
But thoughts on reason's scale combin'd,
Ideas of the Almighty mind?
  On the surface of the brain
Night after night she walks unseen,
Noble fabrics doth she raise
In the woods or on the seas,
On some high, steep, pointed rock,
Where the billows loudly knock
And the dreary tempests sweep
Clouds along the uncivil deep.
  Lo! she walks upon the moon,
Listens to the chimy tune
Of the bright, harmonious spheres,
And the song of angels hears;
Sees this earth a distant star,
Pendant, floating in the air;
Leads me to some lonely dome,
Where Religion loves to come,
Where the bride of Jesus dwells,
And the deep ton'd organ swells
In notes with lofty anthems join'd,
Notes that half distract the mind.
  Now like lightning she descends
To the prison of the fiends,
Hears the rattling of their chains,
Feels their never ceasing pains—
But, O never may she tell
Half the frightfulness of hell.
  Now she views Arcadian rocks,
Where the shepherds guard their flocks,
And, while yet her wings she spreads,
Sees chrystal streams and coral beds,
Wanders to some desert deep,
Or some dark, enchanted steep,
By the full moon light doth shew
Forests of a dusky blue,
Where, upon some mossy bed,
Innocence reclines her head.
  SWIFT, she stretches o'er the seas
To the far off Hebrides,
Canvas on the lofty mast

Text: the 1786 edition. In the 1795 edition and thereafter Freneau printed ll. 1-20 and 141-154 as "Ode to Fancy," using the remainder, in a much-revised form, for a poem entitled "Fancy's Ramble" • 20 **Ideas . . . mind?** The notion here, essentially Platonic, was common in the eighteenth-century philosophy. The emphasis on reason in line 19 and the implications of the line preceding are evidence of Freneau's Deistic ideas (p. 216) • 30 **chimy . . . spheres.** The Aristotelian and Ptolemaic systems conceived of the universe as a succession of concentric spheres, something like the layers of an onion, which, as they rubbed together, produced a mighty musical harmony • 33 **star,** "Milton's Paradise Lost, B. II, v. 1052."—Freneau • 47 **Arcadian,** pastoral, from a mountainous area in ancient Greece, praised by the poets for its idyllic simplicity • 58 **Hebrides,** islands off the coast of Scotland

Could not travel half so fast—
Swifter than the eagle's flight
Or instantaneous rays of light!
Lo! contemplative she stands
On Norwegia's rocky lands—
Fickle Goddess, set me down
Where the rugged winters frown
Upon Orca's howling steep,
Nodding o'er the northern deep,
Where the winds tumultuous roar,
Vext that *Ossian* sings no more.
Fancy, to that land repair,
Sweetest Ossian slumbers there;
Waft me far to southern isles
Where the soften'd winter smiles,
To Bermuda's orange shades,
Or Demarara's lovely glades;
Bear me o'er the sounding cape,
Painting death in every shape,
Where daring *Anson* spread the sail
Shatter'd by the stormy gale—
Lo! she leads me wide and far,
Sense can never follow her—
Shape thy course o'er land and sea,
Help me to keep pace with thee,
Lead me to yon chalky cliff,
Over rock and over reef,
Into Britain's fertile land,
Stretching far her proud command.
Look back and view, thro' many a year,
Cæsar, Julius Cæsar, there.
  Now to Tempe's verdant wood,
Over the mid ocean flood
Lo! the islands of the sea
—Sappho, Lesbos mourns for thee:
Greece, arouse thy humbled head,
Where are all thy mighty dead,
Who states to endless ruin hurl'd
And carried vengeance through the world?—
Troy, thy vanish'd pomp resume,
Or, weeping at thy Hector's tomb,
Yet those faded scenes renew,
Whose memory is to *Homer* due.
Fancy, lead me wandering still
Up to Ida's cloud-topt hill;
Not a laurel there doth grow
But in vision thou shalt show,—
Every sprig on Virgil's tomb
Shall in livelier colours bloom,
And every triumph Rome has seen
Flourish on the years between.
  Now she bears me far away
In the east to meet the day,
Leads me over Ganges' streams,
Mother of the morning beams—
O'er the ocean hath she ran,
Places me on *Tinian;*
Farther, farther in the east,
Till it almost meets the west,
Let us wandering both be lost
On Taitis sea-beat coast,
Bear me from that distant strand,
Over ocean, over land,
To California's golden shore—
Fancy, stop, and rove no more.
  Now, tho' late, returning home,
Lead me to *Belinda's* tomb;

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67 **Orca's**, perhaps a reference to the Orchades or Orkney Islands, to the north of Scotland. In the later version of the poem, "Fancy's Ramble," Freneau substituted **Hecla**, a mountain in Iceland. In either case Fancy's flight is somewhat erratic • 70 **Ossian**, a legendary Gaelic poet who celebrated the deeds of his father, Finn, or Find, who lived, presumably, in the third century. The Ossianic poems exist in fifteenth-century manuscripts, but their fame rests upon the attempt of James MacPherson (1736-1796) to create a Gaelic epic. His **Fingal** (1762) is now known to have been based largely upon forged manuscripts, but in Freneau's time it was accepted as authentic • 76 **Demarara's**, now the name of both a county and a river in British Guiana; it was once also the name for Georgetown, the capital of that South American colony • 79 **Anson**, George Anson (1697-1762), leader of a British naval expedition to the South Pacific, 1740-1744, which, after raiding Peru and a Spanish treasure ship off Acapulco in Mexico, continued westward around the world • 90 **there**, i.e., in Britain, where Caesar landed in 55 B.C. • 91 **Tempe's**, an allusion to the valley in Thessaly whose beauty was often celebrated by the classical poets • 94 **Sappho, Lesbos.** Sappho (fl. 630-570 B.C.), most famous of the women poets of antiquity, was supposedly born on the island of Lesbos or Mytilini, off the coast of Asia Minor • 95 **humbled head.** From 1715 until 1821 Greece was occupied by the Turks. An insurrection in 1770 may have suggested Freneau's phrase • 104 **Ida's.** The gods watched the battles around Troy, described in Homer's **Iliad**, from the summit of Mount Ida • 116 **Tinian**, an island in the Marianas, now well-known to Americans through its occupation in World War II. Anson was there for two months in 1742 • 120 **Taitis**, Tahiti, in the Society Islands, well-known to eighteenth-century readers through the expedition of Captain James Cook, who observed the Transit of Venus of 1769 at that spot • 126 **Belinda's**, a common name in Neoclassical poetry

Let me glide as well as you
Through the shroud and coffin too,
And behold, a moment, there,
All that once was good and fair—
Who doth here so soundly sleep?
Shall we break this prison deep?—
Thunders cannot wake the maid,
Lightnings cannot pierce the shade,
And tho' wintry tempests roar,
Tempests shall disturb no more.
YET must those eyes in darkness stay,
That once were rivals to the day—?
Like heaven's bright lamp beneath the main
They are but set to rise again.
FANCY, thou the muses' pride,
In thy painted realms reside
Endless images of things,
Fluttering each on golden wings,
Ideal objects, such a store,
The universe could hold no more:
Fancy, to thy power I owe
Half my happiness below;
By thee Elysian groves were made,
Thine were the notes that Orpheus play'd;
By thee was Pluto charm'd so well
While rapture seiz'd the sons of hell—
Come, O come—perceiv'd by none,
You and I will walk alone.

1770·1786

George the Third's Soliloquy

As "King George the Third's Soliloquy," this poem first appeared in the **United States Magazine** for May 1779, and was reprinted almost at once in the **Pennsylvania Packet** for June 5. Freneau revised it extensively for the 1786 edition of his Poems, changing the order of the lines, omitting some passages, and adding others. He then entitled it "George III. His Soliloquy for 1779." The present title and text first appeared in 1795. The 1809 edition shows minor variations in spelling, but no further changes. In its combination of bitterness, ridicule, and confidence in the ultimate triumph of the American cause, it probably typifies the attitude and methods of the Whig leaders. It was good politics, of course, to picture the Revolution as caused entirely by a tyrannical and unscrupulous monarch.

What mean these dreams, and hideous forms that rise
Night after night, tormenting to my eyes—
No real foes these horrid shapes can be,
But thrice as much they vex and torture me.
How cursed is he—how doubly curs'd am I—
Who lives in pain, and yet who dares not die;
To him no joy this world of Nature brings,
In vain the wild rose blooms, the daisy springs.
Is this a prelude to some new disgrace,
Some baleful omen to my name and race—!
It may be so—ere mighty Cesar died
Presaging Nature felt his doom, and sigh'd;
A bellowing voice through midnight groves was heard,
And threatening ghosts at dusk of eve appear'd—
Ere Brutus fell, to adverse fates a prey,
His evil genius met him on the way,
And so may mine!—but who would yield so soon
A prize, some luckier hour may make my own?—
Shame seize my crown, ere such a deed be mine—
No—to the last my squadrons shall combine,
And slay my foes, while foes remain to slay,
Or *heaven* shall grant me one successful day.
Is there a robber close in Newgate hemm'd,
Is there a cut-throat, fetter'd and condemn'd?
Haste, loyal slaves, to George's standard come,
Attend his lectures when you hear the drum;
Your chains I break—for better days prepare,
Come out, my friends, from prison and from care,
Far to the west I plan your desperate sway,

Power of Fancy • **149 Elysian groves,** the abode of the blessed in classical mythology, a land of eternal spring and happiness • **150 Orpheus,** a mythical Greek poet who, by petitioning Pluto with song and lyre, won back his wife Eurydice from Hades, only to lose her again by disobeying the injunction not to look at her until they reached the upper air

George the Third's Soliloquy • **Text:** the 1795 edition • **12 Presaging Nature.** Plutarch and Strabo, Roman historians, tell of many wonders seen before Caesar's death, these among them • **16 His evil . . . him.** According to Plutarch, Brutus was visited one night by an apparition, who identified himself as "Thy evil genius. We shall meet again at Philippi." On the eve of the second battle of Philippi the apparition reappeared; next day, defeated, Brutus fell upon his sword • **23 Newgate.** See note, p. 99

There 'tis no sin to ravage, burn, and slay.
There, without fear, your bloody aims pursue,
And show mankind what English thieves can do.
That day, when first I mounted to the throne,
I swore to let all foreign foes alone.
Through love of peace to terms did I advance,
And made, they say, a shameful league with France.
But different scenes rise horrid to my view,
I charg'd my hosts to plunder and subdue—
At first, indeed, I thought short wars to wage
And sent some jail-birds to be led by Gage.
For 'twas but right, that those we mark'd for slaves
Should be reduc'd by cowards, fools, and knaves:
Awhile, directed by his feeble hand,
Those *troops* were kick'd and pelted through the land,
Or starv'd in Boston, curs'd the unlucky hour
They left their dungeons for that fatal shore.
France aids them now, a desperate game I play,
And hostile Spain will do the same, they say;
My armies vanquish'd, and my heroes fled,
My people murmuring, and my commerce dead,
My shattered navy pelted, bruis'd, and clubb'd,
By Dutchmen bullied, and by Frenchmen drubb'd,
My name abhorr'd, my nation in disgrace,
How should I act in such a mournful case!
My hopes and joys are vanish'd with my coin,
My ruin'd army, and my lost Burgoyne!
What shall I do—confess my labours vain,
Or whet my tusks, and to the charge again!
But where's my force—my choicest troops are fled,
Some thousands crippled, and a myriad dead—
If I were own'd the boldest of mankind,
And hell with all her flames inspir'd my mind,
Could I at once with Spain and France contend,
And fight the *rebels*, on the world's green end?—
The pangs of *parting* I can ne'er endure,
Yet *part* we must, and part to meet no more!
Oh! blast this *Congress*, blast each upstart STATE,
On whose commands ten thousand captains wait;
From various climes that dire *Assembly* came,
True to their trust, as hostile to my fame,
'Tis these, ah these, have ruin'd half my sway,
Disgrac'd my arms, and led my slaves astray—
Curs'd be the day, when first I saw the sun,
Curs'd be the hour, when I these wars begun:
The fiends of darkness then possess'd my mind,
And powers unfriendly to the human kind.
To wasting grief, and sullen rage a prey,
To *Scotland's* utmost verge I'll take my way,
There with eternal storms due concert keep
And while the billows rage, as fiercely weep—
Ye highland lads, my rugged fate bemoan,
Assist me with one sympathizing groan,
For late I find the nations are my foes,
I must submit, and that with bloody nose,
Or, like our James, fly basely from the state,
Or share, what still is worse—old *Charles's* fate.

1779·1795

On the Memorable Victory

Obtained by the Gallant Captain John Paul Jones, of the *Bon Homme Richard*, over the *Seraphis*, under the command of Captain Pearson

This poem was first published in the **Freeman's Journal**, August 8, 1781. It relates the action of September 23, 1779, within sight of the east coast of England, in which John Paul Jones (1747-1792) won his greatest victory. The **Bon Homme Richard**, named for Benjamin Franklin, "Poor Richard," was a converted merchantman; only her officers were Americans. The raiding force of which it was the flagship encountered, off Scarborough, a large convoy from the Baltic, guarded by the **Serapis**, under the command of Richard Pearson (1731-1806). Jones, handicapped by inferior arms and equipment, was skillful in placing his deck guns and directing his boarding party, but his triumph came largely from the fact that he never thought of

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36 a shameful . . . France. Shameful because, in making peace with France, the Earl of Bute, King George's teacher and first prime minister, deserted Frederick the Great of Prussia, who had been fighting the three great absolutist monarchies: Austria, Russia, and France • **40 Gage,** Thomas Gage. See note, p. 352. In the 1786 edition, this line read: "And sent a scoundrel by the name of Gage" • **56 Burgoyne.** John Burgoyne (see note, p. 385) arrived in Boston to reinforce Gage in September 1774 • **67 Oh! . . . Congress.** In the 1779 version, this line began the poem. Freneau's chief addition in 1786 consisted of ll. 1-22, but there was considerable rearrangement • **86 old Charles's fate,** an allusion to the execution of Charles I in 1649

accepting defeat. Freneau, curiously enough, does not use exactly Jones' classic reply to Pearson's demand that he strike his colors. "I have not," he said, "begun to fight."

O'ER the rough main, with flowing sheet,
The guardian of a numerous fleet,
Seraphis from the Baltic came;
A ship of less tremendous force
Sail'd by her side the self-same course,
Countess of Scarb'ro' was her name.

And now their native coasts appear,
Britannia's hills their summit rear
Above the German main:
Fond to suppose their dangers o'er,
They southward coast along the shore,
Thy waters, gentle Thames, to gain.

Full forty guns Seraphis bore,
And Scarb'ro's Countess twenty-four,
Mann'd with Old England's boldest tars—
What flag that rides the Gallic seas
Shall dare attack such piles as these,
Design'd for tumults and for wars!

Now from the top-mast's giddy height
A seaman cry'd—"Four sail in sight
"Approach with favouring gales,"
Pearson, resolv'd to save the fleet,
Stood off to sea, these ships to meet,
And closely brac'd his shivering sails.

With him advanc'd the Countess bold,
Like a black tar in wars grown old:
And now these floating piles drew nigh;
But, muse, unfold, what chief of fame
In the other warlike squadron came,
Whose standards at his mast head fly.

'Twas JONES, brave JONES, to battle led
As bold a crew as ever bled
Upon the sky-surrounded main;
The standards of the western world
Were to the willing winds unfurl'd,
Denying Britain's tyrant reign.

The *Good-Man-Richard* led the line;
The *Alliance* next: with these combine
The Gallic ship they *Pallas* call,
The *Vengeance,* arm'd with sword and flame;
These to attack the Britons came—
But *two* accomplish'd all.

Now Phoebus sought his pearly bed:
But who can tell the scenes of dread,
The horrors of that fatal night!
Close up those floating castles came;
The Good-Man-Richard bursts in flame;
Seraphis trembled at the sight.

She felt the fury of *her* ball:
Down, prostrate, down the Britons fall;
The decks were strew'd with slain:
JONES to the foe his vessel lash'd;
And, while the black artillery flash'd,
Loud thunders shook the main.

Alas! that mortals should employ
Such murdering engines, to destroy
That frame by heaven so nicely join'd;
Alas! that e'er the god decreed
That brother should by brother bleed,
And pour'd such madness in the mind.

But thou, brave JONES, no blame shalt bear;
The rights of men demand your care:
For *these* you dare the greedy waves—
No tyrant, on destruction bent,
Has plann'd thy conquests—thou art sent
To humble tyrants and their slaves.

See!—dread Seraphis flames again—
And art thou, JONES, among the slain,
And sunk to Neptune's caves below—

Text: the 1795 edition • 42 two accomplish'd all. The Bon Homme Richard took the Serapis, the Pallas, the Countess of Scarborough. The Vengeance had no part in the action, and the Alliance, commanded by Captain Landis (d. 1818), who was later judged insane, not only failed to help but also fired occasionally, so Jones said, at the Bon Homme Richard • 43 Phoebus, the sun. The battle raged for several hours after sunset

He lives—though crowds around him fall,
Still he, unhurt, survives them all;
  Almost alone he fights the foe.

And can thy ship these strokes sustain?
Behold thy brave companions slain,
  All clasped in ocean's dark embrace.
STRIKE, OR BE SUNK—the Briton cries—
SINK IF YOU CAN—the chief replies,
  Fierce lightnings blazing in his face.

Then to the side three guns he drew,
(Almost deserted by his crew)
  And charg'd them deep with woe:
By *Pearson's* flash he aimed hot balls;
His main-mast totters—down it falls—
  O'erwhelming half below.

Pearson had yet disdain'd to yield,
But scarce his secret fears conceal'd,
  And thus was heard to cry—
"With hell, not mortals, I contend;
"What art thou—human or a fiend,
  "That dost my force defy?

"Return, my lads, the fight renew!"—
So call'd bold Pearson to his crew;
  But call'd, alas, in vain;
Some on the decks lay maim'd and dead;
Some to their deep recesses fled,
  And more were shrouded in the main.

Distress'd, forsaken, and alone,
He haul'd his tatter'd standard down,
  And yielded to his gallant foe;
Bold *Pallas* soon the *Countess* took,—
Thus both their haughty colours struck,
  Confessing what the brave can do.

But, JONES, too dearly didst thou buy
These ships possest so gloriously,
  Too many deaths disgrac'd the fray:
Thy barque that bore the conquering flame,
That the proud Briton overcame,
  Even she forsook thee on thy way;

For when the morn began to shine,
Fatal to her, the ocean brine
  Pour'd through each spacious wound;
Quick in the deep she disappear'd,
But JONES to friendly Belgia steer'd,
  With conquest and with glory crown'd.

Go on, great man, to scourge the foe,
And bid the haughty Britons know
  They to our *Thirteen Stars* shall bend;
The *Stars* that, veil'd in dark attire,
Long glimmer'd with a feeble fire,
  But radiant now ascend.

Bend to the Stars that flaming rise
On western worlds, more brilliant skies.
  Fair Freedom's reign restor'd—
So when the Magi, come from far,
Beheld the God-attending Star,
  They trembled and ador'd.

1781

To the Memory

Of the Brave Americans, under General Greene, in *South Carolina*, Who Fell in the Action of *September* 8, 1781

Since its appearance in the **Freeman's Journal** of November 21, 1781, and in the edition of 1786, this has been one of Freneau's best-known poems. It combines the patriotic theme with that gentle melancholy which is most familiar through Gray's "Elegy Written in a Country Churchyard." The skirmish on which the poem is based was an attack by General Nathanael Greene (1742-1786) and his force upon a British outpost, commanded by Georgia-born General John Stuart (1759-1815). Retreating to another position, the British re-formed their line and this time repulsed

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113 **Belgia,** here Holland. Jones took his prizes to Texel, largest of the West Frisian Islands • 124 **the Magi,** the wise men from the East who found the child Jesus in Bethlehem

the overanxious Americans, killing and wounding an estimated five to seven hundred men. Greene's attack was one of many which contributed to the failure of the British to hold South Carolina.

At EUTAW springs the valiant died:
Their limbs with dust are cover'd o'er—
Weep on, ye springs, your tearful tide;
How many heroes are no more!

If in this wreck of ruin, they
Can yet be thought to claim a tear,
O smite thy gentle breast, and say
The friends of freedom slumber here!

Thou, who shalt trace this bloody plain,
If goodness rules thy generous breast,
Sigh for the wasted rural reign;
Sigh for the shepherds, sunk to rest!

Stranger, their humble graves adorn;
You too may fall, and ask a tear:
'Tis not the beauty of the morn
That proves the evening shall be clear—

They saw their injur'd country's woe;
The flaming town, the wasted field;
Then rush'd to meet the insulting foe;
They took the spear—but left the shield,

Led by thy conquering genius, GREENE,
The Britons they compell'd to fly:
None distant view'd the fatal plain,
None griev'd, in such a cause, to die—

But, like the Parthian, fam'd of old,
Who, flying, still their arrows threw;
These routed Britons, full as bold,
Retreated, and retreating slew.

Now rest in peace, our patriot band;
Though far from Nature's limits thrown,
We trust, they find a happier land,
A brighter sun-shine of their own.

1781

The Wild Honey Suckle

"These stanzas," writes Professor Leary, "placed Freneau, beyond the reach of calumny or special pleading, chronologically at the head of America's procession of poets." They were first printed over the signature "K" in the **Columbian Herald**, July 6, 1786. Other printings followed in the **Pennsylvania Packet**, the **Freeman's Journal**, and the **Massachusetts Centinel**. There is no better evidence of Freneau's independence of the classical tradition and of his fresh perception of nature.

Fair flower, that dost so comely grow,
Hid in this silent, dull retreat,
Untouch'd thy honey'd blossoms blow,
Unseen thy little branches greet:
  No roving foot shall crush thee here,
  No busy hand provoke a tear.

By Nature's self in white array'd,
She bade thee shun the vulgar eye,
And planted here the guardian shade,
And sent soft waters murmuring by;
  Thus quietly thy summer goes,
  Thy days declining to repose.

Smit with those charms, that must decay,
I grieve to see your future doom;
They died—nor were those flowers less gay,
The flowers that did in Eden bloom;

To the Memory • **Text:** the 1795 edition • 1 **Eutaw springs,** on the Santee River, midway between Charleston and Columbia, South Carolina • 19 **Then rush'd.** Professor Pattee has noted that Sir Walter Scott borrowed this and the following line for the introduction to Canto III of Marmion: "When Prussia hurried to the field, And snatch'd the spear, but left the shield" • 25 **the Parthian.** The horsemen of Parthia, a region in ancient Persia, used the stratagem of pretended retreat; when their enemies were scattered, they turned to the attack

The Wild Honey Suckle • **Text:** the 1795 edition, with changes of diction indicated on the basis of Professor Leary's text of the original printing (That Rascal Freneau, p. 144). Variations in punctuation have not all been described • 5 **crush.** 1786, find • 15 **They died.** In the 1786 version the following two lines are in parentheses • 15 **less.** 1786, more

Unpitying frosts, and Autumn's power
Shall leave no vestige of this flower.

From morning suns and evening dews
At first thy little being came:
If nothing once, you nothing lose,
For when you die you are the same;
The space between, is but an hour,
The frail duration of a flower.

1786

The Indian Burying-Ground

"Lines occasioned by a visit to an old Indian burying ground" appeared in the **American Museum** for November 1787 and in Freneau's **Miscellaneous Works** (1788). This poem is usually regarded as one of the earliest idealizations of the Indian.

In spite of all the learn'd have said,
I still my old opinion keep;
The *posture,* that *we* give the dead,
Points out the soul's eternal sleep.

Not so the ancients of these lands—
The Indian, when from life releas'd,
Again is seated with his friends,
And shares again the joyous feast.

His imag'd birds, and painted bowl,
And ven'son, for a journey dress'd,
Bespeak the nature of the soul,
ACTIVITY, that knows no rest.

His bow, for action ready bent,
And arrows, with a head of stone,
Can only mean that life is spent,
And not the finer essence gone.

Thou, stranger, that shalt come this way,
No fraud upon the dead commit—
Observe the swelling turf, and say
They do not *lie,* but here they *sit.*

Here still a lofty rock remains,
On which the curious eye may trace
(Now wasted, half, by wearing rains)
The fancies of a ruder race.

Here still an aged elm aspires,
Beneath whose far-projecting shade
(And which the shepherd still admires)
The children of the forest play'd!

There oft a restless Indian queen
(Pale *Shebah,* with her braided hair)
And many a barbarous form is seen
To chide the man that lingers there.

By midnight moons, o'er moistening dews,
In habit for the chace array'd,
The hunter still the deer pursues,
The hunter and the deer, a shade!

And long shall timorous fancy see
The painted chief, and pointed spear,
And Reason's self shall bow the knee
To shadows and delusions here.

1787

Lines by H. Salem, On His Return from Calcutta

No representative selection from Freneau would be complete without some poem of the sea, where he spent so many years of his life. There is no evidence that Freneau ever visited Calcutta, but this poem leaves no doubt of how he felt about the mariner's life. It first appeared as "A

The Wild Honey Suckle • **24 frail duration.** 1786, empty image

The Indian Burying-Ground • Text: the 1795 edition • **8 joyous feast.** "The North American Indians bury their dead in a sitting posture; decorating the corpse with wampum, the images of birds, quadrupeds, &c: And (if that of a warrior) with bows, arrows, tomahawks, and other military weapons."—Freneau • **16 finer essence.** 1809, old ideas • **36 The hunter . . . shade!** Professor Pattee points out that the English poet Thomas Campbell borrowed this line in the fourth stanza of "O'Connor's Child": "Now o'er the hills in chase he flits, The hunted and the deer a shade!"

Mistake Rectified" over the signature of "Sinbat the Sailor," in the **National Gazette**, and was soon reprinted in the Philadelphia **Daily Advertiser** and the Charleston **City Gazette**. In the 1795 edition it was called "Epistle to a Desponding Sea-man." Hezekiah Salem appears as a character or spokesman in several other poems by Freneau.

Your men of the land, from the king to Jack Ketch,
All join in supposing the sailor a wretch;
That his life is a round of vexation and woe,
With always too much or too little to do:
In the dead of the night, when other men sleep,
He, starboard and larboard, his watches must keep;
Imprisoned by Neptune, he lives like a dog;
And to know where he is, must depend on a LOG;
Must fret in a calm, and be sad in a storm;
In winter much trouble to keep himself warm:

Through the heat of the summer pursuing his trade,
No trees, but his topmasts, to yield him a shade:
Then, add to the list of the mariner's evils,
The water corrupted, the bread full of weevils;
Salt-junk to be eat, be it better or worse,
And, often bull beef of an Irishman's horse:
Whosoever is free, he must still be a slave,
(Despotic is always the rule on the wave;)
Not relished on water, your lords of the main
Abhor the republican doctrines of PAINE,
And each, like the despot of Prussia, may say
That his crew has no right, but the right to obey.
Such things say the lubbers, and sigh when they've said 'em,
But things are not so bad as their fancies persuade 'em:
There ne'er was a task but afforded some ease,
Nor a calling in life, but had something to please.
If the sea has its storms, it has also its calms,
A time to sing songs and a time to sing psalms.—
Yes—give me a vessel well timbered and sound,
Her bottom good plank, and in rigging well found,
If her spars are but staunch, and her oakham swelled tight,
From tempests and storms I'll extract some delight—
At sea I would rather have Neptune my jailor,
Than a lubber on shore, that despises a sailor.
Do they ask me what pleasure I find on the sea?—
Why, absence from land is a pleasure to me:
A hamper of porter, and plenty of grog,
A friend, when too sleepy, to give me a jog,
A coop that will always some poult[r]y afford,
Some bottles of gin, and no parson on board,
A crew that is brisk when it happens to blow,
One compass on deck and another below,
A girl, with more sense than the girl at the head,
To read me a novel, or make up my bed—
The man that has these, has a treasure in store
That millions possess not, who live upon shore:
But if it should happen that commerce grew dull,
Or Neptune, ill-humoured, should batter our hull,
Should damage my cargo, or heave me aground,
Or pay me with farthings instead of a pound:
Should I always be left in the rear of the race,
And this be forever—forever the case;
Why then, if the honest plain truth I may tell,
I would clew up my topsails, and bid him farewell.

1791

On Passing by an Old Church-Yard

This poem first appeared as "Melancholy reflections in passing by a burying place in the neighbourhood of Philadelphia" in the **Time-Piece**, September 15, 1797. It is a good example of the republicanism which sustained Freneau's distrust of pomp and aristocracy throughout the period of the French Revolution.

Pensive, on this green turf I cast my eye,
And almost feel inclined to muse and sigh:
Such tokens of mortality so nigh.

But hold,—who knows if these who soundly sleep,
Would not, alive, have made some orphan weep,
Or plunged some slumbering victim in the deep.

Lines . . . • **Text:** the 1809 edition • 15 **Salt-junk,** salt meat used on long voyages • 16 **bull beef,** the flesh of bulls, exceedingly tough; also a term of abuse • 20 **Paine.** Freneau admired Thomas Paine, as appears from a poem "On Mr. Paine's Rights of Man" (1795). Paine had left Philadelphia before Freneau had many associations there • 21 **the despot of Prussia,** probably Frederick the Great (1712-1786), famous for his reluctance to delegate his powers • 31 **oakham,** oakum, loose fiber from old rope, used to calk ships' seams • 43 **the girl . . . head,** the figurehead at the bow of the ship

On Passing by an Old Church-Yard • **Text:** the 1815 edition

There may be here, who once were virtue's foes,
A curse through life, the cause of many woes,
Who wrong'd the widow, and disturb'd repose.

There may be here, who with malicious aim
Did all they could to wound another's fame,
Steal character, and filch away good name.

Perhaps yond' solitary turf invests
Some who, when living, were the social pests,
Patrons of ribands, titles, crowns and crests.

Can we on such a kindred tear bestow?
They, who, in life, were every just man's foe,
A plague to all about them!—oh, no, no.

What though sepultured with the funeral whine;
Why, sorrowing on such tombs should we recline,
Where truth, perhaps, has hardly penn'd a line.

—Yet, what if here some honest man is laid
Whom nature of her best materials made,
Who all respect to sacred honor paid.

Gentle, humane, benevolent and just,
(Though now forgot and mingled with the dust,
There may be such, and such there are we trust.)

Yes—for the sake of that one honest man
We would on knaves themselves bestow a tear,
Think nature form'd them on some crooked plan,
And say *peace rest on all that slumber here.*

1797

Stanzas to an Alien,

Who After a Series of Persecutions Emigrated to the South Western Country.——1799.——

Freneau and his friends of Jefferson's party were thoroughly suspicious of the conservative reaction to the French Revolution, exemplified by the Alien and Sedition Acts of 1798. This poem, first published as "To an Alien" in the **Time-Piece** for July 13, 1798, shows Freneau's party spirit as well as his sympathy with political exiles. The "alien" has been identified by Professor Leary as John Daly Burk (1775?-1808), an Irishman who arrived in the United States in 1796. He had some reputation as an editor and dramatist and, after some trouble in New York, settled in Petersburg, Virginia.

Remote, beneath a sultry star
Where Mississippi flows afar
I see you rambling, God knows where.

Sometimes, beneath a cypress bough
When met in dreams, with spirits low,
I long to tell you what I know.

How matters go, in this our day,
When monarchy renews her sway,
And royalty begins her play.

I thought you wrong to come so far
Till you had seen our western star
Above the mists ascended clear.

I thought you right, to speed your sails
If you were fond of loathsome jails,
And justice with uneven scales.

And so you came and spoke too free
And soon they made you bend the knee,
And lodged you under lock and key.

Discharged at last, you made your peace
With all you had, and left the place
With empty purse and meagre face.—

You sped your way to other climes
And left me here to teaze with rhymes
The worst of men in worst of times.

Where you are gone the soil is free
And freedom sings from every tree,
"Come quit the crowd and live with me!"

Text: the 1815 edition

Where I must stay, no joys are found;
Excisemen haunt the hateful ground,
And chains are forged for all around.

The scheming men, with brazen throat,
Would set a murdering tribe afloat
To hang you for the lines you wrote.

If you are safe beyond their rage
Thank heaven, and not our *ruling sage,*
Who shops us up in jail and cage.

Perdition seize that odious race
Who, aiming at distinguish'd place,
Would life and liberty efface;

With iron rod would rule the ball
And, at their shrine, debase us all,
Bid devils rise and angels fall.

Oh wish them ill, and wish them long
To be as usual in the wrong
In scheming for a chain too strong.

So will the happy time arrive
When coming home, if then alive,
You'll see them to the devil drive.

1798

To a Caty-Did

In a branch of a willow hid
Sings the evening Caty-did:
From the lofty locust bough
Feeding on a drop of dew,
In her suit of green array'd
Hear her singing in the shade
Caty-did, Caty-did, Caty-did!

While upon a leaf you tread,
Or repose your little head,
On your sheet of shadows laid,
All the day you nothing said:
Half the night your cheery tongue
Revell'd out its little song,
Nothing else but Caty-did.

From your lodgings on the leaf
Did you utter joy or grief—?
Did you only mean to say,
I have had my summer's day,
And am passing, soon, away
To the grave of Caty-did:—
Poor, unhappy Caty-did!

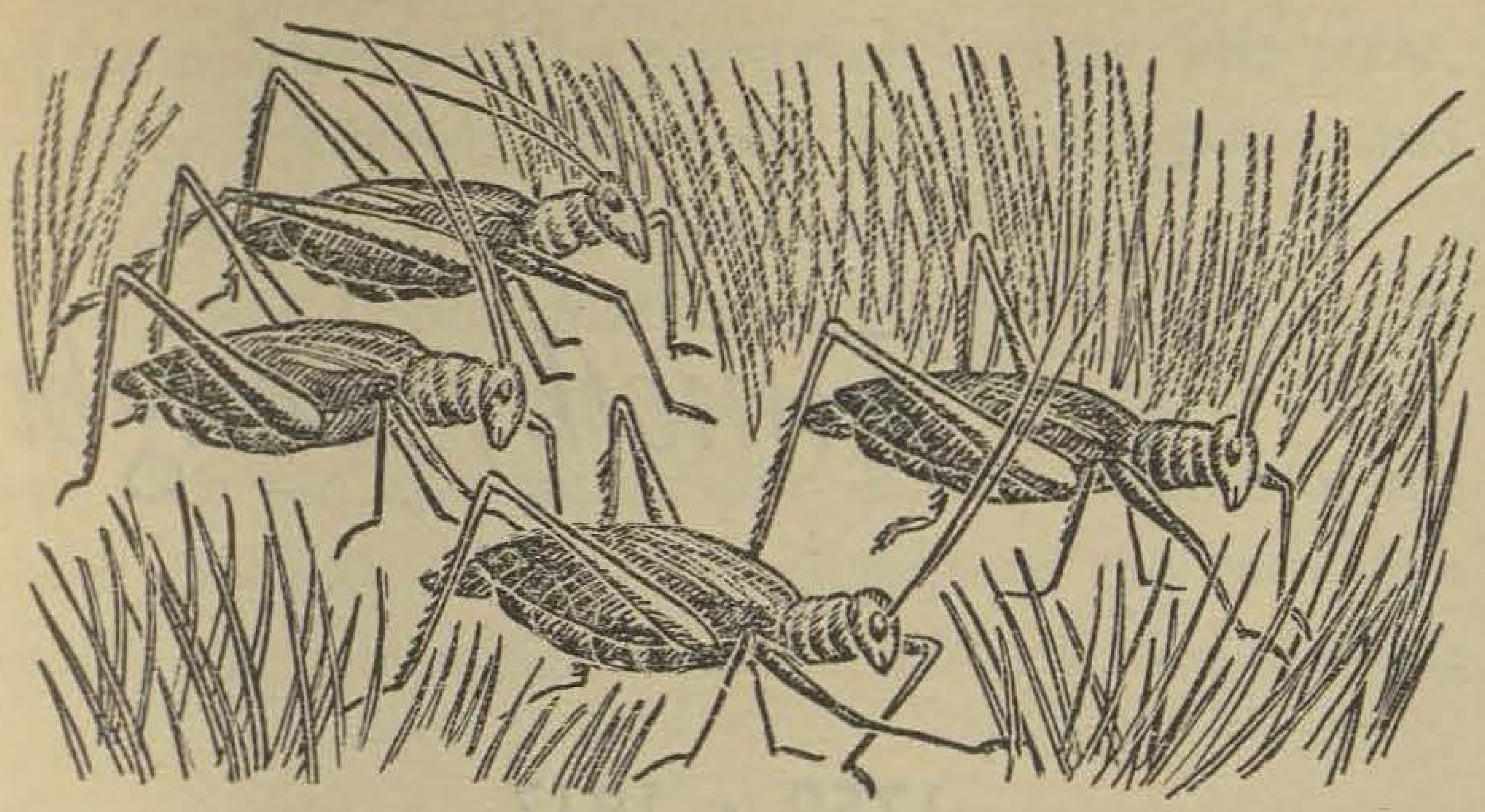
But you would have utter'd more
Had you known of nature's power—
From the world when you retreat,
And a leaf's your winding sheet,
Long before your spirit fled,
Who can tell but nature said,
Live again, my Caty-did!
Live, and chatter Caty-did.

Tell me, what did Caty do?
Did she mean to trouble you?—
Why was Caty not forbid
To trouble little Caty-did?—
Wrong, indeed at you to fling,
Hurting no one while you sing
Caty-did! Caty-did! Caty-did!

Why continue to complain?
Caty tells me, she again
Will not give you plague or pain:—
Caty says you may be hid
Caty will not go to bed

Stanzas to an Alien • 35 **our ruling sage,** John Adams, the President. One of the acts relating to aliens gave him, for two years, the power to deport any aliens he deemed dangerous

To a Caty-Did • **Text:** the 1815 edition, apparently the first printing of this poem. In the table of contents it is entitled "Stanzas to a Caty-Did, the precursor of winter." **Caty-Did.** "A well-known insect, when full grown, about two inches in length, and of the exact color of a green leaf. It is of the genus cicada, or grasshopper kind, inhabiting the green foliage of trees and singing such a note as **Caty-did** in the evening, towards autumn."—Freneau



While you sing us Caty-did.
Caty-did! Caty-did! Caty-did!

But, while singing, you forgot
To tell us what did Caty *not:*
Caty-did not think of cold,
Flocks retiring to the fold,
Winter, with his wrinkles old,
Winter, that yourself foretold
When you gave us Caty-did.

Stay securely in your nest;
Caty now, will do her best,
All she can, to make you blest;
But, you want no human aid—
Nature, when she form'd you, said,
"Independent you are made,
My dear little Caty-did:
Soon yourself must disappear
With the verdure of the year,"—
And to go, we know not where,
With your song of Caty-did.

1815

On the Uniformity and Perfection of Nature

Freneau's views of God, man, and nature are fairly well summarized in this poem. The reference to the "great first cause" and the acceptance of an uninterrupted order of nature are Deistic in tendency, and it is possible to regard Freneau as philosophically akin to Franklin, Paine, and Jefferson. He had perhaps less faith in man than they; as Professor Leary says, his philosophy is one of "optimistic resignation."

On one fix'd point all nature moves,
Nor deviates from the track she loves;
Her system, drawn from reason's source,
She scorns to change her wonted course.

Could she descend from that great plan
To work unusual things for man,
To suit the insect of an hour—
This would betray a want of power,

Unsettled in its first design
And erring, when it did combine
The parts that form the vast machine,
The figures sketch'd on nature's scene.

Perfections of the great first cause
Submit to no contracted laws,
But all-sufficient, all-supreme,
Include no trivial views in them.

Who looks through nature with an eye
That would the scheme of heaven descry,
Observes her constant, still the same,
In all her laws, through all her frame.

No imperfection can be found
In all that is, above, around,—
All, nature made, in reason's sight
Is order all, and *all is right.*

1815

Text: the 1815 edition • 24 **all is right.** See the last lines of the first Epistle of Pope's **Essay on Man** (1732):

"All Nature is but Art, unknown to thee;
All Chance, Direction, which thou canst not see;
All Discord, Harmony not understood;
All partial Evil, universal Good:
And, spite of Pride, in erring Reason's spite,
One truth is clear, Whatever is, is right."

Timothy Dwight

1752 · 1817

The solid rock of orthodoxy in the generation of the Connecticut Wits was Timothy Dwight, president of Yale College from 1795 until his death in 1817. Self-assured, immensely industrious, and a forthright warrior against all forms of religious infidelity, Dwight was the ideal college leader of his day. In conversation and in the pulpit he seemed the very fount of wisdom; and despite having ruined his eyesight by his college studies he managed to publish more than twenty-five items, including a ten-thousand-line epic poem, *The Conquest of Canaan* (1785). Later generations have wondered at the veneration in which he was held by his contemporaries, because, as V. L. Parrington put it, his "mind was closed as tight as his study windows in January." Yet there can be no doubt of Dwight's claim to attention as the chief spokesman of conservative opinion in his period.

Dwight was an extraordinarily precocious student. Entering Yale at thirteen, he was graduated in 1769 and returned as tutor two years later, after some teaching experience in a New Haven grammar school. An exceedingly popular tutor, he helped to turn undergraduate attention to public speaking and belles-lettres and was the students' choice for president when that post fell vacant in 1777. But he was only twenty-five and was not thought experienced enough by the governing board.

By that time Dwight had decided upon theology in preference to law, and late in 1777 he resigned his tutorship to become an army chaplain. He did well in that capacity, writing patriotic songs as well as sermons, among them "Columbia, Columbia, to Glory Arise." Family responsibilities forced him to leave the army early in 1779, and for the next fifteen years he worked feverishly, first as farm manager, preacher, teacher, and legislator at Northampton, Massachusetts, and after 1783 as pastor of the Congregational Church at Greenfield, Connecticut. His preaching did not keep him from conducting one of the most famous schools of the day, an academy which accepted both boys and girls and drew pupils from Charleston and Jamaica as well as from close at hand. Meanwhile he found time to complete his long-projected epic, *The Conquest of Canaan* (1785), to loose a verse satire against the Deists, *The Triumph of Infidelity* (1788), and to finish *Greenfield Hill: A Poem, in Seven Parts* (1794).

Dwight was appointed to the Yale presidency in 1795. There his influence proved strong enough to check Deistic tendencies. He preached twice each Sunday, as well as on special occasions, and reviewed for each student generation the Calvinistic system as it was then understood. Although he emphasized practical ethics, he was no great thinker; his power was evangelical. Thanks to him, Yale and Connecticut shared in the widespread revival of religion at the turn of the century, and Yale-trained ministers continued to hold conspicuous places in the religious life of the nation. *The Nature, and Danger, of Infidel Philosophy* (1798) and *Theology: Explained and Defended* (5 vols., 1818-1819) are the record of a contribution seldom equaled by either theologians or college executives. The practical bent of Dwight's mind is also evident in his posthumous *Travels; in New-England and New-York* (4 vols., 1821-1822), a vast mine of information for the historian

of the early years of the nineteenth century. His prose, however, is somewhat more diffuse than his poetry and is difficult to present in limited space.

Not since Cotton Mather had there been such an indefatigable, universally curious New England clergyman. The two were much alike in their defense of the *status quo,* their flashes of foresight, and the derivative quality of their minds. Dwight never sensed that he might be fighting a losing battle. Those who cannot accept his theological, political, or literary principles must perforce marvel at the certainties by which he lived.

The Connecticut Wits, ed. V. L. Parrington, New York, 1926 • Charles E. Cuningham, Timothy Dwight, 1752-1817, A Biography, New York, 1942

Columbia, Columbia, to Glory Arise

Although this song is believed to have been written in 1778, while Dwight was a chaplain in the army, it was first printed in 1793. The tune, probably composed by Dwight himself, was first printed in Andrew Wright's The American Musical Miscellany (Northampton, 1798). There is considerable evidence that the song was most popular in the 1830's, when Americans were all thinking in terms of their "manifest destiny."

Columbia, Columbia, to glory arise,
The queen of the world, and child of the skies!
Thy genius commands thee; with rapture behold,
While ages on ages thy splendors unfold.
Thy reign is the last, and the noblest of time,
Most fruitful thy soil, most inviting thy clime;
Let the crimes of the east ne'er encrimson thy name,
Be freedom, and science, and virtue, thy fame.

To conquest, and slaughter, let Europe aspire;
Whelm nations in blood, and wrap cities in fire;
Thy heroes the rights of mankind shall defend,
And triumph pursue them, and glory attend.
A world is thy realm: for a world be thy laws,
Enlarg'd as thine empire, and just as thy cause;
On Freedom's broad basis, that empire shall rise,
Extend with the main, and dissolve with the skies.

Fair Science her gates to thy sons shall unbar,
And the east see thy morn hide the beams of her star.
New bards, and new sages, unrival'd shall soar
To fame, unextinguish'd, when time is no more;
To thee, the last refuge of virtue design'd,
Shall fly from all nations the best of mankind;
Here, grateful to heaven, with transport shall bring
Their incense, more fragrant than odours of spring.

Nor less shall thy fair ones to glory ascend,
And Genius and Beauty in harmony blend;
The graces of form shall awake pure desire,
And the charms of the soul ever cherish the fire;
Their sweetness unmingled, their manners refin'd
And virtue's bright image, instamp'd on the mind,
With peace, and soft rapture, shall teach life to glow,
And light up a smile in the aspect of woe.

Thy fleets to all regions thy pow'r shall display,
The nations admire, and the ocean obey;
Each shore to thy glory its tribute unfold,
And the east and the south yield their spices and gold,
As the day-spring unbounded, thy splendor shall flow,
And earth's little kingdoms before thee shall bow,
While the ensigns of union, in triumph unfurl'd,
Hush the tumult of war, and give peace to the world.

Thus, as down a lone valley, with cedars o'erspread,
From war's dread confusion I pensively stray'd—
The gloom from the face of fair heav'n retir'd;
The winds ceas'd to murmur; the thunders expir'd;
Perfumes, as of Eden, flow'd sweetly along,
And a voice, as of angels, enchantingly sung:
"Columbia, Columbia, to glory arise,
The queen of the world, and the child of the skies."

1793

Text: the first printing, in American Poems, Selected and Original, Litchfield, Connecticut, 1793, an anthology prepared by Dr. Elihu Hubbard Smith (1771-1798), one of the minor members of the Connecticut group

From

Greenfield Hill

Greenfield Hill was published at New York in 1794, with a dedication to John Adams, then vice-president. "The greater part of it," Dwight says in his introduction, "was written seven years ago." His original intention was to imitate one of the great English poets in each of the seven sections; but that scheme was abandoned, and Dwight characteristically sought to "contribute to the innocent amusement of his countrymen, and to their improvement in manners, and in economical, political, and moral sentiments." Those who read his book doubtless found more improvement than innocent amusement. Among Dwight's favorite poems were Sir John Denham's **Cooper's Hill** (1642), Alexander Pope's **Windsor Forest** (1713), James Thomson's **The Seasons** (1730), and Oliver Goldsmith's **The Deserted Village** (1779). The last of these is admittedly the model for "The Flourishing Village," Part II of **Greenfield Hill**, of which about one fourth is here reprinted. The amazing slavishness of Dwight's imitation is obvious from his own notes; his didactic aims are apparent both there and in the "Argument" which preceded this and each of the other sections. There is enough detail in his description to show his knowledge and genuine liking for New England rural life, comparable to Whittier's as displayed over seventy years later in **Snow-Bound.** Dwight's lengthy note to his first line indicates, however, that he had other things on his mind than an account of rural delights.

Part II

THE FLOURISHING VILLAGE

Fair Verna! loveliest village of the west;
Of every joy, and every charm, possess'd;
How pleas'd amid thy varied walks I rove,
Sweet, cheerful walks of innocence, and love,
And o'er thy smiling prospects cast my eyes,
And see the seats of peace, and pleasure, rise,
And hear the voice of Industry resound,
And mark the smile of Competence, around!
Hail, happy village! O'er thy cheerful lawns,
With earliest beauty, spring delighted dawns;
The northward sun begins his vernal smile;
The spring-bird carols o'er the cressy rill:
The shower, that patters in the ruffled stream,
The ploughboy's voice, that chides the lingering team,
The bee, industrious, with his busy song,
The woodman's axe, the distant groves among,
The waggon, rattling down the rugged steep,
The light wind, lulling every care to sleep,
All these, with mingled music, from below,
Deceive intruding sorrow, as I go.

How pleas'd, fond Recollection, with a smile,
Surveys the varied round of wintery toil!
How pleas'd, amid the flowers, that scent the plain,

Text: the original edition (1794) • 1 **Fair Verna.** "Sweet Auburn, loveliest village of the plain! **Goldsmith.**"—Dwight • 1 **village . . . west.** "This part of the poem, although appropriated to the parish of Greenfield, may be considered as a general description of the towns and villages of New England; those only excepted, which are either commercial, new, or situated on a barren soil. Morose and gloomy persons, and perhaps some others, may think the description too highly coloured. Persons of moderation and candour may possibly think otherwise. In its full extent, the writer supposes it applicable to the best inhabitants only; but he believes the number of these to be great: to others he thinks it partially applicable. Poetical representations are usually esteemed flattering; possibly this is as little so, as most of them. The inhabitants of New England notwithstanding some modern instances of declension, are, at least in the writer's opinion, a singular example of virtue and happiness.

"It will be easily discovered by the reader, that this part of the poem is designed to illustrate the effects of a state of property, which is the counter part to that, so beautifully exhibited by Dr. Goldsmith, in the Deserted Village. That excellent writer, in a most interesting manner, displays the wretched condition of the many, where enormous wealth, splendour, and luxury, constitute the state of the few. In this imperfect attempt, the writer wished to exhibit the blessings, which flow from an equal division of property, and a general competence.

"Whenever an **equal division of property** is mentioned, in this Work, the Reader is requested to remember, that that state of things only is intended, in which every citizen is secured in the avails of his industry and prudence, and in which property descends, by law, in equal shares, to the proprietor's children."—Dwight. The Connecticut law that all children should share equally in the family estate was passed in 1699 • 12 **spring-bird.** "A small bird, called, in some parts of New England, by that name; which appeared, very early in the spring, on the banks of brooks and small rivers, and sings a very sweet and sprightly note."—Dwight • 12 **cressy,** abounding in watercress or similar plants

Recalls the vanish'd frost, and sleeted rain;
The chilling damp, the ice-endangering street,
And treacherous earth that slump'd beneath the feet.

Yet even stern winter's glooms could joy inspire:
Then social circles grac'd the nutwood fire;
The axe resounded, at the sunny door;
The swain, industrious, trimm'd his flaxen store;
Or thresh'd, with vigorous flail, the bounding wheat,
His poultry round him pilfering for their meat;
Or slid his firewood on the creaking snow;
Or bore his produce to the main below;
Or o'er his rich returns exulting laugh'd;
Or pledg'd the healthful orchard's sparkling draught:
While, on his board, for friends and neighbours spread,
The turkey smoak'd, his busy housewife fed;
And Hospitality look'd smiling round,
And Leisure told his tale, with gleeful sound.

Then too, the rough road hid beneath the sleigh,
The distant friend despis'd a length of way,
And join'd the warm embrace, and mingling smile,
And told of all his bliss, and all his toil;
And, many a month elaps'd, was pleas'd to view
How well the houshold far'd, the children grew;
While tales of sympathy deceiv'd the hour,
And Sleep, amus'd, resign'd his wonted power.

Yes! let the proud despise, the rich deride,
These humble joys, to Competence allied:
To me, they bloom, all fragrant to my heart,
Nor ask the pomp of wealth, nor gloss of art.
And as a bird, in prison long confin'd,
Springs from his open'd cage, and mounts the wind,
Thro' fields of flowers, and fragrance, gaily flies,
Or re-assumes his birth-right, in the skies:
Unprison'd thus from artificial joys,
Where pomp fatigues, and fussful fashion cloys,
The soul, reviving, loves to wander free
Thro' native scenes of sweet simplicity;
Thro' Peace' low vale, where Pleasure lingers long,
And every songster tunes his sweetest song,
And Zephyr hastes, to breathe his first perfume,
And Autumn stays, to drop his latest bloom:
'Till grown mature, and gathering strength to roam,
She lifts her lengthen'd wings, and seeks her home.

But now the wintery glooms are vanish'd all;
The lingering drift behind the shady wall;
The dark-brown spots, that patch'd the snowy field;
The surly frost, that every bud conceal'd;
The russet veil, the way with slime o'erspread,
And all the saddening scenes of March are fled.

Sweet-smiling village! loveliest of the hills!
How green thy groves! How pure thy glassy rills!
With what new joy, I walk thy verdant streets!
How often pause, to breathe thy gale of sweets;
To mark thy well-built walls! thy budding fields!
And every charm, that rural nature yields;
And every joy, to Competence allied,
And every good, that Virtue gains from Pride!

No griping landlord here alarms the door,
To halve, for rent, the poor man's little store.
No haughty owner drives the humble swain
To some far refuge from his dread domain;
Nor wastes, upon his robe of useless pride,
The wealth, which shivering thousands want beside;
Nor in one palace sinks a hundred cots;
Nor in one manor drowns a thousand lots;
Nor, on one table, spread for death and pain,
Devours what would a village well sustain.

O Competence, thou bless'd by Heaven's decree,
How well exchang'd is empty pride for thee!

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26 **slump'd.** "This word, said, in England, to be of North Country original, is customarily used in New England, to denote the sudden sinking of the foot in the earth, when partially thawn, as in the month of March. It is also used to denote the sudden sinking of the earth under the foot."—Dwight • 28 **nutwood,** "hickory."—Dwight • 45 **And . . . view.** "And, many a year elapsed, return'd to view. **Goldsmith.**"—Dwight • 49 **Yes! . . . proud.** "Yes, let the rich deride, the proud disdain. **Goldsmith.**"—Dwight • 52 **gloss of art.** "Goldsmith."—Dwight • 63 **Zephyr,** the west wind • 68 **The lingering drift.** "And parting summer's lingring blooms delayed. **Goldsmith.**"—Dwight • 73 **Sweet-smiling village!** "Sweet-smiling village! loveliest of the lawn. Goldsmith."—Dwight • 75 **streets.** "In several parts of this country, the roads through the villages are called streets." —Dwight • 79 **And every joy. . . .** "And every want, to opulence allied, And every pang that folly pays to pride. Goldsmith."—Dwight • 87 **cots,** cottages • 91 **O Competence.** "O luxury! thou curst by heaven's decree. **Goldsmith.** Men in middling circumstances appear greatly to excel the rich, in piety, charity, and public spirit; nor will a critical observer of human life, hesitate to believe, that they enjoy more happiness."—Dwight

Oft to thy cot my feet delighted turn,
To meet thy chearful smile, at peep of morn;
To join thy toils, that bid the earth look gay;
To mark thy sports, that hail the eve of May;
To see thy ruddy children, at thy board,
And share thy temperate meal, and frugal hoard;
And every joy, by winning prattlers giv'n,
And every earnest of a future Heaven.

There the poor wanderer finds a table spread,
The fireside welcome, and the peaceful bed.
The needy neighbour, oft by wealth denied,
There finds the little aids of life supplied;
The horse, that bears to mill the hard-earn'd grain;
The day's work given, to reap the ripen'd plain;
The useful team, to house the precious food,
And all the offices of real good.

There too, divine Religion is a guest,
And all the Virtues join the daily feast.
Kind Hospitality attends the door,
To welcome in the stranger and the poor;
Sweet Chastity, still blushing as she goes;
And Patience smiling at her train of woes;
And meek-eyed Innocence, and Truth refin'd,
And Fortitude, of bold, but gentle mind.

Thou pay'st the tax, the rich man will not pay;
Thou feed'st the poor, the rich man drives away.
Thy sons, for freedom, hazard limbs, and life,
While pride applauds, but shuns the manly strife:
Thou prop'st religion's cause, the world around,
And shew'st thy faith in works, and not in sound.

Say, child of passion! while, with idiot stare,
Thou seest proud grandeur wheel her sunny car;
While kings, and nobles, roll bespangled by,
And the tall palace lessens in the sky;
Say, while with pomp thy giddy brain runs round,
What joys, like these, in splendour can be found?
Ah, yonder turn thy wealth-inchanted eyes,
Where that poor, friendless wretch expiring lies!
Hear his sad partner shriek, beside his bed,
And call down curses on her landlord's head,
Who drove, from yon small cot, her household sweet,
To pine with want, and perish in the street.

See the pale tradesman toil, the livelong day,
To deck imperious lords, who never pay!
Who waste, at dice, their boundless breadth of soil,
But grudge the scanty meed of honest toil.
See hounds and horses riot on the store,
By HEAVEN created for the hapless poor!
See half a realm one tyrant scarce sustain,
While meagre thousands round him glean the plain!
See, for his mistress' robe, a village sold,
Whose matrons shrink from nakedness and cold!
See too the Farmer prowl around the shed,
To rob the starving houshold of their bread;
And seize, with cruel fangs, the helpless swain,
While wives, and daughters, plead, and weep, in vain;
Or yield to infamy themselves, to save
Their sire from prison, famine, and the grave.

There too foul luxury taints the putrid mind,
And slavery there imbrutes the reasoning kind:
There humble worth, in damps of deep despair,
Is bound by poverty's eternal bar:
No motives bright the etherial aim impart,
Nor one fair ray of hope allures the heart.

But, O sweet Competence! how chang'd the scene,
Where thy soft footsteps lightly print the green!
Where Freedom walks erect, with manly port,
And all the blessings to his side resort,
In every hamlet, Learning builds her schools,
And beggars' children gain her arts, and rules;
And mild Simplicity o'er manners reigns,
And blameless morals Purity sustains.

From thee the rich enjoyments round me spring,
Where every farmer reigns a little king;
Where all to comfort, none to danger, rise;
Where pride finds few, but nature all supplies;
Where peace and sweet civility are seen,
And meek good-neighbourhood endears the green.
Here every class (if classes those we call,

---

145 **the Farmer.** "Farmer of revenue: A superior kind of tax-gatherer, in some countries of Europe."—Dwight • 154 **poverty's eternal bar.** "By poverty's unconquerable bar. Beattie."—Dwight. The line appears in the first stanza of "The Minstrel" (1771) by James Beattie (1735-1803)

Where one extended class embraces all,
All mingling, as the rainbow's beauty blends,
Unknown where every hue begins or ends)
Each following, each, with uninvidious strife,
Wears every feature of improving life.
Each gains from other comeliness of dress,
And learns, with gentle mein to win and bless,
With welcome mild the stranger to receive,
And with plain, pleasing decency to live;
Refinement hence even humblest life improves;
Not the loose fair, that form and frippery loves;
But she, whose mansion is the gentle mind,
Is thought, and action, virtuously refin'd.
Hence, wives and husbands act a lovelier part,
More just the conduct, and more kind the heart;
Hence brother, sister, parent, child, and friend,
The harmony of life more sweetly blend;
Hence labour brightens every rural scene;
Hence cheerful plenty lives along the green;
Still Prudence eyes her hoard, with watchful care,
And robes of thrift and neatness, all things wear.

. . . .

Thrice bless'd the life, in this glad region spent,
In peace, in competence, and still content;
Where bright, and brighter, all things daily smile,
And rare and scanty, flow the streams of ill;
Where undecaying youth sits blooming round,
And Spring looks lovely on the happy ground;
Improvement glows, along life's cheerful way,
And with soft lustre makes the passage gay
Thus oft, on yonder Sound, when evening gales
Breath'd o'er th' expanse, and gently fill'd the sails,
The world was still, the heavens were dress'd in smiles,
And the clear moon-beam tipp'd the distant isles,
On the blue plain a lucid image gave,
And capp'd, with silver light, each little wave;
The silent splendour, floating at our side,
Mov'd as we mov'd, and wanton'd on the tide;
While shadowy points, and havens, met the eye,
And the faint-glimmering landmark told us home was nigh.

Ah, dire reverse! in yonder eastern clime,
Where heavy drags the sluggish car of time;
The world unalter'd by the change of years,
Age after age, the same dull aspect wears;
On the bold mind the weight of system spread,
Resistless lies, a cumbrous load of lead;
One beaten course, the wheels politic keep,
And slaves of custom, lose their woes in sleep;
Stagnant is social life; no bright design,
Quickens the sloth, or checks the sad decline.
The friend of man casts round a wishful eye,
And hopes, in vain, improving scenes to spy;
Slow o'er his head, the dragging moments roll,
And damp each cheerful purpose of the soul.

Thus the bewilder'd traveler, forc'd to roam
Through a lone forest, leaves his friends, and home;
Dun evening hangs the sky; the woods around
Join their sad umbrage o'er the russet ground;
At every step, new gloom inshrouds the skies;
His path grows doubtful, and his fears arise:
No woodland songstress soothes his mournful way;
No taper gilds the gloom with cheering ray;
On the cold earth he lays his head forlorn,
And watching, looks, and looks, to spy the lingering morn.

And when new regions prompt their feet to roam,
And fix, in untrod fields, another home,
No dreary realms our happy race explore,
Nor mourn their exile from their native shore.
For there no endless frosts the glebe deform,
Nor blows, with icy breath, perpetual storm:
No wrathful suns, with sickly splendour glare,
Nor moors, impoison'd, taint the balmy air,
But medial climates change the healthful year;
Pure streamlets wind, and gales of Eden cheer;
In misty pomp the sky-topp'd mountains stand,
And with green bosom humbler hills expand:
With flowery brilliance smiles the woodland glade;
Full teems the soil, and fragrant twines the shade.

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192 all things wear. According to Dwight's "Argument" the next 445 lines, omitted here, contain the following matter: Africa appears—State of Negro Slavery in Connecticut—Effects of Slavery on the African, from his childhood through life—Slavery generally characterized—West-Indian Slavery—True cause of the calamities of the West-Indies—Church—Effects of the Sabbath—Academic School—Schoolmaster—House of Sloth—Female Worthy—Inferior Schools—Female Visit—What is not, and what is, a social female visit. As may be imagined, the trend is highly moral and didactic

There cheaper fields the numerous household charm,
And the glad sire gives every son a farm;
In falling forests, Labour's axe resounds;
Opes the new field; and winds the fence's bounds;
The green wheat sparkles; nods the towering corn;
And meads, and pastures, lessening wastes adorn.
Where howl'd the forest, herds unnumber'd low;
The fleecy wanderers fear no prowling foe;
The village springs; the humble school aspires;
And the church brightens in the morning fires!
Young Freedom wantons; Art exalts her head;
And infant Science prattles through the shade.
There changing neighbours learn their manners mild;
And toil and prudence dress th' improving wild:
The savage shrinks, nor dares the bliss annoy;
And the glad traveller wonders at the joy.

All hail, thou western world! by heaven design'd
Th' example bright, to renovate mankind.
Soon shall thy sons across the mainland roam;
And claim, on far Pacific shores, their home;
Their rule, religion, manners, arts, convey,
And spread their freedom to the Asian sea.
Where erst six thousand suns have roll'd the year
O'er plains of slaughter, and o'er wilds of fear,
Towns, cities, fanes, shall lift their towery pride;
The village bloom, on every streamlets side;
Proud Commerce' mole the western surges lave;
The long, white spire lie imag'd on the wave;
O'er morn's pellucid main expand their sails,
And the starr'd ensign court Korean gales.
Then nobler thoughts shall savage trains inform;
Then barbarous passions cease the heart to storm:
No more the captive circling flames devour;
Through the war path the Indian creep no more;
No midnight scout the slumbering village fire;
Nor the scalp'd infant stain his gasping sire:
But peace, and truth, illume the twilight mind,
The gospel's sunshine, and the purpose kind.
Where marshes teem'd with death, shall meads unfold;
Untrodden cliffs resign their stores of gold;
The dance refin'd on Albion's margin move,
And her lone bowers rehearse the tale of love.
Where slept perennial night, shall science rise,
And new-born Oxfords cheer the evening skies;
Miltonic strains the Mexic hills prolong,
And Louis murmur to Sicilian song.

Then to new climes the bliss shall trace its way,
And Tartar desarts hail the rising day;
From the long torpor startled China wake;
Her chains of misery rous'd Peruvia break;
Man link to man; with bosom bosom twine;
And one great bond the house of Adam join:
The sacred promise full completion know,
And peace, and piety, the world o'erflow.

1787?-1794

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712 **Asian sea,** "Pacific ocean."—Dwight • 719 **pellucid main,** transparent sea • 720 **Korean.** "Korea is a large peninsula on the eastern shore of Asia."—Dwight • 731 **Albion's margin.** "New Albion, a very desirable country, on the western shore of America, discovered by Sir Francis Drake."—Dwight. The California coast bore this name on maps of America well into the nineteenth century • 735 **Mexic hills.** "A range of mountains, running from north to south, at the distance of several hundred miles, westward of the Mississippi."—Dwight • 736 **Louis,** "The Mississippi."—Dwight • 736 **Sicilian song,** "Pastoral poetry."—Dwight



Joel Barlow

1754 · 1812

Philanthropist, statesman, philosopher, poet—such is the order in which his biographer ranks the various capacities in which Joel Barlow distinguished himself. There can be little objection to the judgment; but it records the failure of a great ambition, for Barlow wanted above all things to be an epic poet. Later generations have regretted that the hours and years he spent on *The Columbiad* did not go instead into more prose such as the vigorous *Advice to the Privileged Orders* or, if he had to express himself in poetry, to such unpretentious portrayals of life and manners as *The Hasty-Pudding.*

Barlow was born at Redding, Connecticut, in 1754, and was graduated from Yale College with the Class of 1778. His college career was distinguished chiefly by at least one vacation spent in the army, of all places, and a Commencement poem, *The Prospect of Peace.* Settling down in the atmosphere of revolution proved somewhat difficult. He studied law for a time, then served as an unordained chaplain from September 1780 until the end of the war. Choosing Hartford for his home, he then tried his hand at teaching and editing before being admitted to the bar in 1786. In the year following he helped organize the Scioto Company, which planned to buy lands in Ohio and sell them at a large profit to European immigrants. Going abroad as a promoter in 1788, Barlow found London apathetic, but with the aid of enticing circulars he created a speculative flurry in Ohio real estate in Paris. Unfortunately the titles which he sold were not clear, and the Frenchmen who occupied Gallipolis in 1790 found that they had been swindled. The guilt, however, lay more with others than with Barlow, if not, indeed, with the French themselves, who were gulled by dreams of a Utopia in the wilderness.

Barlow was caught in Paris by the French Revolution. Somewhat surprisingly for a son of Federalist Connecticut who had collaborated in *The Anarchiad* (1786), an attack on populist tendencies in government, Barlow emerged in 1792 as an ardent radical. He expected a general revolution in the political and social structure of Europe along the lines of the American system. *Advice to the Privileged Orders*—a pamphlet attack on monarchy, an established church, inequalities in taxation and access to the courts, and standing armies—helped precipitate the conservative reaction in England, of which Edmund Burke was leader. A poem entitled *The Conspiracy of Kings* made him anathema to cautious Englishmen. Another pamphlet, *A Letter to the National Convention of France,* won him the honor of French citizenship. Barlow lived through the Terror without inconvenience and was able to befriend Thomas Paine in one serious crisis (see p. 408). From 1795 to 1797 he served as American consul in Algiers, engineering a treaty with the pirates there; he then returned to Paris and by judicious speculation in securities made a comfortable fortune. From 1805 until 1811 he lived in considerable splendor near Washington, D. C., polishing what he regarded as his great epic and entertaining his wide circle of friends. President Madison sent him once more to

France in 1811, as ambassador, and in the following year Barlow died in Poland, where he had gone to confer with Napoleon on matters of state.

Barlow spent a large part of his life planning, composing, and revising a long philosophical poem on the importance of American history. Some of it was written in 1780; two years later he was taking subscriptions for its publication. It appeared as *The Vision of Columbus* in 1787, and the final version, *The Columbiad*, was published in 1807, nearly thirty years after Barlow had conceived it. All that can be said for it is that it is a better epic than Timothy Dwight's *The Conquest of Canaan.* Barlow is now read almost exclusively in *The Hasty-Pudding,* tossed off in a few days in a nostalgic mood.

The Connecticut Wits, ed. V. L. Parrington, New York, 1926 • C. B. Todd, Life and Letters of Joel Barlow, New York, 1886 • T. A. Zunder, The Early Days of Joel Barlow, a Connecticut Wit, New Haven, 1934 • V. C. Miller, Joel Barlow: Revolutionist, London, 1791-1792, Hamburg, 1932

The Hasty-Pudding

A Poem, in Three Cantos, Written at Chambery in Savoy, January, 1793

In January 1793, the month of the execution of Louis XVI, Barlow was in Savoy, apparently hoping to become a deputy to the National Convention from a new department or election district being organized there. In a spell of homesickness, brought on by encountering unexpectedly the most familiar porridge of his New England boyhood, he composed The Hasty-Pudding, which imitates the mock-heroic and pastoral veins of the age of Pope. The burlesque of the traditional epic invocation to the Muse, the rhetorical passages on exceedingly homely subjects, the numerous allusions—all reveal Barlow's familiarity with literature. Yet the poem, typical of the productions of the Connecticut group in its backward-looking tendencies, has a verve and an abundant local reference which save it from dullness. One might argue, indeed, that Barlow's democratic sympathies are as well expressed in his praise of simplicity as in his radical pamphlets. At any rate, to remember the most popular of Barlow's work is not wholly, as V. L. Parrington's remarks tend to suggest, to "make a mush" of an "honest thinker."

Omne tulit punctum qui miscuit utile dulci.
He makes a good breakfast who mixes pudding with molasses.

PREFACE

A *simplicity in diet, whether it be considered with reference to the happiness of individuals or the prosperity of a nation, is of more consequence than we are apt to imagine. In recommending so important an object to the rational part of mankind, I wish it were in my power to do it in such a manner as would be likely to gain their attention. I am sensible that it is one of those subjects in which example has infinitely more power than the most convincing arguments or the highest charms of poetry. Goldsmith's* Deserted Village, *though possessing these two advantages in a greater degree than any other work of the kind, has not prevented villages in England from being deserted. The apparent interest of the rich individuals, who form the taste as well as the laws in that country, has been against him; and with that interest it has been vain to contend.*

Text: that which appeared in the January 1796 issue of the **New-York Magazine.** The first separate publication was apparently at New Haven; it contains an "advertisement" dated in April. The New Haven edition reveals several changes: the Preface became a dedication to Martha Washington; greater particularity was obtained by making "our sires" "my sire" throughout; four lines (following 264) were added; a prose note was appended and numerous changes made in punctuation, spelling, and italics. Possibly Barlow sent back two manuscripts; it is also possible that the dedication to Mrs. Washington was someone else's idea • **Omne . . . dulci.** He has gained all approval who has mingled the useful with the agreeable • **apparent interest.** A distinction between the "interests" of privileged groups and the interests of the masses is the basis of Barlow's argument in **Advice to the Privileged Orders.** He sought to appeal to the enlightened self-interest of all readers

The vicious habits which in this little piece I endeavor to combat, seem to me not so difficult to cure. No class of people has any interest *in supporting them, unless it be the interest which certain families feel in vying with each other in sumptuous entertainments. There may indeed be some instances of depraved appetites, which no arguments will conquer; but these must be rare. There are very few persons but what would always prefer a plain dish for themselves, and would prefer it likewise for their guests, if there were no risk of reputation in the case. This difficulty can only be removed by example; and the example should proceed from those whose situation enables them to take the lead in forming the manners of a nation. Persons of this description in America, I should hope, are neither above nor below the influence of truth and reason, when conveyed in language suited to the subject.*

Whether the manner I have chosen to address my arguments to them be such as to promise any success is what I cannot decide. But I certainly had hopes of doing some good, or I should not have taken the pains of putting so many rhymes together.—The example of domestic virtues has doubtless a great effect. I only wish to rank simplicity of diet *among the virtues. In that case I should hope it will be cherished and more esteemed by others than it is at present.*

THE AUTHOR

CANTO I

Ye Alps audacious, thro' the heav'ns that rise,
To cramp the day and hide me from the skies;
Ye Gallic flags, that o'er their heights unfurl'd,
Bear death to kings, and freedom to the world,
I sing not you. A softer theme I chuse,
A virgin theme, unconscious of the Muse,
But fruitful, rich, well suited to inspire
The purest frenzy of poetic fire.
Despise it not, ye Bards to terror steel'd,
Who hurl your thunders round the epic field;
Nor ye who strain your midnight throats to sing
Joys that the vineyard and the still-house bring;
Or on some distant fair your notes employ,
And speak of raptures that you ne'er enjoy.
I sing the sweets I know, the charms I feel,
My morning incense, and my evening meal,
The sweets of Hasty-Pudding. Come, dear bowl,
Glide o'er my palate, and inspire my soul.
The milk beside thee, smoking from the kine,
Its substance mingled, married in with thine,
Shall cool and temper thy superior heat,
And save the pains of blowing while I eat.
Oh! could the smooth, the emblematic song
Flow like thy genial juices o'er my tongue,
Could those mild morsels in my numbers chime,
And, as they roll in substance, roll in rhyme,
No more thy aukward unpoetic name
Should shun the Muse, or prejudice thy fame;
But rising grateful to th' accustom'd ear,
All Bards should catch it, and all realms revere.
Assist me first with pious toil to trace
Thro' wrecks of time thy lineage and thy race;
Declare what lovely squaw, in dayes of yore,
(Ere great Columbus sought thy native shore)
First gave thee to the world; her works of fame
Have liv'd indeed, but liv'd without a name.
Some tawny Ceres, goddess of her days
First learn'd with stones to crack the well dry'd maise,
Thro' the rough seive to shake the golden show'r,
In boiling water stir the yellow flour:
The yellow flour, bestrew'd and stir'd with haste,
Swells in the flood and thickens to a paste,
Then puffs and wallops, rises to the brim,
Drinks the dry knobs that on the surface swim;
The knobs at last the busy ladle breaks,
And the whole mass its true consistence takes.
Could but her sacred name unknown so long,
Rise, like her labors, to the son of song,
To her, to them, I'd consecrate my lays,
And blow her pudding with the breath of praise.
If 'twas Oella, whom I sang before,

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3 **Gallic flags,** French standards. At the beginning of the French Revolution, Savoy was a part of the Kingdom of Sardinia; it was invaded and taken by the French in 1792 • 12 **still-house,** distillery • 37 **Ceres,** goddess of grain • 43 **wallops,** bubbles (dialect) • 51 **Oella . . . before.** In Bks. II and III of **The Vision of Columbus** and **The Columbiad,** Barlow made great use of the legend that the Incas of Peru originated with two children of the Sun, Manco Capac and his sister-wife, Mama Oella. This legend, derived from the history of Peru by Garcilaso de la Vega (1540-1616), made Oella the originator of spinning and other useful arts

I here ascribe her one great virtue more.
Not thro' the rich Peruvian realms alone
The fame of Sol's sweet daughter should be known,
But o'er the world's wide clime should live secure,
Far as his rays extend, as long as they endure.
  Dear Hasty-Pudding, what unpromis'd joy
Expands my heart, to meet thee in Savoy!
Doom'd o'er the world thro' devious paths to roam,
Each clime my country, and each house my home,
My soul is sooth'd, my cares have found an end,
I greet my long-lost, unforgotten friend.
  For Thee thro' Paris, that corrupted town,
How long in vain I wandered up and down,
Where shameless Bacchus, with his drenching hoard,
Cold from his cave usurps the morning board.
London is lost in smoke and steep'd in tea;
No Yankey there can lisp the name of thee;
The uncouth word, a libel on the town,
Would call a proclamation from the crown.
For climes oblique, that fear the sun's full rays,
Chill'd in their fogs, exclude the generous maize;
A grain whose rich luxuriant growth requires
Short gentle showers, and bright etherial fires.
  But here, tho' distant from our native shore,
With mutual glee we meet and laugh once more.
The same! I know thee by that yellow face,
That strong complexion of true Indian race.
Which time can never change, nor soil impair,
Nor Alpine snows, nor Turkey's morbid air;
For endless years, thro' every mild domain,
Where grows the maize, there thou art sure to reign.
  But man, more fickle, the bold licence claims,
In different realms to give thee different names.
Thee the soft nations round the warm Levant
Polanta call, the French of course *Polante.*
Ev'n in thy native regions, how I blush
To hear the Pennsylvanians call thee *Mush!*
On Hudson's banks, while men of Belgic spawn
Insult and eat thee by the name *Suppawn.*
Thy name is *Hasty-Pudding!* thus our sires
Were wont to greet thee fuming from their fires,
And while they argu'd in thy just defence
With logic clear, they thus explain'd the sense:—
"In *haste* the boiling cauldron, o'er the blaze,
"Receives and cooks the ready-powder'd maize;
"In *haste* 'tis served, and then in equal *haste,*
"With cooling milk, we make the sweet repast.
"No carving to be done, no knife to grate
"The tender ear, and wound the stony plate;
"But the smooth spoon, just fitted to the lip,
"And taught with art the yielding mass to dip,
"By frequent journeys to the bowl well stor'd,
"Performs the hasty honors of the board."
Such is thy name, significant and clear,
A name, a sound to every Yankey dear,
But most to me, whose heart and palate chaste
Preserve my pure hereditary taste.
  There are who strive to stamp with disrepute
The luscious food, because it feeds the brute;
In tropes of high-strain'd wit, while gaudy prigs
Compare thy nursling man to pamper'd pigs;
With sovereign scorn I treat the vulgar jest,
Nor fear to share thy bounties with the beast.
What though the generous cow gives me to quaff
The milk nutritious; am I then a calf?
Or can the genius of the noisy swine,
Though nurs'd on pudding, thence lay claim to mine?
Sure the sweet song, I fashion to thy praise,
Runs more melodious than the notes they raise.
  My song resounding in its grateful glee,
No merit claims; I praise myself in thee.
My father lov'd thee thro' his length of days;
For thee his fields were shaded o'er with maize;
From thee what health, what vigor he possesst,
Ten sturdy freemen from his loins attest;
Thy constellation rul'd my natal morn,
And all my bones were made of Indian corn.
Delicious grain! whatever form it take,
To roast or boil, to smother or to bake,
In every dish 'tis welcome still to me,
But most, my *Hasty-Pudding,* most in thee.
  Let the green Succatash with thee contend,

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65 Bacchus, god of wine • **70 crown.** "A certain king, at the time when this was written, was publishing proclamations to prevent American principles from being propagated in his country."—Barlow. The allusion is probably to a royal proclamation against seditious publications issued in England in May 1792, which forced Barlow to publish Part II of Advice to the Privileged Orders (1793) in Paris • **85 Levant,** countries of the eastern Mediterranean • **89 Belgic spawn,** the Dutch • **90 Suppawn,** supawn, a word of American Indian origin • **126 Ten sturdy freemen.** Only nine Barlow children are accounted for. "Still," says Professor Zunder, "Joel must have known the truth"

Let beans and corn their sweetest juices blend,
Let butter drench them in its yellow tide,
And a long slice of bacon grace their side;
Not all the plate, how fam'd soe'er it be,
Can please my palate like a bowl of thee.
  Some talk of Hoe-Cake, fair Virginia's pride,
Rich Johnny-Cake this mouth has often tri'd;
Both please me well, their virtues much the same;
Alike their fabric, as allied their fame,
Except in dear New-England, where the last
Receive a dash a pumpkin in the paste,
To give it sweetness and improve the taste.
But place them all before me, smoaking hot,
The big, round dumplin rolling from the pot;
The pudding of the bag, whose quivering breast,
With suet lin'd, leads on the Yankey feast;
The Charlotte brown, within whose crusty sides
A belly soft the pulpy apple hides;
The yellow bread, whose face like amber glows,
And all of Indian that the bake-pan knows—
You tempt me not, my fav'rite greets my eyes,
To that lov'd bowl my spoon by instinct flies.

CANTO II

  To mix the food by vicious rules of art,
To kill the stomach and to sink the heart,
To make mankind to social virtue sour,
Cram o'er each dish, and be what they devour;
For this the kitchen Muse first fram'd her book,
Commanding sweat to stream from every cook;
Children no more their antic gambols tri'd,
And friends to physic wonder'd why they died.
  Not so the Yankey—his abundant feast,
With simples furnish'd, and with plainness drest,
A numerous offspring gathers round the board,
And cheers alike the servant and the lord;
Whose well-bought hunger prompts the joyous taste,
And health attends them from the short repast.
  While the full pail rewards the milk-maid's toil,
The mother sees the morning cauldron boil;
To stir the pudding next demands their care,
To spread the table and the bowls prepare;
To feed the children, as their portions cool,
And comb their heads, and send them off to school.
  Yet may the simplest dish some rules impart,
For nature scorns not all the aids of art.
Ev'n Hasty-Pudding, purest of all food,
May still be bad, indifferent, or good,
As sage experience the short process guides,
Or want of skill, or want of care presides.
Whoe'er would form it on the surest plan,
To rear the child and long sustain the man;
To shield the morals while it mends the size,
And all the powers of every food supplies,
Attend the lessons that the Muse shall bring,
Suspend your spoons, and listen while I sing.
  But since, O man! thy life and health demand
Not food alone, but labour from thy hand,
First in the field, beneath the sun's strong rays,
Ask of thy mother earth the needful maize;
She loves the race that courts her yielding soil,
And gives her bounties to the sons of toil.
  When now the ox, obedient to thy call,
Repays the loan that fill'd the winter stall,
Pursue his traces o'er the furrow'd plain,
And plant in measur'd hills the golden grain.
But when the tender germe begins to shoot,
And the green spire declares the sprouting root,
Then guard your nursling from each greedy foe,
Th' insidious worm, the all-devouring crow.
A little ashes, sprinkled round the spire,
Soon steep'd in rain, will bid the worm retire;
The feather'd robber with his hungry maw
Swift flies the field before your man of straw,
A frightful image, such as school-boys bring
When met to burn the Pope, or hang the King.
  Thrice in each season, through each variant row
Wield the strong plow-share and the faithful hoe;
The faithful hoe; a double task that takes,
To till the summer corn, and roast the winter cakes.
  Slow springs the blade, while check'd by chilling rains,
Ere yet the sun the seat of Cancer gains;

---

150 **Charlotte,** a sweet enclosed in cake, crust, or crumbs, such as charlotte russe. Barlow probably picked up the word in Europe, although he may have been describing a kind of apple pie • 207 **burn . . . King.** The allusion is probably to the traditional celebration of Guy Fawkes Day, November 5, the anniversary of the discovery of the Gunpowder Plot in 1605. English children still ask "a penny for the Guy"; American boys probably cared little for distinctions between Fawkes, Pope, and King • 213 **Cancer,** the sign of the zodiac marking the summer solstice or longest day in the year; about June 21

But when his fiercest fires emblaze the land,
Then start the juices, then the roots expand;
Then, like a column of Corinthian mould,
The stalk struts upward, and the leaves unfold;
The busy branches all the ridges fill,
Entwine their arms, and kiss from hill to hill.
Here cease to vex them, all your cares are done;
Leave the last labors to the parent sun;
Beneath his genial smiles, the well-drest field,
When autumn calls, a plenteous crop shall yield.
  Now the strong foliage bears the standards high,
And shoots the tall top-gallants to the sky;
The suckling ears their silky fringes bend,
And pregnant grown, their swelling coats distend;
The loaded stalk, while still the burthen grows,
O'erhangs the space that runs between the rows;
High as a hop-field waves the silent grove,
A safe retreat for little thefts of love,
When the pledg'd roasting-ears invite the maid,
To meet her swain beneath the new-form'd shade;
His generous hand unloads the cumbrous hill,
And the green spoils her ready basket fill;
Small compensation for the two-fold bliss,
The promis'd wedding and the present kiss.
  Slight depredations these; but now the moon
Calls from his hollow tree the sly raccoon;
And while by night he bears his prize away,
The bolder squirrel labors thro' the day.
Both thieves alike, but provident of time,
A virtue rare, that almost hides their crime.
Then let them steal the little stores they can,
And fill their gran'ries from the toils of man;
We've one advantage where they take no part,—
With all their wiles they ne'er have found the art
To boil the Hasty-Pudding; here we shine
Superior far to tenants of the pine;
This envy'd boon to man shall still belong,
Unshar'd by them in substance or in song.
  At last the closing season browns the plain,
And ripe October gathers in the grain;
Deep loaded carts the spacious corn-house fill,
The sack distended marches to the mill;
The lab'ring mill beneath the burthen groans,
And show'rs the future pudding from the stones;
Till the glad house-wife greets the powder'd gold,
And the new crop exterminates the old.

  The days grow short; but tho' the falling sun
To the glad swain proclaims his day's work done,
Night's pleasing shades his various tasks prolong,
And yield new subjects to my various song.
For now, the corn-house fill'd, the harvest home,
Th' invited neighbors to the *Husking* come;
A frolic scene, where work, and mirth, and play,
Unite their charms, to chace the hours away.
  Where the huge heap lies center'd in the hall,
The lamp suspended from the cheerful wall,
Brown corn-fed nymphs, and strong hard-handed beaux,
Alternate rang'd, extend in circling rows,
Assume their seats, the solid mass attack;
The dry husks rustle, and the corn-cobs crack;
The song, the laugh, alternate notes resound,
And the sweet cider trips in silence round.
  The laws of Husking every wight can tell;
And sure no laws he ever keeps so well:
For each red ear a general kiss he gains,
With each smut ear he smuts the luckless swains;
But when to some sweet maid a prize is cast,
Red as her lips, and taper as her waist,
She walks the round, and culls one favor'd beau,
Who leaps, the luscious tribute to bestow.
Various the sport, as are the wits and brains
Of well-pleas'd lasses and contending swains;
Till the vast mound of corn is swept away,
And he that gets the last ear, wins the day.
  Meanwhile the house-wife urges all her care,
The well-earn'd feast to hasten and prepare.
The sifted meal already waits her hand.
The milk is strain'd, the bowls in order stand,
The fire flames high; and, as a pool (that takes
The headlong stream that o'er the mill-dam breaks)
Foams, roars, and rages, with incessant toils,

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216 Corinthian mould, the most ornamental of the Greek capital orders • **259 the old.** New Haven ed. inserts:

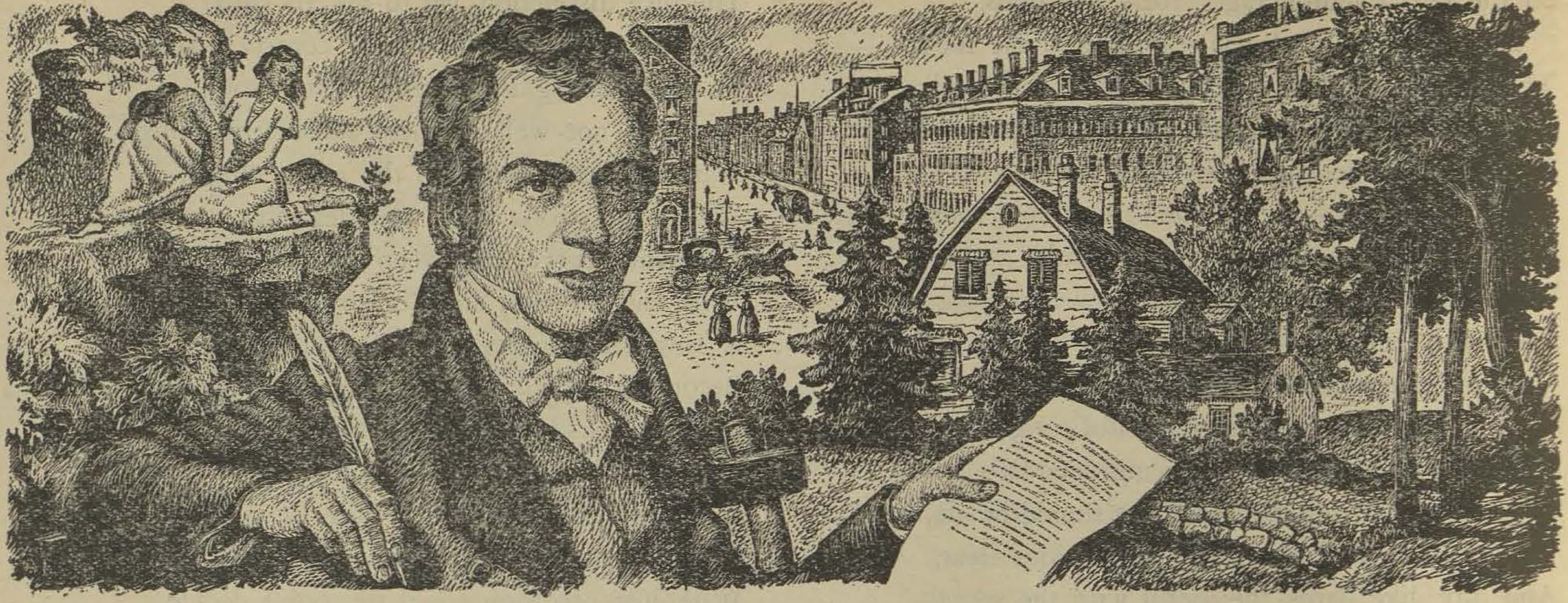
Ah, who can sing what every wight must feel,
The joy that enters with the bag of meal,
A general jubilee pervades the house,
Wakes every child and gladdens every mouse.

So the vext cauldron rages, roars and boils.
First with clean salt she seasons well the food,
Then strews the flour, and thickens all the flood.
Long o'er the simmering fire she lets it stand;
To stir it well demands a stronger hand;
The husband takes his turn and round and round
The ladle flies; at last the toil is crown'd;
When to the board the thronging huskers pour,
And take their seats as at the corn before.
I leave them to their feast. There still belong
More copious matters to my faithful song.
For rules there are, tho' ne'er unfolded yet,
Nice rules and wise, how pudding should be ate.
Some with molasses grace the luscious treat,
And mix, like Bards, the useful with the sweet.
A wholesome dish, and well deserving praise,
A great resource in those bleak wintry days,
When the chill'd earth lies buried deep in snow,
And raging Boreas dries the shivering cow.
Blest cow! thy praise shall still my notes employ,
Great source of health, the only source of joy;
Mother of Egypt's God,—but sure, for me,
Were I to leave my God, I'd worship thee.
How oft thy teats these pious hands have prest!
How oft thy bounties proved my only feast!
How oft I've fed thee with my fav'rite grain!
And roar'd, like thee, to find thy children slain!
Ye swains who know her various worth to prize,
Ah! house her well from Winter's angry skies.
Potatoes, pumpkins, should her sadness cheer,
Corn from your crib, and mashes from your beer;
When spring returns she'll well acquit the loan,
And nurse at once your infants and her own.
Milk then with pudding I should always chuse;
To this in future I confine my Muse,
Till she in haste some farther hints unfold,
Well for the young, nor useless to the old.
First in your bowl the milk abundant take,
Then drop with care along the silver lake
Your flakes of pudding; these at first will hide
Their little bulk beneath the swelling tide;
But when their growing mass no more can sink,
When the soft island looms above the brink,
Then check your hand; you've got the portion's due,
So taught our sires, and what they taught is true.
There is a choice in spoons. Tho' small appear
The nice distinction, yet to me 'tis clear.
The deep-bowl'd Gallic spoon, contriv'd to scoop
In ample draughts the thin diluted soup,
Performs not well in these substantial things,
Whose mass adhesive to the metal clings;
Where the strong labial muscles must embrace,
The gentle curve, and sweep the hollow space.
With ease to enter and discharge the freight,
A bowl less concave but still more dilate,
Becomes the pudding best. The shape, the size,
A secret rests unknown to vulgar eyes.
Experienc'd feeders can alone impart
A rule so much above the lore of art.
These tuneful lips, that thousand spoons have tried,
With just precision could the point decide.
Tho' not in song; the muse but poorly shines
In cones, and cubes, and geometric lines,
Yet the true form, as near as she can tell,
Is that small section of a goose-egg shell,
Which in two equal portions shall divide
The distance from the centre to the side.
Fear not to slaver; 'tis no deadly sin.
Like the free Frenchman, from your joyous chin
Suspend the ready napkin; or, like me,
Poise with one hand your bowl upon your knee;
Just in the zenith your wise head project,
Your full spoon, rising in a line direct,
Bold as a bucket, heeds no drops that fall,
The wide-mouth'd bowl will surely catch them all!

1793 • 1796

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362 slaver, drool, slobber • 369 catch them all. New Haven ed. inserts a note: "There are various ways of preparing and eating it; with molasses, butter, sugar, cream, and fried. Why so excellent a thing cannot be eaten alone? Nothing is perfect alone, even man who boasts of so much perfection is nothing without his fellow substance. In eating, beware of the lurking heat that lies deep in the mass; dip your spoon gently, take shallow dips and cool it by degrees. It is sometimes necessary to blow. This is indicated by certain signs which every experienced feeder knows. They should be taught to young beginners. I have known a child's tongue blistered for want of this attention, and then the school-dame would insist that the poor thing had told a lie. A mistake: the falsehood was in the faithless pudding. A prudent mother will cool it for her child with her own sweet breath. The husband, seeing this, pretends his own wants blowing too from the same lips. A sly deceit of love. She knows the cheat, but feigning ignorance, lends her pouting lips and gives a gentle blast, which warms the husband's heart more than it cools his pudding"



William Cullen Bryant

1794 · 1878

When William Cullen Bryant was born, during Washington's second term as President, there were fifteen states in the Union, with Kentucky the only one west of the Alleghenies. When Bryant died, twenty-two of the thirty-eight states were "western," and the first transcontinental railroad had been in operation for nearly a decade. In this period of unparalleled expansion, Bryant, as a public-spirited citizen and the editor of an influential newspaper, had a conspicuous place and would be remembered even had he not written poetry. Sober, dignified, earnest in urging principles and policies in which he believed, he was recognized as a great liberal, and it is likely that he will command respect, for one reason or another, from each succeeding generation of Americans.

As a poet, Bryant has suffered from being called the American Wordsworth, or a belated representative of New England Puritanism, or a cold child of the eighteenth century, only slightly affected by the warming influences of the Romantic movement. That there is some justice in each of these judgments cannot be denied, but Bryant may be better understood against the background of American expansion. His love of nature was typical of an age which was discovering the wildness and variety of American scenery; his moral earnestness was shared by the vast majority of his countrymen, although few of them, perhaps, were as untouched by denominational bigotry; and his conservative tastes in the arts were in large part the result of the uncertain groping of his generation toward standards and traditions. In Bryant's poetry, moreover, we can observe the

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Panel (l. to r.): "Monument Mountain" • William Cullen Bryant at 25 • Broadway in 1840 • Bryant's birthplace, Cummington, Massachusetts

two magnetic poles of his time: the past, Europe, and the idea of continuity on the one hand; and on the other the future, the manifest destiny of America, and the hope of a new start toward a more perfect world.

Bryant was born at Cummington, in western Massachusetts, November 3, 1794. Brought up in a Calvinistic and Federalist environment, he took himself and the world very seriously as soon as he knew anything about them. His first verses appeared in a newspaper when he was ten, and he saw his first book in print five years later, when his father arranged for the publication of *The Embargo,* an attack on Jefferson's methods of avoiding entanglement in the Napoleonic conflict. He had only one year of college, at Williams, and then, because there was no livelihood in poetry, he turned to the study of law. Admitted to the bar in 1814, he practiced in several Massachusetts towns with moderate success, occasionally using his leisure for composing poems. After 1817, when his father sent some of his poems to a Boston friend and "Thanatopsis" came out in the *North American Review,* he became known as poet and reviewer for that periodical and others. In 1821 he married Fanny Fairchild, the "fairest of the rural maids"; theirs was an unusually happy marriage. During a visit to Boston in that same year, to read "The Ages" before the Phi Beta Kappa society at Harvard, Bryant arranged for the first collection of his poems. Thin volume though it was—it contained only eight pieces—the *Poems* of 1821 remains a landmark in American literary history.

Then, in 1825, Bryant had the courage to give up the law for the uncertainties of a literary life and deserted Massachusetts for New York City. Within a few months he formed a connection with the *Evening Post,* a daily newspaper which had been founded by Alexander Hamilton; in 1829 he became its editor-in-chief. Thereafter until his death in 1878 he was first of all the editor of the *Evening Post;* as a part owner he grew wealthy and was able to afford much European travel for himself and his family, as well as to establish a comfortable home at Roslyn on Long Island. His liberalism was most marked in his lifelong devotion to free trade; it may also be followed in his treatment of both national and local politics. In editorials, travel letters, and public discourses he persistently and fearlessly spoke out for what he regarded the best interests of the American people, upholding the right of workingmen to organize, the abolition of slavery, and the rejected plans of Lincoln and Johnson for reconstruction of the South. A recital of his public services would be lengthy, and would include recognition of his part in the establishment of New York City's Central Park and Metropolitan Museum of Art, as well as his close connections with the National Academy of Design and the Century Association.

Busy as he was, Bryant continued to write poetry throughout his life, although not in great quantity. After 1821, the chief editions of his poems were those of 1832, 1836, 1847, 1854, 1871, and 1876. Other volumes of importance included *The Fountain and Other Poems* (1842), *The White Footed Deer and Other Poems* (1844), and *Thirty Poems* (1864). He also translated the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey* and published three volumes of travel letters as well as numerous commemorative discourses.

Bryant's poetry, although apparently simple, presents some very complicated problems, inadequately suggested by the familiar terms "classical" and "romantic." Lowell's famous description in *A Fable for Critics* (". . . Bryant, as quiet, as cool, and as dignified, / As a smooth, silent iceberg, that never is ignified") hints at the "classic" qualities of Bryant: his concern for form and clarity, harmony and serenity. That Bryant owed much to such English poets as James Thomson and William Cowper is clear. Yet his poetic theories and, more particularly, his themes—the past, death, freedom, nature—have much in them that is ordinarily called "romantic." Thoughtful consideration of his work will show how largely a matter of degree is the distinction between the classical and the romantic, and, for most readers, will bring respect for the mind of a man who was much more than a transition figure in the growth of American literature.

The Life and Works of William Cullen Bryant, ed. Parke Godwin, 6 vols., New York, 1883-1884 • **William Cullen Bryant: Representative Selections,** ed. Tremaine McDowell, Cincinnati, 1935 • John Bigelow, **William Cullen Bryant,** American Men of Letters Series, Boston, 1890 • W. A. Bradley, **William Cullen Bryant,** English Men of Letters Series, New York, 1905

Thanatopsis

Bryant's best-known poem, "Thanatopsis" (meaning "view of death"), was in large part written in 1811, when he was only sixteen. Six years later, without his knowledge, his father sent it and other pieces to the North American Review. The story goes that Richard Henry Dana, later one of Bryant's closest friends, remarked on seeing the manuscript that no one in America was capable of writing such verses. Thinking that another poem on death, consisting of four stanzas in iambic tetrameter rhyming abab, was a part of "Thanatopsis," the editors of the North American published both under one title in the issue for September 1817. When Bryant prepared the Poems of 1821, he added lines 1-17 (to "Yet a few days") as an introduction, and sixteen lines at the end (beginning with "As the long train").

The poem should be read in the light of both literary tradition and Bryant's own religious background. From the English poets (notably Henry Kirke White, Robert Blair, Bishop Beilby Porteus, Robert Southey, and William Cowper) he learned of the possibilities of blank verse and the themes of the "graveyard school" of writers. Even had he not read these poets, however, he would have had, from his Puritan background, a predilection for the funereal. Note, however, that Bryant's concept of Man's long sleep is more Stoic than Christian, with no hint of the resurrection or immortality of the soul.

To him who in the love of Nature holds
Communion with her visible forms, she speaks
A various language; for his gayer hours
She has a voice of gladness, and a smile
And eloquence of beauty, and she glides
Into his darker musings, with a mild
And healing sympathy, that steals away
Their sharpness, ere he is aware. When thoughts
Of the last bitter hour come like a blight
Over thy spirit, and sad images
Of the stern agony, and shroud, and pall,
And breathless darkness, and the narrow house,
Make thee to shudder, and grow sick at heart;—
Go forth, under the open sky, and list
To Nature's teachings, while from all around—
Earth and her waters, and the depths of air—
Comes a still voice—Yet a few days, and thee
The all-beholding sun shall see no more
In all his course; nor yet in the cold ground,
Where thy pale form was laid, with many tears,
Nor in the embrace of ocean, shall exist
Thy image. Earth, that nourished thee, shall claim
Thy growth, to be resolved to earth again,
And, lost each human trace, surrendering up
Thine individual being, shalt thou go
To mix for ever with the elements,
To be a brother to the insensible rock
And to the sluggish clod, which the rude swain
Turns with his share, and treads upon. The oak
Shall send his roots abroad, and pierce thy mould.

Yet not to thine eternal resting-place
Shalt thou retire alone, nor couldst thou wish
Couch more magnificent. Thou shalt lie down
With patriarchs of the infant world—with kings,
The powerful of the earth—the wise, the good,
Fair forms, and hoary seers of ages past,
All in one mighty sepulchre. The hills
Rock-ribbed and ancient as the sun,—the vales
Stretching in pensive quietness between;
The venerable woods—rivers that move
In majesty, and the complaining brooks
That make the meadows green; and, poured round all,
Old Ocean's gray and melancholy waste,—
Are but the solemn decorations all
Of the great tomb of man. The golden sun,
The planets, all the infinite host of heaven,
Are shining on the sad abodes of death,
Through the still lapse of ages. All that tread
The globe are but a handful to the tribes
That slumber in its bosom.—Take the wings
Of morning, pierce the Barcan wilderness,
Or lose thyself in the continuous woods

Text: here, as in the poems which follow, is the 1876 edition • 51 pierce . . . wilderness. North American: and the Borean desert pierce; 1821, 1832, 1847: and the Barcan desert pierce; 1854: traverse Barca's desert sands; present reading, 1871. Barca is the ancient name of that part of Libya east of Tripoli, its capital being Bengazi. Bryant seems to have had the idea, common in his time, that there was a Sahara-like desert west of the Mississippi

Where rolls the Oregon, and hears no sound,
Save his own dashings—yet the dead are there:
And millions in those solitudes, since first
The flight of years began, have laid them down
In their last sleep—the dead reign there alone.
So shalt thou rest, and what if thou withdraw
In silence from the living, and no friend
Take note of thy departure? All that breathe
Will share thy destiny. The gay will laugh
When thou art gone, the solemn brood of care
Plod on, and each one as before will chase
His favorite phantom; yet all these shall leave
Their mirth and their employments, and shall come
And make their bed with thee. As the long train
Of ages glide away, the sons of men,
The youth in life's green spring, and he who goes
In the full strength of years, matron and maid,
The speechless babe, and the gray-headed man—
Shall one by one be gathered to thy side,
By those, who in their turn shall follow them.

So live, that when thy summons comes to join
The innumerable caravan, which moves
To that mysterious realm, where each shall take
His chamber in the silent halls of death,
Thou go not, like the quarry-slave at night,
Scourged to his dungeon, but, sustained and soothed
By an unfaltering trust, approach thy grave,
Like one who wraps the drapery of his couch
About him, and lies down to pleasant dreams.

1811·1817-1821

Inscription for the Entrance to a Wood

Nowhere, perhaps, does Bryant express more happily the romantic view of nature than in "A Fragment," which first appeared in the **North American Review** for September 1817 with "Thanatopsis." In the **Poems** of 1821 it was entitled "Inscription for the Entrance into a Wood." Note that nature is a joy and a solace to man, not, as the post-Darwinians tell us, an arena for the struggle to survive.

Stranger, if thou hast learned a truth which needs
No school of long experience, that the world
Is full of guilt and misery, and hast seen
Enough of all its sorrows, crimes, and cares,
To tire thee of it, enter this wild wood
And view the haunts of Nature. The calm shade
Shall bring a kindred calm, and the sweet breeze
That makes the green leaves dance, shall waft a balm
To thy sick heart. Thou wilt find nothing here
Of all that pained thee in the haunts of men,
And made thee loathe thy life. The primal curse
Fell, it is true, upon the unsinning earth,
But not in vengeance. God hath yoked to guilt
Her pale tormentor, misery. Hence, these shades
Are still the abodes of gladness; the thick roof
Of green and stirring branches is alive
And musical with birds, that sing and sport
In wantonness of spirit; while below
The squirrel, with raised paws and form erect,
Chirps merrily. Throngs of insects in the shade
Try their thin wings and dance in the warm beam
That waked them into life. Even the green trees
Partake the deep contentment; as they bend

Thanatopsis • 53 **Where . . . and.** NA: That veil Oregan, where he; 1821: Where rolls the Oregon, and. The Oregon is Bryant's name for the Columbia River • 58 **withdraw.** NA, 1821, 1832: shalt fall • 59 **In silence from.** NA, 1821: Unnoticed by; 1832, 1847: Unheeded by • 60 **All that breathe.** NA: Thousands more • 61 **The gay . . . care.** NA: The tittering world. Dance to the grave. The busy brood of care • 63 **as . . . chase.** NA: chases as before. 1821: The bow'd with age, the infant in the smiles; 1832, 1847, 1854: And the sweet babe, and the gray-headed man • 74 **which.** 1821, 1832, 1847: that • 75 **that mysterious realm.** 1821: the pale realms of shade

Inscription • 1 **learned.** Until 1847: learnt • 2 **No . . . experience.** Until 1832: Experience more than reason • 3 **seen.** Until 1832: known • 7 **kindred.** 1817: kinder • 9 **Thou . . . here.** 1817: Here thou wilt nothing find • 13 **God . . . life.** 1817: Misery is wed
To guilt. Hence in these shades we still behold
The abodes of gladness, here from tree to tree
And through the rustling branches flit the birds
In wantonness of spirit;—theirs are strains
Of no dissembled rapture—while below
The squirrel with rais'd paws and form erect
Chirps merrily. In the warm glade the throngs
Of dancing insects sport in the mild beam
That wak'd them into life.

1821: Misery is wed
To guilt. And hence the shades are still the abodes
Of undissembled gladness; the thick roof . . .

which is followed by the present version except for the use of "glade" instead of "shade" in line 20. By 1832 Bryant had come to the present reading

To the soft winds, the sun from the blue sky
Looks in and sheds a blessing on the scene.
Scarce less the cleft-born wild-flower seems to enjoy
Existence, than the wingèd plunderer
That sucks its sweets. The mossy rocks themselves,
And the old and ponderous trunks of prostrate trees
That lead from knoll to knoll a causey rude
Or bridge the sunken brook, and their dark roots,
With all their earth upon them, twisting high,
Breathe fixed tranquillity. The rivulet
Sends forth glad sounds, and tripping o'er its bed
Of pebbly sands, or leaping down the rocks,
Seems, with continuous laughter, to rejoice
In its own being. Softly tread the marge,
Lest from her midway perch thou scare the wren
That dips her bill in water. The cool wind,
That stirs the stream in play, shall come to thee,
Like one that loves thee nor will let thee pass
Ungreeted, and shall give its light embrace.

1817

To a Waterfowl

This poem, which Matthew Arnold believed the finest of its length in the English language, was composed by Bryant after a walk from Cummington to Plainfield, Massachusetts, in December 1815. It was first published in the North American Review for March 1818 and collected in the Poems of 1821. The clarity of the central image and the aptness and simplicity of the moral analogy have always been admired, even by those who dislike "preaching" in poetry. The effect of the stanza form has been described as "gliding," appropriate to the visual image of the second stanza.

Whither, midst falling dew,
While glow the heavens with the last steps of day,
Far, through their rosy depths, dost thou pursue
Thy solitary way?

Vainly the fowler's eye
Might mark thy distant flight to do thee wrong,
As, darkly seen against the crimson sky,
Thy figure floats along.

Seek'st thou the plashy brink
Of weedy lake, or marge of river wide,
Or where the rocking billows rise and sink
On the chafed ocean-side?

There is a Power whose care
Teaches thy way along that pathless coast—
The desert and illimitable air—
Lone wandering, but not lost.

All day thy wings have fanned,
At that far height, the cold, thin atmosphere,
Yet stoop not, weary, to the welcome land,
Though the dark night is near.

And soon that toil shall end;
Soon shalt thou find a summer home, and rest,
And scream among thy fellows; reeds shall bend,
Soon, o'er thy sheltered nest.

Thou'rt gone, the abyss of heaven
Hath swallowed up thy form; yet, on my heart
Deeply hath sunk the lesson thou hast given,
And shall not soon depart.

He who, from zone to zone,
Guides through the boundless sky thy certain flight,
In the long way that I must tread alone,
Will lead my steps aright.

1815·1818

A Forest Hymn

"A Hymn" first appeared in the **United States Literary Gazette** for April 1, 1825, over the signature of "B." It was reprinted as "Forest Hymn" in the Poems of 1832. Ex-

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Inscription • **25 Looks.** 1817: Peeps • **28 mossy.** Until 1854: massy • **30 causey.** 1817: causeway • **31 brook.** 1817: stream • **39 in water.** The 1817 version ends with these words

To a Waterfowl • **5 fowler's,** hunter's • **9 plashy,** marshy

cept for minor changes in capitalization, punctuation, and spelling, Bryant left the poem pretty well alone down through the years. Thought to have been composed at Great Barrington early in 1825, it has always been praised for the simplicity and sincerity of its quiet love of the revelation of God in external nature.

The groves were God's first temples. Ere man learned
To hew the shaft, and lay the architrave,
And spread the roof above them—ere he framed
The lofty vault, to gather and roll back
The sound of anthems; in the darkling wood,
Amid the cool and silence, he knelt down,
And offered to the Mightiest solemn thanks
And supplication. For his simple heart
Might not resist the sacred influences
Which, from the stilly twilight of the place,
And from the gray old trunks that high in heaven
Mingled their mossy boughs, and from the sound
Of the invisible breath that swayed at once
All their green tops, stole over him, and bowed
His spirit with the thought of boundless power
And inaccessible majesty. Ah, why
Should we, in the world's riper years, neglect
God's ancient sanctuaries, and adore
Only among the crowd, and under roofs
That our frail hands have raised? Let me, at least,
Here, in the shadow of this aged wood,
Offer one hymn—thrice happy, if it find
Acceptance in His ear.
Father, thy hand
Hath reared these venerable columns, thou
Didst weave this verdant roof. Thou didst look down
Upon the naked earth, and, forthwith, rose
All these fair ranks of trees. They, in thy sun,
Budded, and shook their green leaves in thy breeze,
And shot toward heaven. The century-living crow
Whose birth was in their tops, grew old and died
Among their branches, till, at last, they stood,
As now they stand, massy, and tall, and dark,
Fit shrine for humble worshipper to hold
Communion with his Maker. These dim vaults,
These winding aisles, of human pomp or pride
Report not. No fantastic carvings show
The boast of our vain race to change the form
Of thy fair works. But thou art here—thou fill'st
The solitude. Thou art in the soft winds
That run along the summit of these trees
In music; thou art in the cooler breath
That from the inmost darkness of the place
Comes, scarcely felt; the barky trunks, the ground,
The fresh moist ground, are all instinct with thee.
Here is continual worship;—Nature, here,
In the tranquillity that thou dost love,
Enjoys thy presence. Noiselessly, around,
From perch to perch, the solitary bird
Passes; and yon clear spring, that, midst its herbs,
Wells softly forth and wandering steeps the roots
Of half the mighty forest, tells no tale
Of all the good it does. Thou hast not left
Thyself without a witness, in these shades,
Of thy perfections. Grandeur, strength, and grace,
Are here to speak of thee. This mighty oak—
By whose immovable stem I stand and seem
Almost annihilated—not a prince,
In all that proud old world beyond the deep,
E'er wore his crown as loftily as he
Wears the green coronal of leaves with which
Thy hand has graced him. Nestled at his root
Is beauty, such as blooms not in the glare
Of the broad sun. That delicate forest flower,
With scented breath and look so like a smile,
Seems, as it issues from the shapeless mould,
An emanation of the indwelling Life,
A visible token of the upholding Love,
That are the soul of this great universe.

My heart is awed within me when I think
Of the great miracle that still goes on,
In silence, round me—the perpetual work
Of thy creation, finished, yet renewed
Forever. Written on thy works I read
The lesson of thy own eternity.

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2 **shaft,** column • 2 **architrave,** in classical architecture, that part of the entablature, or lintel, lying between the capital and the frieze. Bryant was thinking first of the Greek temple and then ("lofty vault," l. 4) of the Gothic cathedral • 30 **century-living crow.** The long life of the crow, or raven, is traditional; there are said to be instances of captive ravens that have lived nearly a hundred years • 37 **fantastic carvings.** At this period of his life, Bryant apparently cared little for Gothic architecture

Lo! all grow old and die—but see again,
How on the faltering footsteps of decay
Youth presses—ever-gay and beautiful youth
In all its beautiful forms. These lofty trees
Wave not less proudly that their ancestors
Moulder beneath them. Oh, there is not lost
One of earth's charms: upon her bosom yet,
After the flight of untold centuries,
The freshness of her far beginning lies
And yet shall lie. Life mocks the idle hate
Of his arch-enemy Death—yea, seats himself
Upon the tyrant's throne—the sepulchre,
And of the triumphs of his ghastly foe
Makes his own nourishment. For he came forth
From thine own bosom, and shall have no end.

There have been holy men who hid themselves
Deep in the woody wilderness, and gave
Their lives to thought and prayer, till they outlived
The generation born with them, nor seemed
Less aged than the hoary trees and rocks
Around them;—and there have been holy men
Who deemed it were not well to pass life thus.
But let me often to these solitudes
Retire, and in thy presence reassure
My feeble virtue. Here its enemies,
The passions, at thy plainer footsteps shrink
And tremble and are still. Oh, God! when thou
Dost scare the world with tempests, set on fire
The heavens with falling thunderbolts, or fill,
With all the waters of the firmament,
The swift dark whirlwind that uproots the woods
And drowns the villages; when, at thy call,
Uprises the great deep and throws himself
Upon the continent, and overwhelms
Its cities—who forgets not, at the sight
Of these tremendous tokens of thy power,
His pride, and lays his strifes and follies by?
Oh, from these sterner aspects of thy face
Spare me and mine, nor let us need the wrath
Of the mad, unchained elements to teach
Who rules them. Be it ours to meditate,
In these calm shades, thy milder majesty,
And to the beautiful order of thy works
Learn to conform the order of our lives.

1825

I Cannot Forget With What Fervid Devotion

Nine "Stanzas" by "X. X." appeared in the New-York Review and Atheneum Magazine for February 1826. When Bryant prepared the 1832 edition of his poems, he condensed this piece to seven stanzas. The poem is thought to have been written at Cummington in 1815, when Bryant was only twenty-one, but the nostalgia of a man of affairs for the dreams of his early youth was apparently recurrent throughout his life.

I cannot forget with what fervid devotion
  I worshipped the visions of verse and of fame;
Each gaze at the glories of earth, sky, and ocean,
  To my kindled emotions, was wind over flame.

And deep were my musings in life's early blossom,
  'Mid the twilight of mountain-groves wandering long;
How thrilled my young veins, and how throbbed my full bosom,
  When o'er me descended the spirit of song!

'Mong the deep-cloven fells that for ages had listened
  To the rush of the pebble-paved river between,
Where the kingfisher screamed and gray precipice glistened,
  All breathless with awe have I gazed on the scene;

Till I felt the dark power o'er my reveries stealing,
  From the gloom of the thickets that over me hung,
And the thoughts that awoke, in that rapture of feeling,
  Were formed into verse as they rose to my tongue.

Bright visions! I mixed with the world, and ye faded,
  No longer your pure rural worshipper now;
In the haunts your continual presence pervaded,
  Ye shrink from the signet of care on my brow.

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9 fells, mountains, rocky uplands. 1832:
From his throne in the depth of that stern solitude,
And he breathed through my lips, in that tempest of feeling,
Strains warm with his spirit, though artless and rude.

In the old mossy groves on the breast of the mountain,
In deep lonely glens where the waters complain,
By the shade of the rock, by the gush of the fountain,
I seek your loved footsteps, but seek them in vain.

Oh, leave not forlorn and forever forsaken,
Your pupil and victim to life and its tears!
But sometimes return, and in mercy awaken
The glories ye showed to his earlier years.

1815?-1826

A Meditation on Rhode Island Coal

Humor and awareness of the technological advances of the age are pleasantly combined in "A Meditation on Rhode Island Coal," first published in the **New-York Review and Atheneum Magazine** for April 1826.

"Decolor, obscurus, vilis, non ille repexam
Cesariem regum, non candida virginis ornat
Colla, nec insigni splendet per cingula morsu
Sed nova si nigri videas miracula saxi,
Tunc superat pulchros cultus et quicquid Eois
Indus litoribus rubra scrutatur in alga."—CLAUDIAN

I sat beside the glowing grate, fresh heaped
With Newport coal, and as the flame grew bright
—The many-colored flame—and played and leaped,
I thought of rainbows, and the northern light,
Moore's Lalla Rookh, the Treasury Report,
And other brilliant matters of the sort.

And last I thought of that fair isle which sent
The mineral fuel; on a summer day
I saw it once, with heat and travel spent,
And scratched by dwarf-oaks in the hollow way.
Now dragged through sand, now jolted over stone—
A rugged road through rugged Tiverton.

And hotter grew the air, and hollower grew
The deep-worn path, and horror-struck, I thought,
Where will this dreary passage lead me to?
This long dull road, so narrow, deep, and hot?
I looked to see it dive in earth outright;
I looked—but saw a far more welcome sight.

Like a soft mist upon the evening shore,
At once a lovely isle before me lay,
Smooth, and with tender verdure covered o'er,
As if just risen from its calm inland bay;
Sloped each way gently to the grassy edge,
And the small waves that dallied with the sedge.

The barley was just reaped; the heavy sheaves
Lay on the stubble-field; the tall maize stood
Dark in its summer growth, and shook its leaves,
And bright the sunlight played on the young wood—
For fifty years ago, the old men say,
The Briton hewed their ancient groves away.

I saw where fountains freshened the green land,
And where the pleasant road, from door to door,
With rows of cherry-trees on either hand,
Went wandering all that fertile region o'er—
Rogue's Island once—but when the rogues were dead,
Rhode Island was the name it took instead.

Beautiful island! then it only seemed
A lovely stranger; it has grown a friend.

Claudian • The message is from a poem on the magnet, by Claudianus (365?-408), to be found among his **Carminum Minorum Corpusculum** (XXIX, ll. 10-15). The sense is: Black, dull, and common, it does not adorn the braided hairs of kings nor the snowy necks of girls, nor shine in the jewelled buckles of warrior's belts. But consider the marvelous properties of this dull-looking stone and you will see that it is of more worth than lovely gems and any pearl sought of Indian amid the seaweed on the Red Sea's shore • 2 **Newport coal.** Rhode Island coal was actually mined near Portsmouth on the northern part of the island in Narragansett Bay called Aquidneck by the Indians, on which Newport is located • 5 **Lalla Rookh.** Part III of the poem by Thomas Moore (1779-1852) deals with Oriental fire worshipers • 5 **the Treasury Report.** Since 1800, the law has required that the secretary of the treasury make an annual report of the state of the finances. • 12 **Tiverton,** on the mainland north and east of Rhode Island proper • 29 **fifty years ago,** during the British occupation of Newport, between 1776 and 1779, when much timber was cut for firewood • 31 **fountains,** springs • 35 **Rogue's Island.** Bryant's etymology is not admitted by Rhode Island folk, who attribute the name Rhode Island to Giovanni da Verrazano, a Florentine sailing under the flag of France, who visited Narragansett Bay in 1524 and thought it looked like the extensive harbors of the island of Rhodes in the Mediterranean

I gazed on its smooth slopes, but never dreamed
How soon that green and quiet isle would send
The treasures of its womb across the sea,
To warm a poet's room and boil his tea.

Dark anthracite! that reddenest on my hearth,
Thou in those island mines didst slumber long;
But now thou art come forth to move the earth,
And put to shame the men that mean thee wrong:
Thou shalt be coals of fire to those that hate thee,
And warm the shins of all that underrate thee.

Yea, they did wrong thee foully—they who mocked
Thy honest face, and said thou wouldst not burn;
Of hewing thee to chimney-pieces talked,
And grew profane, and swore, in bitter scorn,
That men might to thy inner caves retire,
And there, unsinged, abide the day of fire.

Yet is thy greatness nigh. I pause to state,
That I too have seen greatness—even I—
Shook hands with Adams, stared at La Fayette,
When, barehead, in the hot noon of July,
He would not let the umbrella be held o'er him,
For which three cheers burst from the mob before him.

And I have seen—not many months ago—
An Eastern Governor in chapeau bras
And military coat, a glorious show!
Ride forth to visit the reviews, and ah!
How oft he smiled and bowed to Jonathan!
How many hands were shook and votes were won!

'Twas a great Governor; thou too shalt be
Great in thy turn, and wide shall spread thy fame
And swiftly; farthest Maine shall hear of thee,
And cold New Brunswick gladden at thy name;
And, faintly through its sleets, the weeping isle
That sends the Boston folks their cod shall smile.

For thou shalt forge vast railways, and shalt heat
The hissing rivers into steam, and drive
Huge masses from thy mines, on iron feet,
Walking their steady way, as if alive,
Northward, till everlasting ice besets thee,
And South as far as the grim Spaniard lets thee.

Thou shalt make mighty engines swim the sea,
Like its own monsters—boats that for a guinea
Will take a man to Havre—and shalt be
The moving soul of many a spinning-jenny,
And ply thy shuttles, till a bard can wear
As good a suit of broadcloth as the mayor.

Then we will laugh at winter when we hear
The grim old churl about our dwellings rave:
Thou, from that "ruler of the inverted year,"
Shalt pluck the knotty sceptre Cowper gave,
And pull him from his sledge, and drag him in,
And melt the icicles from off his chin.

1826

To Cole, the Painter, Departing for Europe

Thomas Cole (1801-1848), lionized in New York City in the 1820's for his discovery of native subjects for landscape paintings, was one of Bryant's numerous friends in the world of art. The two men, companions on walking tours in the Catskills, were remarkably similar in their tastes and accomplishments. From the Hudson River scenes which gave him reputation Cole turned to allegories and moral-

43 **anthracite.** Rhode Island coal is so compressed that it is much more difficult to ignite than ordinary hard coal; it is no longer commercially mined • 57 **Shook . . . La Fayette.** Bryant probably saw Lafayette when he took part in the Fourth of July celebration at New York in 1825, near the end of his triumphal tour of the United States; the other reference is probably to John Adams, still living in Quincy, Massachusetts, when the poem was written • 62 **Eastern . . . chapeau bras,** that is, in a three-cornered hat, of the late-eighteenth-century fashion. The governor was perhaps De Witt Clinton (1769-1828) • 71 **weeping isle,** Newfoundland, notorious for its fogs • 87 **"ruler . . . year,"** a line from Bk. IV, "The Winter Evening," of Cowper's **The Task** (1785) • 90 **his chin.** In the **New-York Review** there was an additional stanza, somewhat more convivial and topical than those Bryant retained; it refers to the famous punch of Newport and the "Lunch"—the Bread and Cheese Club in which James Fenimore Cooper was the leading spirit:

Heat will be cheap—a small consideration
Will put one in a way to raise his punch,
Set lemon-trees, and have a cane plantation—
'Twill be a pretty saving to the **Lunch.**
Then the West India Negroes may go play
The banjo and keep endless holiday.

izing in such series of paintings as "The Course of Empire" and "The Voyage of Life," both remarkably like Bryant's "The Flood of Years." Cole, born in England, came to the United States at eighteen, and in later life is said to have remarked that he would give his left hand to have been a native American. The nationalistic tone of Bryant's tribute is therefore quite appropriate.

Thine eyes shall see the light of distant skies;
  Yet, COLE! thy heart shall bear to Europe's strand
  A living image of our own bright land,
Such as upon thy glorious canvas lies;
Lone lakes—savannas where the bison roves—
  Rocks rich with summer garlands—solemn streams—
  Skies, where the desert eagle wheels and screams—
Spring bloom and autumn blaze of boundless groves.
Fair scenes shall greet thee where thou goest—fair,
  But different—everywhere the trace of men,
Paths, homes, graves, ruins, from the lowest glen
To where life shrinks from the fierce Alpine air—
  Gaze on them, till the tears shall dim thy sight,
  But keep that earlier, wilder image bright.

1829

The Prairies

About 1830, two of Bryant's younger brothers went west to take up land, eventually settling at Princeton, Illinois. Visiting them in the summer of 1832, the poet rode on horseback northward a hundred miles from Jacksonville. "The Prairies," in which he combined his impressions on this trip with his well-tried themes of the ruins of empire and the transience of human life, was first published in the Knickerbocker for December 1833. The last lines suggest that he believed it was the "manifest destiny" of the United States to occupy the entire North American continent.

  These are the gardens of the Desert, these
The unshorn fields, boundless and beautiful,
For which the speech of England has no name—
The Prairies. I behold them for the first,
And my heart swells, while the dilated sight
Takes in the encircling vastness. Lo! they stretch
In airy undulations, far away,
As if the Ocean, in his gentlest swell,
Stood still, with all his rounded billows fixed,
And motionless for ever. Motionless?—
No—they are all unchained again. The clouds
Sweep over with their shadows, and, beneath,
The surface rolls and fluctuates to the eye;
Dark hollows seem to glide along and chase
The sunny ridges. Breezes of the South!
Who toss the golden and the flame-like flowers,
And pass the prairie-hawk that, poised on high,
Flaps his broad wings, yet moves not—ye have played
Among the palms of Mexico and vines
Of Texas, and have crisped the limpid brooks
That from the fountains of Sonora glide
Into the calm Pacific—have ye fanned
A nobler or a lovelier scene than this?
Man hath no part in all this glorious work:
The hand that built the firmament hath heaved
And smoothed these verdant swells, and sown their slopes
With herbage, planted them with island-groves,
And hedged them round with forests. Fitting floor
For this magnificent temple of the sky—
With flowers whose glory and whose multitude
Rival the constellations! The great heavens
Seem to stoop down upon the scene in love,—
A nearer vault, and of a tenderer blue,
Than that which bends above our Eastern hills.

  As o'er the verdant waste I guide my steed,
Among the high rank grass that sweeps his sides

To Cole . . . • 3 our own bright. Bryant seems not to have known that Cole was English-born until he delivered a funeral oration on Cole before the National Academy of Design in 1848

The Prairies • 3 no name. "Prairie," French in origin, seems to have come into general use in American English late in the eighteenth century • **13 The surface . . . eye.** "The prairies of the West, with an undulating surface, **rolling prairies,** as they are called, present to the unaccustomed eye a singular spectacle when the shadows of the clouds are passing rapidly over them. The face of the ground seems to fluctuate and toss like billows of the sea."—Bryant • **17 the prairie-hawk . . . not.** "I have seen the prairie-hawk balancing himself in the air for hours together, apparently over the same spot; probably watching his prey."—Bryant • **21 Sonora,** a state in the northwestern part of Mexico

The hollow beating of his footstep seems
A sacrilegious sound. I think of those
Upon whose rest he tramples. Are they here—
The dead of other days?—and did the dust
Of these fair solitudes once stir with life
And burn with passion? Let the mighty mounds
That overlook the rivers, or that rise
In the dim forest crowded with old oaks,
Answer. A race, that long has passed away,
Built them; a disciplined and populous race
Heaped, with long toil, the earth, while yet the Greek
Was hewing the Pentelicus to forms
Of symmetry, and rearing on its rock
The glittering Parthenon. These ample fields
Nourished their harvests, here their herds were fed,
When haply by their stalls the bison lowed,
And bowed his manèd shoulder to the yoke.
All day this desert murmured with their toils,
Till twilight blushed, and lovers walked, and wooed
In a forgotten language, and old tunes,
From instruments of unremembered form,
Gave the soft winds a voice. The red-man came—
The roaming hunter-tribes, warlike and fierce,
And the mound-builders vanished from the earth.
The solitude of centuries untold
Has settled where they dwelt. The prairie-wolf
Hunts in their meadows, and his fresh-dug den
Yawns by my path. The gopher mines the ground
Where stood their swarming cities. All is gone;
All—save the piles of earth that hold their bones,
The platforms where they worshipped unknown gods,
The barriers which they builded from the soil
To keep the foe at bay—till o'er the walls
The wild beleaguerers broke, and, one by one,
The strongholds of the plain were forced, and heaped
With corpses. The brown vultures of the wood
Flocked to those vast uncovered sepulchres,
And sat, unscared and silent, at their feast.
Haply some solitary fugitive,
Lurking in marsh and forest, till the sense
Of desolation and of fear became
Bitterer than death, yielded himself to die.
Man's better nature triumphed then. Kind words
Welcomed and soothed him; the rude conquerors
Seated the captive with their chiefs; he chose
A bride among their maidens, and at length
Seemed to forget—yet ne'er forgot—the wife
Of his first love, and her sweet little ones,
Butchered, amid their shrieks, with all his race.

Thus change the forms of being. Thus arise
Races of living things, glorious in strength,
And perish, as the quickening breath of God
Fills them, or is withdrawn. The red-man, too,
Has left the blooming wilds he ranged so long,
And, nearer to the Rocky Mountains, sought
A wilder hunting-ground. The beaver builds
No longer by these streams, but far away,
On waters whose blue surface ne'er gave back
The white man's face—among Missouri's springs,
And pools whose issues swell the Oregon,
He rears his little Venice. In these plains
The bison feeds no more. Twice twenty leagues
Beyond remotest smoke of hunter's camp,
Roams the majestic brute, in herds that shake
The earth with thundering steps—yet here I meet
His ancient footprints stamped beside the pool.

Still this great solitude is quick with life.
Myriads of insects, gaudy as the flowers
They flutter over, gentle quadrupeds,
And birds, that scarce have learned the fear of man,
Are here, and sliding reptiles of the ground,
Startlingly beautiful. The graceful deer
Bounds to the wood at my approach. The bee,

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42 **mighty mounds.** In the forty-two lines which follow, Bryant builds upon the theory, common in his time but now generally rejected, that the burial, ceremonial, and earthwork mounds of the Mississippi Valley were not constructed by the ancestors of the Indians, but by an extinct race, the Mound Builders. There are said to be ten thousand such mounds in Illinois alone; Bryant's letters reveal that he had examined some near St. Louis • 48 **Pentelicus,** a mountain range some miles northeast of Athens, where an unusually white marble was quarried • 50 **Parthenon,** a temple dedicated to Athena Parthenos on the Acropolis in Athens. Completed about 435 B.C., it is still one of the great monuments of the ancient world • 50 **These . . . harvests.** "The size and extent of the mounds in the valley of the Mississippi indicate the existence, at a remote period, of a nation at once populous and laborious, and therefore probably subsisting by agriculture."—Bryant • 52 **bison.** There is little evidence that the American buffalo was ever domesticated • 80 **the rude . . . chiefs.** "Instances are not wanting of generosity like this among the North American Indians toward a captive or survivor of a hostile tribe on which the greatest cruelties had been exercised."—Bryant

A more adventurous colonist than man,
With whom he came across the eastern deep,
Fills the savannas with his murmurings,
And hides his sweets, as in the golden age,
Within the hollow oak. I listen long
To his domestic hum, and think I hear
The sound of that advancing multitude
Which soon shall fill these deserts. From the ground
Comes up the laugh of children, the soft voice
Of maidens, and the sweet and solemn hymn
Of Sabbath worshippers. The low of herds
Blends with the rustling of the heavy grain
Over the dark-brown furrows. All at once
A fresher wind sweeps by, and breaks my dream,
And I am in the wilderness alone.

1832·1833

Earth

When Bryant first visited Europe in 1834-1836, most of Italy was under Austrian rule, and the liberation movement led by Mazzini was only slowly gathering strength. Although he was impressed by the grandeur of Italian scenery, Bryant was evidently deeply disturbed by first-hand acquaintance with the bloody history of the Old World. He wrote "Earth" at Pisa in 1834, sending it back to be printed in the New-York Mirror for March 28, 1835. In the poem he approaches bitter pessimism; he cannot be entirely happy even in his hope for America. Man is not merely insignificant; in the light of European history, he is evil. Like Whitman, Bryant perceived that for the United States, too, greatness was not to be easily achieved.

A midnight black with clouds is in the sky;
I seem to feel, upon my limbs, the weight
Of its vast brooding shadow. All in vain
Turns the tired eye in search of form; no star
Pierces the pitchy veil; no ruddy blaze,
From dwellings lighted by the cheerful hearth,
Tinges the flowering summits of the grass.
No sound of life is heard; no village hum,
Nor measured tramp of footstep in the path,
Nor rush of wind, while, on the breast of Earth,
I lie and listen to her mighty voice:
A voice of many tones—sent up from streams
That wander through the gloom, from woods unseen
Swayed by the sweeping of the tides of air,
From rocky chasms where darkness dwells all day,
And hollows of the great invisible hills,
And sands that edge the ocean, stretching far
Into the night—a melancholy sound!

O Earth! dost thou too sorrow for the past
Like man thy offspring? Do I hear thee mourn
Thy childhood's unreturning hours, thy springs
Gone with their genial airs and melodies,
The gentle generations of thy flowers,
And thy majestic groves of olden time,
Perished with all their dwellers? Dost thou wail
For that fair age of which the poets tell,
Ere yet the winds grew keen with frost, or fire
Fell with the rains or spouted from the hills,
To blast thy greenness, while the virgin night
Was guiltless and salubrious as the day?
Or haply dost thou grieve for those that die—
For living things that trod thy paths awhile,
The love of thee and heaven—and now they sleep
Mixed with the shapeless dust on which thy herds
Trample and graze? I too must grieve with thee,
O'er loved ones lost. Their graves are far away
Upon thy mountains; yet, while I recline
Alone, in darkness, on thy naked soil,
The mighty nourisher and burial-place
Of man, I feel that I embrace their dust.

Ha! how the murmur deepens! I perceive
And tremble at its dreadful import. Earth
Uplifts a general cry for guilt and wrong,
And heaven is listening. The forgotten graves
Of the heart-broken utter forth their plaint.
The dust of her who loved and was betrayed,
And him who died neglected in his age;

The Prairies • 111 came . . . deep. Although the point is disputed, most authorities agree that the honeybee was not native to North America
Earth • 22 Gone . . . melodies. Mirror: brief time of genial airs and melody • **36 loved ones lost.** Bryant's grief for his father, who died in 1820, and his favorite sister, who died in 1824, is also expressed in "The Past," "The Death of the Flowers," and "Consumption"

The sepulchres of those who for mankind
Labored, and earned the recompense of scorn;
Ashes of martyrs for the truth, and bones
Of those who, in the strife for liberty,
Were beaten down, their corses given to dogs,
Their names to infamy, all find a voice.
The nook in which the captive, overtoiled,
Lay down to rest at last, and that which holds
Childhood's sweet blossoms, crushed by cruel hands,
Send up a plaintive sound. From battle-fields,
Where heroes madly drave and dashed their hosts
Against each other, rises up a noise,
As if the armèd multitudes of dead
Stirred in their heavy slumber. Mournful tones
Come from the green abysses of the sea—
A story of the crimes the guilty sought
To hide beneath its waves. The glens, the groves,
Paths in the thicket, pools of running brook,
And banks and depths of lake, and streets and lanes
Of cities, now that living sounds are hushed,
Murmur of guilty force and treachery.

Here, where I rest, the vales of Italy
Are round me, populous from early time,
And field of the tremendous warfare waged
'Twixt good and evil. Who, alas! shall dare
Interpret to man's ear the mingled voice
That comes from her old dungeons yawning now
To the black air, her amphitheatres,
Where the dew gathers on the mouldering stones,
And fanes of banished gods, and open tombs,
And roofless palaces, and streets and hearths
Of cities dug from their volcanic graves?
I hear a sound of many languages,
The utterance of nations now no more,
Driven out by mightier, as the days of heaven
Chase one another from the sky. The blood
Of freemen shed by freemen, till strange lords
Came in their hour of weakness, and made fast
The yoke that yet is worn, cries out to Heaven.

What then shall cleanse thy bosom, gentle Earth,
From all its painful memories of guilt?
The whelming flood, or the renewing fire,
Or the slow change of time?—that so, at last,
The horrid tale of perjury and strife,
Murder and spoil, which men call history,
May seem a fable, like the inventions told
By poets of the gods of Greece. O thou,
Who sittest far beyond the Atlantic deep,
Among the sources of thy glorious streams,
My native Land of Groves! a newer page
In the great record of the world is thine;
Shall it be fairer? Fear, and friendly Hope,
And Envy, watch the issue, while the lines,
By which thou shalt be judged, are written down.

1834·1835

The Antiquity of Freedom

As an editor Bryant had a constant and direct concern with politics. "The Antiquity of Freedom" should be read with the recollection that Bryant was deeply interested in political developments in Europe between the revolutions of 1830 and those of 1848. In that period the rise of socialism and the continuous struggle against despotic rulers kept most of the Continent in turmoil, and thousands fled to the United States. World War II has brought more Americans than ever before to a realization of the truth of Bryant's conception of freedom.

Here are old trees, tall oaks, and gnarlèd pines,
That stream with gray-green mosses; here the ground
Was never trenched by spade, and flowers spring up
Unsown, and die ungathered. It is sweet
To linger here, among the flitting birds
And leaping squirrels, wandering brooks, and winds
That shake the leaves, and scatter, as they pass,
A fragrance from the cedars, thickly set
With pale-blue berries. In these peaceful shades—
Peaceful, unpruned, immeasurably old—
My thoughts go up the long dim path of years,
Back to the earliest days of liberty.

O FREEDOM! thou art not, as poets dream,
A fair young girl, with light and delicate limbs,

And wavy tresses gushing from the cap
With which the Roman master crowned his slave
When he took off the gyves. A bearded man,
Armed to the teeth, art thou; one mailèd hand
Grasps the broad shield, and one the sword; thy brow,
Glorious in beauty though it be, is scarred
With tokens of old wars; thy massive limbs
Are strong with struggling. Power at thee has launched
His bolts, and with his lightnings smitten thee;
They could not quench the life thou hast from heaven;
Merciless Power has dug thy dungeon deep,
And his swart armorers, by a thousand fires,
Have forged thy chain; yet, while he deems thee bound,
The links are shivered, and the prison-walls
Fall outward; terribly thou springest forth,
As springs the flame above a burning pile,
And shoutest to the nations, who return
Thy shoutings, while the pale oppressor flies.

Thy birthright was not given by human hands:
Thou wert twin-born with man. In pleasant fields,
While yet our race was few, thou sat'st with him,
To tend the quiet flock and watch the stars,
And teach the reed to utter simple airs.
Thou by his side, amid the tangled wood,
Didst war upon the panther and the wolf,
His only foes; and thou with him didst draw
The earliest furrow on the mountain-side,
Soft with the deluge. Tyranny himself,
Thy enemy, although of reverend look,
Hoary with many years and far obeyed,
Is later born than thou; and as he meets
The grave defiance of thine elder eye,
The usurper trembles in his fastnesses.

Thou shalt wax stronger with the lapse of years,
But he shall fade into a feeble age—
Feebler, yet subtler. He shall weave his snares,
And spring them on thy careless steps, and clap
His withered hands, and from their ambush call
His hordes to fall upon thee. He shall send
Quaint maskers, wearing fair and gallant forms
To catch thy gaze, and uttering graceful words
To charm thy ear; while his sly imps, by stealth,
Twine round thee threads of steel, light thread on thread,
That grow to fetters; or bind down thy arms
With chains concealed in chaplets. Oh! not yet
Mayst thou unbrace thy corslet, nor lay by
Thy sword; nor yet, O Freedom! close thy lids
In slumber; for thine enemy never sleeps,
And thou must watch and combat till the day
Of the new earth and heaven. But wouldst thou rest
Awhile from tumult and the frauds of men,
These old and friendly solitudes invite
Thy visit. They, while yet the forest-trees
Were young upon the unviolated earth,
And yet the moss-stains on the rock were new,
Beheld thy glorious childhood, and rejoiced.

1842

"Oh Mother of a Mighty Race"

Although Bryant was decidedly lukewarm about the Mexican War, he shared the nationalistic feeling of the Polk administration. His patriotic emotions were doubtless accentuated by his trips to Europe, where he met sharp criticism of American democracy. The sentiment in this poem should be compared with that in the last lines of "The Prairies" and with the much milder feeling of "Earth."

Oh mother of a mighty race,
Yet lovely in thy youthful grace!
The elder dames, thy haughty peers,
Admire and hate thy blooming years.
With words of shame
And taunts of scorn they join thy name.

For on thy cheeks the glow is spread
That tints thy morning hills with red;
Thy step—the wild-deer's rustling feet,

15 **cap.** Bryant had in mind the "liberty cap" of the French Revolution, adapted from the Roman "pilleus," given to a slave when he was freed • 37 **reed.** The allusion is to the syrinx, or Panpipe, a primitive musical instrument made of reeds • 40 **His.** Knickerbocker: Thine • 41 **furrow.** Until 1854: furrows • 43 **reverend,** venerable • 49 **feeble.** In all other editions: feebler; probably, in 1876, an error • 54 **wearing . . . forms.** Until 1847: forms of fair and gallant mien • 60 **nor.** K: or • 63 **the day . . . heaven,** the millennium. See Revelation 21:1 • 65 **the frauds of men.** K: from treachery

Within thy woods are not more fleet;
Thy hopeful eye
Is bright as thine own sunny sky.

Ay, let them rail—those haughty ones,
While safe thou dwellest with thy sons.
They do not know how loved thou art,
How many a fond and fearless heart
Would rise to throw
Its life between thee and the foe.

They know not, in their hate and pride,
What virtues with thy children bide;
How true, how good, thy graceful maids
Make bright, like flowers, the valley-shades;
What generous men
Spring, like thine oaks, by hill and glen.

What cordial welcomes greet the guest
By thy lone rivers of the West;
How faith is kept, and truth revered,
And man is loved, and God is feared,
In woodland homes,
And where the ocean-border foams.

There's freedom at thy gates and rest
For Earth's down-trodden and opprest,
A shelter for the hunted head,
For the starved laborer toil and bread,
Power, at thy bounds,
Stops and calls back his baffled hounds.

Oh, fair young mother! on thy brow
Shall sit a nobler grace than now.
Deep in the brightness of thy skies
The thronging years in glory rise,
And, as they fleet,
Drop strength and riches at thy feet.

Thine eye, with every coming hour,
Shall brighten, and thy form shall tower;
And when thy sisters, elder born,
Would brand thy name with words of scorn,
Before thine eye,
Upon their lips the taunt shall die.

1846·1847

Robert of Lincoln

Bryant's pleasure in the bobolink is characteristically combined with a quiet comment on the round of human life. "Robert of Lincoln" is about as close as the sober Bryant ever gets to the "carpe diem" theme—the glorification, that is to say, of the enjoyment of the present moment.

Merrily swinging on brier and weed,
Near to the nest of his little dame,
Over the mountain-side or mead,
Robert of Lincoln is telling his name:
Bob-o'-link, bob-o'-link,
Spink, spank, spink;
Snug and safe is that nest of ours,
Hidden among the summer flowers.
Chee, chee, chee.

Robert of Lincoln is gayly drest,
Wearing a bright black wedding-coat;
White are his shoulders and white his crest,
Hear him call in his merry note:
Bob-o'-link, bob-o'-link,
Spink, spank, spink.
Look, what a nice new coat is mine,
Sure there was never a bird so fine.
Chee, chee, chee.

Robert of Lincoln's Quaker wife,
Pretty and quiet, with plain brown wings,
Passing at home a patient life,
Broods in grass while her husband sings:
Bob-o'-link, bob-o'-link,
Spink, spank, spink;
Brood, kind creature; you need not fear
Thieves and robbers while I am here.
Chee, chee, chee.

Modest and shy as a nun is she;
One weak chirp is her only note.
Braggart and prince of braggarts is he,
Pouring boasts from his little throat:

Bob-o'-link, bob-o'-link,
Spink, spank, spink;
Never was I afraid of man;
Catch me, cowardly knaves, if you can!
Chee, chee, chee.

Six white eggs on a bed of hay,
Flecked with purple, a pretty sight!
There as the mother sits all day,
Robert is singing with all his might:
Bob-o'-link, bob-o'-link,
Spink, spank, spink;
Nice good wife, that never goes out,
Keeping house while I frolic about.
Chee, chee, chee.

Soon as the little ones chip the shell
Six wide mouths are open for food;
Robert of Lincoln bestirs him well,
Gathering seeds for the hungry brood.
Bob-o'-link, bob-o'-link,
Spink, spank, spink;
This new life is likely to be
Hard for a gay young fellow like me.
Chee, chee, chee.

Robert of Lincoln at length is made
Sober with work, and silent with care;
Off is his holiday garment laid,
Half forgotten that merry air:
Bob-o'-link, bob-o'-link,
Spink, spank, spink;
Nobody knows but my mate and I
Where our nest and our nestlings lie.
Chee, chee, chee.

Summer wanes; the children are grown;
Fun and frolic no more he knows;
Robert of Lincoln's a humdrum crone;
Off he flies, and we sing as he goes:
Bob-o'-link, bob-o'-link,
Spink, spank, spink;
When you can pipe that merry old strain,
Robert of Lincoln, come back again.
Chee, chee, chee.

1855

The Poet

Godwin informs us that "The Poet," the expression of Bryant's conviction that poetry depends primarily upon emotion, was written in 1863. As early as 1826, in his lectures on poetry before the American Atheneum Society, Bryant had asserted that "the great spring of poetry is emotion," although he also acknowledged the importance of appealing to the imagination and the understanding. His theories are similar to but somewhat less mystical than those of Emerson (see p. 873) and Whitman. The extent to which he followed his own advice about revision is debatable, for textual study reveals that he often changed his mind about his diction. Textual revisions are indicated in the footnotes for "Thanatopsis," "Inscription for the Entrance to a Wood," and "The Antiquity of Freedom."

Thou, who wouldst wear the name
Of poet mid thy brethren of mankind,
And clothe in words of flame
Thoughts that shall live within the general mind!
Deem not the framing of a deathless lay
The pastime of a drowsy summer day.

But gather all thy powers,
And wreak them on the verse that thou dost weave,
And in thy lonely hours,
At silent morning or at wakeful eve,
While the warm current tingles through thy veins,
Set forth the burning words in fluent strains.

No smooth array of phrase,
Artfully sought and ordered though it be,
Which the cold rhymer lays

Robert of Lincoln • 49 Gathering seeds. John Burroughs, in an essay on "Nature and the Poets," challenged Bryant's natural history. The bobolink, he said, "is an insectivorous bird in the North, or until its brood has flown" • 66 crone, a withered old woman. Bryant refers to the fact that the male bobolink (the rice-bird of the South) annually loses his glossy black, buff, and white plumage, together with his song, and at the summer's end is almost indistinguishable from the female

The Poet • 8 wreak them on, let them play upon

Upon his page with languid industry,
Can wake the listless pulse to livelier speed,
Or fill with sudden tears the eyes that read.

The secret wouldst thou know
To touch the heart or fire the blood at will?
Let thine own eyes o'erflow;
Let thy lips quiver with the passionate thrill;
Seize the great thought, ere yet its power be past,
And bind, in words, the fleet emotion fast.

Then, should thy verse appear
Halting and harsh, and all unaptly wrought,
Touch the crude line with fear,
Save in the moment of impassioned thought;
Then summon back the original glow, and mend
The strain with rapture that with fire was penned.

Yet let no empty gust
Of passion find an utterance in thy lay,
A blast that whirls the dust
Along the howling street and dies away;
But feelings of calm power and mighty sweep,
Like currents journeying through the windless deep.

Seek'st thou, in living lays,
To limn the beauty of the earth and sky?
Before thine inner gaze
Let all that beauty in clear vision lie;
Look on it with exceeding love, and write
The words inspired by wonder and delight.

Of tempests wouldst thou sing,
Or tell of battles—make thyself a part
Of the great tumult; cling
To the tossed wreck with terror in thy heart;
Scale, with the assaulting host, the rampart's height,
And strike and struggle in the thickest fight.

So shalt thou frame a lay
That haply may endure from age to age,
And they who read shall say:
"What witchery hangs upon this poet's page!
What art is his the written spells to find
That sway from mood to mood the willing mind!"

1863·1864

The Flood of Years

Many of Bryant's poems express a humanistic sense of the stream of life. "The Flood of Years," written in his eighty-first year, is one of the few places where he indicated a belief in the doctrine of personal immortality. One can understand the motive of the reader who wrote to ask if the closing lines represented Bryant's real convictions. He was answered as follows: "Certainly I believe all that is said in the lines you have quoted: otherwise I could not have written them. I believe in the everlasting life of the soul, and it seems to me that immortality would be but an imperfect gift without the recognition in the life to come of those who are dear to us here."

The central figure is remarkably similar to Addison's in "The Vision of Mirza," **The Spectator, No. 159.**

A mighty Hand, from an exhaustless Urn,
Pours forth the never-ending Flood of Years,
Among the nations. How the rushing waves
Bear all before them! On their foremost edge,
And there alone, is Life. The Present there
Tosses and foams and fills the air with roar
Of mingled noises. There are they who toil,
And they who strive, and they who feast, and they
Who hurry to and fro. The sturdy swain—
Woodman and delver with the spade—is there,
And busy artisan beside his bench,
And pallid student with his written roll.
A moment on the mounting billow seen,
The flood sweeps over them and they are gone.
There groups of revellers whose brows are twined
With roses, ride the topmost swell awhile,
And as they raise their flowing cups and touch
The clinking brim to brim, are whirled beneath
The waves and disappear. I hear the jar
Of beaten drums, and thunders that break forth
From cannon, where the advancing billow sends
Up to the sight long files of armèd men,
That hurry to the charge through flame and smoke.
The torrent bears them under, whelmed and hid
Slayer and slain, in heaps of bloody foam.

Down go the steed and rider, the plumed chief
Sinks with his followers; the head that wears
The imperial diadem goes down beside
The felon's with cropped ear and branded cheek.
A funeral-train—the torrent sweeps away
Bearers and bier and mourners. By the bed
Of one who dies men gather sorrowing,
And women weep aloud; the flood rolls on;
The wail is stifled and the sobbing group
Borne under. Hark to that shrill, sudden shout,
The cry of an applauding multitude,
Swayed by some loud-voiced orator who wields
The living mass as if he were its soul!
The waters choke the shout and all is still.
Lo! next a kneeling crowd, and one who spreads
The hands in prayer, the engulfing wave o'ertakes
And swallows them and him. A sculptor wields
The chisel, and the stricken marble grows
To beauty; at his easel, eager-eyed,
A painter stands, and sunshine at his touch
Gathers upon his canvas, and life glows;
A poet, as he paces to and fro,
Murmurs his sounding lines. Awhile they ride
The advancing billow, till its tossing crest
Strikes them and flings them under, while their tasks
Are yet unfinished. See a mother smile
On her young babe that smiles to her again;
The torrent wrests it from her arms; she shrieks
And weeps, and midst her tears is carried down.
A beam like that of moonlight turns the spray
To glistening pearls; two lovers, hand in hand,
Rise on the billowy swell and fondly look
Into each other's eyes. The rushing flood
Flings them apart: the youth goes down; the maid
With hands outstretched in vain, and streaming eyes,
Waits for the next high wave to follow him.
An aged man succeeds; his bending form
Sinks slowly. Mingling with the sullen stream
Gleam the white locks, and then are seen no more.

Lo! wider grows the stream—a sea-like flood
Saps earth's walled cities; massive palaces
Crumble before it; fortresses and towers
Dissolve in the swift waters; populous realms
Swept by the torrent see their ancient tribes
Engulfed and lost; their very languages
Stifled, and never to be uttered more.

I pause and turn my eyes, and looking back
Where that tumultous flood has been, I see
The silent ocean of the Past, a waste
Of waters weltering over graves, its shores
Strewn with the wreck of fleets where mast and hull
Drop away piecemeal; battlemented walls
Frown idly, green with moss, and temples stand
Unroofed, forsaken by the worshipper.
There lie memorial stones, whence time has gnawed.
The graven legends, thrones of kings o'erturned,
The broken altars of forgotten gods,
Foundations of old cities and long streets
Where never fall of human foot is heard,
On all the desolate pavement. I behold
Dim glimmerings of lost jewels, far within
The sleeping waters, diamond, sardonyx,
Ruby and topaz, pearl and chrysolite,
Once glittering at the banquet on fair brows
That long ago were dust, and all around
Strewn on the surface of that silent sea
Are withering bridal wreaths, and glossy locks
Shorn from dear brows, by loving hands, and scrolls
O'er written, haply with fond words of love
And vows of friendship, and fair pages flung
Fresh from the printer's engine. There they lie
A moment, and then sink away from sight.

I look, and the quick tears are in my eyes,
For I behold in every one of these
A blighted hope, a separate history
Of human sorrows, telling of dear ties
Suddenly broken, dreams of happiness
Dissolved in air, and happy days too brief
That sorrowfully ended, and I think
How painfully must the poor heart have beat
In bosoms without number, as the blow
Was struck that slew their hope and broke their peace.

Sadly I turn and look before, where yet
The Flood must pass, and I behold a mist
Where swarm dissolving forms, the brood of Hope.
Divinely fair, that rest on banks of flowers,
Or wander among rainbows, fading soon
And reappearing, haply giving place

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26 **plumed chief.** Bryant perhaps had in mind James G. Blaine, "the plumed knight." Blaine was so named when he was nominated for the presidency in 1876 by Col. Robert G. Ingersoll

To forms of grisly aspect such as Fear
Shapes from the idle air—where serpents lift
The head to strike, and skeletons stretch forth
The bony arm in menace. Further on
A belt of darkness seems to bar the way
Long, low, and distant, where the Life to come
Touches the Life that is. The Flood of Years
Rolls toward it near and nearer. It must pass
That dismal barrier. What is there beyond?
Hear what the wise and good have said. Beyond
That belt of darkness, still the Years roll on
More gently, but with not less mighty sweep.
They gather up again and softly bear
All the sweet lives that late were overwhelmed
And lost to sight, all that in them was good,
Noble, and truly great, and worthy of love—
The lives of infants and ingenuous youths,
Sages and saintly women who have made
Their households happy; all are raised and borne
By that great current in its onward sweep,
Wandering and rippling with caressing waves
Around green islands fragrant with the breath
Of flowers that never wither. So they pass,
From stage to stage along the shining course
Of that bright river, broadening like a sea.
As its smooth eddies curl along their way
They bring old friends together; hands are clasped
In joy unspeakable; the mother's arms
Again are folded round the child she loved
And lost. Old sorrows are forgotten now,
Or but remembered to make sweet the hour
That overpays them; wounded hearts that bled
Or broke are healed forever. In the room
Of this grief-shadowed present, there shall be
A Present in whose reign no grief shall gnaw
The heart, and never shall a tender tie
Be broken; in whose reign the eternal Change
That waits on growth and action shall proceed
With everlasting Concord hand in hand.

1876

From • Lectures on Poetry

On the Nature of Poetry

In April 1826 Bryant delivered a series of four lectures before the New York Atheneum. The lecture here reprinted was followed by one on the value and uses of poetry, one on poetry "in Relation to Our Age and Country" which is another reflection of Bryant's nationalism, and one on originality and imitation. The critical questions which crop out in this first lecture are ageless, and the ideas which Bryant expresses can best be described as a complex patchwork of Neoclassical and romantic theories. His remarks here should be compared with "The Poet" and, for further study, with his introduction to **A Library of Poetry and Song** (1871). See, also, William Charvat, **Origins of American Critical Thought, 1810-1835** (Philadelphia, 1935); and William Palmer Hudson, "Archibald Alison and William Cullen Bryant," **American Literature**, XII (March 1940), 59-68.

In treating of the subject which has been assigned me, it is obvious that it will be impossible for me to compress into four lectures anything like a complete view of it. I am to speak of one of the most ancient of all arts, of the very earliest and most venerable branch of literature—one which even now exists in many countries that have no other; one, which although it has not in every period been cultivated with the same degree of success, has yet in no age of the world ceased to attract a large degree of the attention of mankind. Not only have the writers of poetry been exceedingly numerous —more so, perhaps, than those of any other class— but poetry has shot forth another branch of literature, her handmaid and satellite, and raised up a large body of authors, who speculate upon what the poets have written, who define the elements and investigate the principles of the art, and fix the degrees of estimation in which its several productions should be held. Not

only has the poetry of one age been exceedingly different from that of another, but different styles of poetry have prevailed at the same time in different nations, different schools of poetry have arisen in the same nation, and different forms of poetical composition have been preferred by the several writers of the same school. So much poetry has been written, and that poetry has been the subject of so much criticism, so much matter for speculation has been collected, and so many reasonings and theories have been framed out of it, that the subject has grown to be one of the most comprehensive in the whole province of literature.

If I were to treat of either of its great subdivisions—if, for example, I were to attempt its history from its earliest origin, through its various stages, to the present time; if I were to analyze the several forms of poetical composition, or to point out the characteristics of the various kinds of poetry that have prevailed at different periods, or to compare the genius of the most illustrious poets—in either case, I could do little more than pass rapidly over the principal topics. The view would be so brief that it would seem like a dry table of the contents of a large work, and would become tedious from its very brevity. I shall, therefore, in the short course of lectures which I have undertaken, attempt no entire view of the subject assigned to me; but shall only endeavor to select a few of the topics which seem to me among the most interesting, and on which I may imagine that I shall weary you the least.

Of the nature of poetry different ideas have been entertained. The ancient critics seemed to suppose that they did something toward giving a tolerable notion of it by calling it a mimetic or imitative art, and classing it with sculpture and painting. Of its affinity with these arts there can be no doubt; but that affinity seems to me to consist almost wholly in the principles by which they all produce their effect, and not in the manner in which those principles are reduced to practice. There is no propriety in applying to poetry the term *imitative* in a literal and philosophical sense, as there is in applying it to painting and sculpture. The latter speak to the senses; poetry speaks directly to the mind. They reproduce sensible objects, and, by means of these, suggest the feeling or sentiment connected with them; poetry, by the symbols of words, suggests both the sensible object and the association. I should be glad to learn how a poem descriptive of a scene or an event is any more an imitation of that scene or that event than a prose description would be. A prose composition giving an account of the proportions and dimensions of a building, and the materials of which it is constructed, is certainly, so far as mere exactness is concerned, a better imitation of it than the finest poem that could be written about it. Yet who, after all, ever thought of giving such a composition the name of an imitation? The truth is, painting and sculpture are, literally, imitative arts, while poetry is only metaphorically so. The epithet as applied to poetry may be well enough, perhaps, as a figure of speech, but to make a metaphor the foundation of a philosophical classification is putting it to a service in which it is sure to confuse what it professes to make clear.

I would rather call poetry a suggestive art. Its power of affecting the mind by pure suggestion, and employing, instead of a visible or tangible imitation, arbitrary symbols, as unlike as possible to the things with which it deals, is what distinguishes this from its two sister arts. It is owing to its operation by means of suggestion that it affects different minds with such different degrees of force. In a picture or a statue the colors and forms employed by the artist impress the senses with the greatest distinctness. In painting, there is little—in sculpture, there is less—for the imagination to supply. It is true that different minds, according to their several degrees of cultivation, will receive different degrees of pleasure from the production of these arts, and that the moral associations they suggest will be variously felt, and in some instances variously interpreted. Still, the impression made on the senses is in all cases the same; the same figures, the same lights and shades, are seen by all the beholders alike. But the creations of Poetry have in themselves nothing of this precision and fixedness of form, and depend greatly for their vividness and clearness of impression upon the mind to which they are presented. Language, the great machine with which her miracles are wrought, is contrived to have an application to all possible things; and wonderful as this contrivance is, and numerous and varied as are its combinations, it is still limited and imperfect, and, in point of com-

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31 ancient critics, notably Aristotle, whose ideas on imitation appear in the first part of the **Poetics**. See also Bk. X of Plato's **Republic**

prehensiveness, distinctness, and variety, falls infinitely short of the mighty and diversified world of matter and mind of which it professes to be the representative. It is, however, to the very limitation of this power of language, as it seems to me, that Poetry owes her magic. The most detailed of her descriptions, which, by the way, are not always the most striking, are composed of a few touches; they are glimpses of things thrown into the mind; here and there a trace of the outline; here a gleam of light, and there a dash of shade. But these very touches act like a spell upon the imagination and awaken it to greater activity, and fill it, perhaps, with greater delight than the best defined objects could do. The imagination is the most active and the least susceptible of fatigue of all the faculties of the human mind; its more intense exercise is tremendous, and sometimes unsettles the reason; its repose is only a gentle sort of activity; nor am I certain that it is ever quite unemployed, for even in our sleep it is still awake and busy, and amuses itself with fabricating our dreams. To this restless faculty—which is unsatisfied when the whole of its work is done to its hands, and which is ever wandering from the combination of ideas directly presented to it to other combinations of its own—it is the office of poetry to furnish the exercise in which it delights. Poetry is that art which selects and arranges the symbols of thought in such a manner as to excite it the most powerfully and delightfully. The imagination of the reader is guided, it is true, by the poet, and it is his business to guide it skilfully and agreeably; but the imagination in the mean time is by no means passive. It pursues the path which the poet only points out, and shapes its visions from the scenes and allusions which he gives. It fills up his sketches of beauty with what suits its own highest conceptions of the beautiful, and completes his outline of grandeur with the noblest images its own stores can furnish. It is obvious that the degree of perfection with which this is done must depend greatly upon the strength and cultivation of that faculty. For example, in the following passage, in which Milton describes the general mother passing to her daily task among the flowers:

> "With goddess-like demeanor forth she went
> Not unattended, for on her as queen
> A pomp of winning graces waited still."

The coldest imagination on reading it, will figure to itself, in the person of Eve, the finest forms, attitudes, and movements of female loveliness and dignity, which, after all, are not described, but only hinted at by the poet. A warmer fancy, kindling at the delicate allusions in these lines, will not only bestow these attractions on the principal figure, but will fill the air around her with beauty, and people it with the airy forms of the graces; it will see the delicate proportions of their limbs, the lustre of their flowing hair, and the soft light of their eyes. Take, also, the following passage from the same poet, in which, speaking of Satan, he says:

> "His face
> Deep scars of thunder had entrenched, and care
> Sat on his faded cheek—but under brows
> Of dauntless courage and considerate pride
> Waiting revenge; cruel his eye but cast
> Signs of remorse and passion to behold
> The fellows of his crime, the followers rather,
> (Far other once beheld in bliss), condemned
> For evermore to have their lot in pain."

The imagination of the reader is stimulated by the hints in this powerful passage to form to itself an idea of the features in which reside this strong expression of malignity and dejection—the brow, the cheek, the eye of the fallen angel, bespeaking courage, pride, the settled purpose of revenge, anxiety, sorrow for the fate of his followers, and fearfully marked with the wrath of the Almighty. There can be no doubt that the picture which this passage calls up in the minds of different individuals will vary accordingly as the imagination is more or less vivid, or more or less excited in the perusal. It will vary, also, accordingly as the individual is more or less experienced in the visible expression of strong passion, and as he is in the habit of associating the idea of certain emotions with certain configurations of the countenance.

There is no question that one principal office of poetry

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14 **The imagination.** Bryant's notion is deeply influenced by eighteenth-century thought, as developed by Addison in Nos. 411-414 of **The Spectator** and by the followers of the "association" psychology of David Hartley (1705-1757). Among the books which Bryant read and which elaborate on the nature and function of the imagination is Archibald Alison's **Essays on the Nature and Principles of Taste** (1790)

is to excite the imagination, but this is not its sole, nor perhaps its chief province; another of its ends is to touch the heart, and, as I expect to show in this lecture, it has something to do with the understanding. I know that some critics have made poetry to consist solely in the exercise of the imagination. They distinguish poetry from pathos. They talk of pure poetry, and by this phrase they mean passages of mere imagery, with the least possible infusion of human emotion. I do not know by what authority these gentlemen take the term poetry from the people, and thus limit its meaning.

In its ordinary acceptation, it has, in all ages and all countries, included something more. When we speak of a poem, we do not mean merely a tissue of striking images. The most beautiful poetry is that which takes the strongest hold of the feelings, and, if it is really the most beautiful, then it is poetry in the highest sense. Poetry is constantly resorting to the language of the passions to heighten the effect of her pictures; and, if this be not enough to entitle that language to the appellation of poetical, I am not aware of the meaning of the term. Is there no poetry in the wrath of Achilles? Is there no poetry in the passage where Lear, in the tent of Cordelia, just recovered from his frenzy, his senses yet infirm and unassured, addresses his daughter as she kneels to ask his blessing?

"Pray do not mock me;
I am a very foolish, fond old man,
Fourscore and upward:
Not an hour more or less, and to deal plainly
I fear I am not in my perfect mind."

Is there no poetry in the remorse of Othello, in the terrible consciousness of guilt which haunts Macbeth, or the lamentations of Anthony over the body of his friend, the devoted love of Juliet, and the self-sacrificing affection of Cleopatra? In the immortal work of Milton, is there no poetry in the penitence of Adam, or in the sorrows of Eve at being excluded from Paradise? The truth is, that poetry which does not find its way to the heart is scarcely deserving of the name; it may be brilliant and ingenious, but it soon wearies the attention. The feelings and the imagination, when skilfully touched, act reciprocally on each other. For example, when the poet introduces Ophelia, young, beautiful, and unfortunate, the wildness of frenzy in her eye, dressed with fantastic garlands of wild flowers, and singing snatches of old tunes, there is a picture for the imagination, but it is one which affects the heart. But when, in the midst of her incoherent talk, she utters some simple allusion to her own sorrows, as when she says,

"We know what we are, but know not what we may be,"

this touching sentence, addressed merely to our sympathy, strongly excites the imagination. It sets before us the days when she knew sorrow only by name, before her father was slain by the hand of her lover, and before her lover was estranged, and makes us feel the heaviness of that affliction which crushed a being so gentle and innocent and happy.

Those poems, however, as I have already hinted, which are apparently the most affluent of imagery, are not always those which most kindle the reader's imagination. It is because the ornaments with which they abound are not naturally suggested by the subject, not poured forth from a mind warmed and occupied by it; but a forced fruit of the fancy, produced by labor, without spontaneity or excitement.

The language of passion is naturally figurative, but its figures are only employed to heighten the intensity of the expression; they are never introduced for their own sake. Important, therefore, as may be the office of the imagination in poetry, the great spring of poetry is emotion. It is this power that holds the key of the storehouse where the mind has laid up its images, and that alone can open it without violence. All the forms of fancy stand ever in its sight, ready to execute its bidding. Indeed, I doubt not that most of the offences against good taste in this kind of composition are to be traced to the absence of emotion. A desire to treat agreeably or impressively a subject by which the writer is himself little moved, leads him into great mistakes about the means of effecting his purpose. This is the origin of cold conceits, of prosing reflections, of the minute painting of uninteresting circumstances, and of the opposite extremes of tameness and extravagance. On the other hand, strong feeling is always a sure guide. It rarely offends against good taste, because it instinctively chooses the most effectual means of communicating itself to others. It gives a variety to the composition it inspires, with which the severest taste is delighted. It may sometimes transgress arbitrary rules, or offend against

local associations, but it speaks a language which reaches the heart in all countries and all times. Everywhere are the sentiments of fortitude and magnanimity uttered in strains that brace our own nerves, and the dead mourned in accents that draw our tears.

But poetry not only addresses the passions and the imagination; it appeals to the understanding also. So far as this position relates to the principles of taste which lie at the foundation of all poetry, and by which its merits are tried, I believe its truth will not be doubted. These principles have their origin in the reason of things, and are investigated and applied by the judgment. True it is that they may be observed by one who has never speculated about them, but it is no less true that their observance always gratifies the understanding with the fitness, the symmetry, and the congruity it produces. To write fine poetry requires intellectual faculties of the highest order, and among these, not the least important, is the faculty of reason. Poetry is the worst mask in the world behind which folly and stupidity could attempt to hide their features. Fitter, safer, and more congenial to them is the solemn discussion of unprofitable questions. Any obtuseness of apprehension or incapacity for drawing conclusions, which shows a deficiency of want of cultivation of the reasoning power, is sure to expose the unfortunate poet to contempt and ridicule.

But there is another point of view in which poetry may be said to address the understanding—I mean in the direct lessons of wisdom that it delivers. Remember that it does not concern itself with abstract reasonings, nor with any course of investigation that fatigues the mind. Nor is it merely didactic; but this does not prevent it from teaching truths which the mind instinctively acknowledges. The elements of moral truth are few and simple, but their combinations with human actions are as innumerable and diversified as the combinations of language. Thousands of inductions resulting from the application of great principles to human life and conduct lie, as it were, latent in our minds, which we have never drawn for ourselves, but which we admit the moment they are hinted at, and which, though not abstruse, are yet new. Nor are these of less value because they require no laborious research to discover them. The best riches of the earth are produced on its surface, and we need no reasoning to teach us the folly of a people who should leave its harvest ungathered to dig for its ores. The truths of which I have spoken, when possessing any peculiar force or beauty, are properly within the province of the art of which I am treating, and, when recommended by harmony of numbers, become poetry of the highest kind. Accordingly, they abound in the works of the most celebrated poets. When Shakespeare says of mercy,

"it is twice blessed—
It blesses him that gives and him that takes,"

does he not utter beautiful poetry as well as unquestionable truth? There are passages also in Milton of the same kind, which sink into the heart like the words of an oracle. For instance:

"Evil into the mind of God or man
May come and go so unapproved, and leave
No spot or blame behind."

Take, also, the following example from Cowper, in which he bears witness against the guilt and folly of princes:

"War is a game which, were their subjects wise,
Kings should not play at. Nations would do well
To extort their truncheons from the puny hands
Of heroes whose infirm and baby minds
Are gratified with mischief, and who spoil,
Because men suffer it, their toy—the world."

I call these passages poetry, because the mind instantly acknowledges their truth and feels their force, and is moved and filled and elevated by them. Nor does poetry refuse to carry on a sort of process of reasoning by deducing one truth from another. Her demonstrations differ, however, from ordinary ones by requiring that each step should be in itself beautiful or striking, and that they all should carry the mind to the final conclusion without the consciousness of labor.

All the ways by which poetry affects the mind are open also to the prose-writer. All that kindles the

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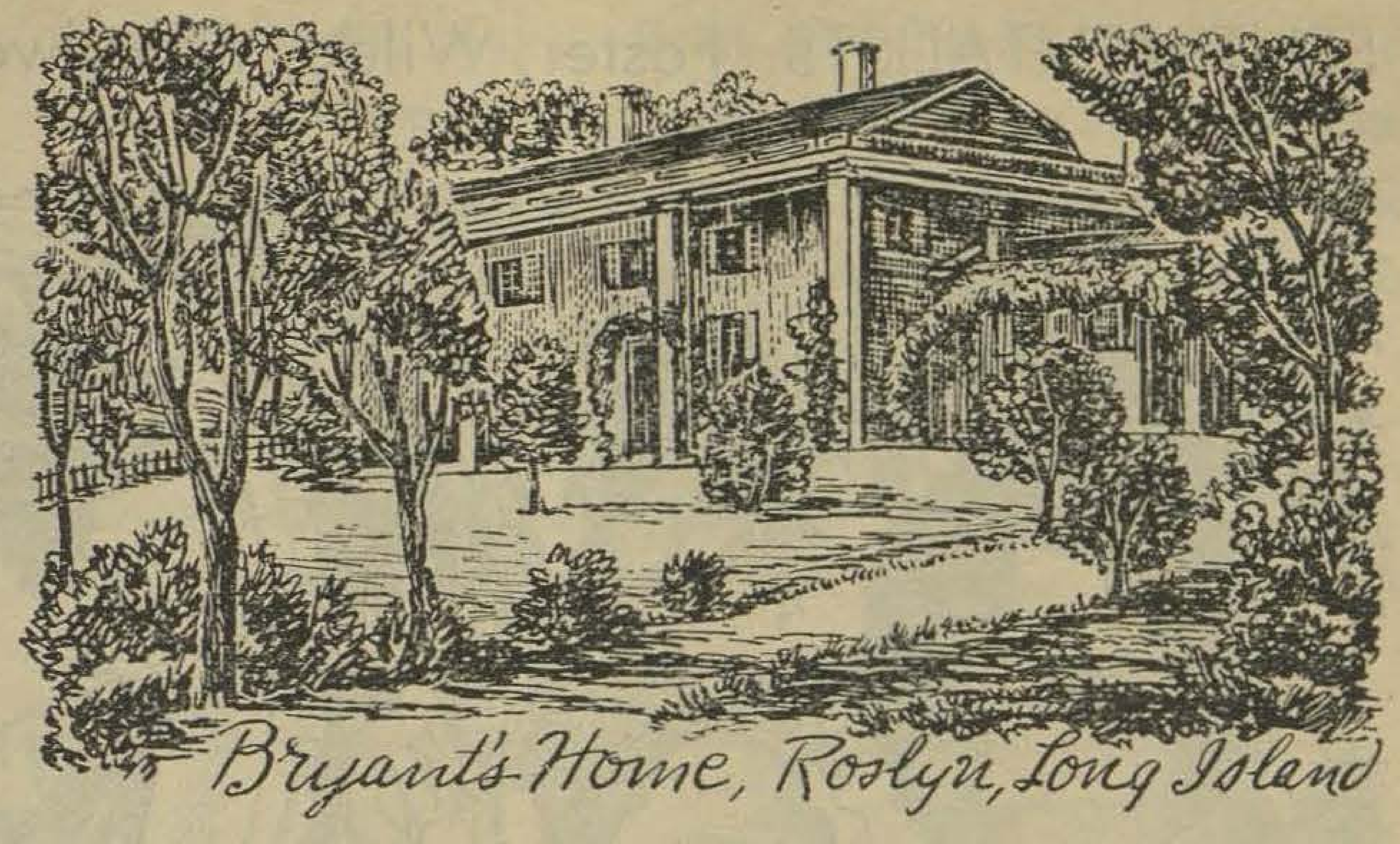
64 from Cowper. The passage is from "The Winter Morning, Walk," Bk. V of The Task

imagination, all that excites emotion, all those moral truths that find an echo in our bosoms, are his property as well as that of the poet. It is true that in the ornaments of style the poet is allowed a greater license, but there are many excellent poems which are not distinguished by any liberal use of the figures of speech from prose writings composed with the same degree of excitement. What, then, is the ground of the distinction between prose and poetry? This is a question about which there has been much debate, but one which seems to me of easy solution to those who are not too ambitious of distinguishing themselves by profound researches into things already sufficiently clear. I suppose that poetry differs from prose, in the first place, by the employment of metrical harmony. It differs from it, in the next place, by excluding all that disgusts, all that tasks and fatigues the understanding, and all matters which are too trivial and common to excite any emotion whatever. Some of these, verse cannot raise into dignity; to others, verse is an encumbrance: they are, therefore, all unfit for poetry; put them into verse, and they are prose still.

A distinction has been attempted to be made between poetry and eloquence, and I acknowledge that there is one; but it seems to me that it consists solely in metrical arrangement. Eloquence is the poetry of prose; poetry is the eloquence of verse. The maxim that the poet is born and the orator made is a pretty antithesis, but a moment's reflection will convince us that one can become neither without natural gifts improved by cultivation. By eloquence I do not mean mere persuasiveness: there are many processes of argument that are not susceptible of eloquence, because they require close and painful attention. But by eloquence I understand those appeals to our moral perceptions that produce emotion as soon as they are uttered. It is in these that the orator is himself affected with the feelings he would communicate, that his eyes glisten, and his frame seems to dilate, and his voice acquires an unwonted melody, and his sentences arrange themselves into a sort of measure and harmony, and the listener is chained in involuntary and breathless attention. This is the very enthusiasm that is the parent of poetry. Let the same man go to his closet and clothe in numbers conceptions full of the same fire and spirit, and they will be poetry.

In conclusion, I will observe that the elements of poetry make a part of our natures, and that every individual is more or less a poet. In this "bank-note world," as it has been happily denominated, we sometimes meet with individuals who declare that they have no taste for poetry. But by their leave I will assert they are mistaken; they have it, although they may have never cultivated it. Is there any one among them who will confess himself insensible to the beauty of order or to the pleasure of variety—two principles, the happy mingling of which makes the perfection of poetic numbers? Is there any one whose eye is undelighted with beautiful forms and colors, whose ear is not charmed by sweet sounds, and who sees no loveliness in the returns of light and darkness, and the changes of the seasons? Is there any one for whom the works of Nature have no associations but such as relate to his animal wants? Is there any one for whom her great courses and operations show no majesty, to whom they impart no knowledge, and from whom they hide no secrets? Is there any one who is attached by no ties to his fellow-beings, who has no hopes for the future, and no memory of the past? Have they all forgotten the days and the friends of their childhood, and do they all shut their eyes to the advances of age? Have they nothing to desire and nothing to lament, and are their minds never darkened with the shadows of fear? Is it, in short, for these men that life has no pleasures and no pains, the grave no solemnity, and the world to come no mysteries? All these things are the sources of poetry, and they are not only part of ourselves, but of the universe, and will expire only with the last of the creatures of God.

1826·1884



10 **much debate.** Coleridge's **Biographia Literaria** (1817) gave much space to the difference between poetry and prose, building upon Wordsworth's remarks in the Preface to the second edition (1800) of the **Lyrical Ballads**



Hannah Foster

1758 · 1840

Mrs. Hannah Webster Foster was born in Salisbury, Massachusetts, in 1758, the daughter of a merchant. As numerous learned and literary allusions in her writings attest, she was "highly educated for the times." In 1785 she married a minister, John Foster, a cousin of the woman upon whose sad story her best-known novel, *The Coquette; or, the History of Eliza Wharton* (1797), was based. Her only other book, another epistolary work, was *The Boarding School* (1798).

The excerpts which follow typify a group of fictional works produced by the hundreds and read widely in this country between 1789 and 1860. These "sentimental novels" were important as a literary form which influenced in various ways such famous narrative writers as Henry Wadsworth Longfellow, Harriet Beecher Stowe, Edgar Allan Poe, and Nathaniel Hawthorne. *The Coquette* is one of the best of these narratives of sensibility.

The title page of *The Coquette,* like that of many a novel of the time, proclaimed that it was "founded on fact." To some extent this proclamation, like the moralizing which dotted its pages, helped overcome a widespread prejudice against fiction. In addition, its many tempestuous emotional scenes, centering around a seduction, were sure to touch the heart of sensibility. Mrs. Foster told her story in a way then much admired, using the letter method which had been made famous by the great Samuel Richardson.

Panel (l. to r.): Samuel Woodworth • Sentiment • "Eliza Wharton," The Coquette • Sentimental belle and beau • Richard Henry Wilde

The plot, typical of this kind of novel, tells how the Rev. J. Boyer, a good and sincere (but rather dull) man, tries to win the hand of Eliza Wharton. Eliza, too fond for her own good of "the scenes of festive mirth and the dissipating amusements of the gay world," is more taken with dashing Major Sanford, a rake whose dangerousness is enhanced by both his shrewdness and his charm. Eliza loses her chance to marry Boyer by showing too much interest in the Major. Even after Sanford marries, she continues to see him, and eventually he seduces her. The following letters take up the story at this point, but the letters describing Eliza's pathetic death and the moralizing about it are not included.

R. L. Shurter, "Mrs. Hannah Webster Foster and the Early American Novel," **American Literature**, Nov. 1932, IV • H. R. Brown, "Introduction," **The Coquette**, Facsimile Text Society Edition, New York, 1939

From

The Coquette

LETTER LXV

To Mr. Charles Deighton

Hartford

Good news, Charles, good news! I have arrived to the utmost bounds of my wishes; the full possession of my adorable Eliza! I have heard a quotation from a certain book; but what book it was I have forgotten, if I ever knew. No matter for that; the quotation is, that "stolen waters are sweet, and bread eaten in secret is pleasant." If it has reference to the pleasures, which I have enjoyed with Eliza, I like it hugely, as Tristram Shandy's father said of Yorick's sermon; and I think it fully verified.

I had a long and tedious siege. Every method which love could suggest, or art invent, was adopted. I was sometimes ready to despair, under an idea that her resolution was unconquerable, her virtue impregnable. Indeed, I should have given over the pursuit long ago, but for the hopes of success I entertained from her parlying with me, and in reliance upon her own strength, endeavoring to combat, and counteract my designs. Whenever this has been the case, Charles, I have never yet been defeated in my plan. If a lady will consent to enter the lists against the antagonist of her honor, she may be sure of loosing the prize. Besides, were her delicacy genuine, she would banish the man at once, who presumed to doubt, which he certainly does, who attempts to vanquish it!

But, far be it from me to criticise the pretensions of the sex. If I gain the rich reward of my dissimulation and gallantry, that you know is all I want.

To return then to the point. An unlucky, but not a miraculous accident, has taken place, which must soon expose our amour. What can be done? At the first discovery, absolute distraction seized the soul of Eliza, which has since terminated in a fixed melancholy. Her health too is much impaired. She thinks herself rapidly declining; and I tremble when I see her emaciated form!

My wife has been reduced very low, of late. She brought me a boy a few weeks past, a dead one though.

These circumstances give me neither pain nor pleasure. I am too much ingrossed by my divinity to take an interest in any thing else. True, I have lately suffered myself to be somewhat engaged here and there, by a few jovial lads, who assist me in dispelling the anxious thoughts, which my perplexed situation excites. I must, however, seek some means to relieve Eliza's distress. My finances are low; but the last fraction shall be expended in her service, if she need it.

Julia Granby is expected at Mr. Wharton's every hour. I fear that her inquisitorial eye will soon detect our intrigue, and obstruct its continuation. Now there's a girl, Charles, I should never attempt to seduce; yet she is a most alluring object, I assure you. But the dignity of her manners forbid all assaults upon her virtue.

10 **Tristram Shandy**, a character in **The Life and Opinions of Tristram Shandy** (1760), an English sentimental novel, the fictional masterpiece of Laurence Sterne (1713-1768)

Why, the very expression of her eye, blasts in the bud, every thought, derogatory to her honor; and tells you plainly, that the first insinuation of the kind, would be punished with eternal banishment and displeasure! Of her there is no danger! But I can write no more, except that I am, &c.

PETER SANFORD

LETTER LXVI

To Mrs. Lucy Sumner

Hartford

Oh, my friend! I have a tale to unfold; a tale which will rend every nerve of sympathizing pity, which will rack the breast of sensibility, and unspeakably distress your benevolent heart! Eliza—oh, the ruined, lost Eliza!

I want words to express the emotions of indignation, and grief which oppress me. But I will endeavor to compose myself; and relate the circumstances as they came to my knowledge.

After my last letter, Eliza remained much in the same gloomy situation as I found her. She refused to go, agreeably to her promise, to visit your mamma; and under one pretext or another, has constantly declined accompanying me any where else, since my arrival.

Till last Thursday night she slept in the same bed with me; when she excused herself, by saying she was restless, and should disturb my repose. I yielded to her humor of taking a different apartment, little suspecting the real cause! She frequently walked out, and though I sometimes followed, I very seldom found her. Two or three times, when I happened to be awake, I heard her go down stairs; and on inquiry in the morning, she told me that she was very thirsty, and went down for water. I observed a degree of hesitancy in her answers, for which I could not account. But last night, the dreadful mystery was developed! A little before day, I heard the front door opened with great caution. I sprang from my bed, and running to the window, saw by the light of the moon, a man going from the house. Soon after I perceived a footstep upon the stairs, which carefully approached and entered Eliza's chamber.

Judge of my astonishment, my surprise, my feelings, upon this occasion! I doubted not but Major Sanford was the person I had seen; and the discovery of Eliza's guilt, in this infamous intrigue, almost deprived me of thought and recollection! My blood thrilled with horror at this sacrifice of virtue! After a while I recovered myself, and put on my clothes. But what to do, I knew not; whether to go directly to her chamber and let her know that she was detected; or to wait another opportunity.

I resolved on the first. The day had now dawned. I tapped at her door; and she bid me come in. She was sitting in an easy chair by the side of her bed. As I entered she withdrew her handkerchief from her face; and looking earnestly at me, said, what procures me the favor of a visit, at this early hour, Miss Granby? I was disturbed, said I, and wished not to return to my bed. But what breaks your rest; and calls you up so unseasonably, Eliza? Remorse, and despair, answered she, weeping. After what I have witnessed, this morning, rejoined I, I cannot wonder at it! Was it not Major Sanford whom I saw go from the house some time ago? She was silent, but tears flowed abundantly. It is too late, continued I, to deny, or evade. Answer my question sincerely; for, believe me, Eliza, it is not malice, but concern for you, which prompts it. I will answer you, Julia, said she. You have discovered a secret, which harrows up my very soul! A secret, which I wished you to know, but could not exert resolution to reveal! Yes! It was Major Sanford; the man who has robbed me of my peace; who has triumphed in my destruction; and who will cause my sun to sit at noon!

I shudder, said I, at your confession! Wretched, deluded girl! Is this a return for your parent's love, and assiduous care; for your friends' solicitude, and premonitory advice? You are ruined, you say! You have sacrificed your virtue to an abandoned, despicable profligate! And you live to acknowledge and bear your infamy! I do, said she; but not long shall I support this burden! See you not, Julia, my decaying frame, my faded cheek, and tottering limbs? Soon shall I be insensible to censure and reproach! Soon shall I be sequestered in that mansion, "where the wicked cease from troubling, and where the weary are at rest!" Rest! said I, can you expect to find rest either in this world, or another, with such a weight of guilt on your head? She exclaimed, with great emotion, add not to the upbraidings of a wounded spirit! Have pity upon me, Oh! my friend, have pity upon me!

Could you know what I suffer, you would think me sufficiently punished! I wish you no other punishment,

said I, than what may effect your repentance and reformation. But your mother, Eliza! She cannot long be ignorant of your fall; and I tremble to think of her distress! It will break her widowed heart! How has she loved; how has she doated upon you! Dreadful is the requital which you have made! My mother, rejoined she —Oh, name her not! The very sound is distraction to me! Oh! my Julia, if your heart be not shut against mercy and compassion towards me, aid me through this trying scene! Let my situation call forth your pity, and induce you, undeserving as I am, to exert it in my behalf!

During this time, I had walked the chamber. My spirits had been raised above their natural key, and were exhausted. I sat down, but thought I should have fainted, till a copious flood of tears gave me relief. Eliza was extremely affected. The appearance of calamity which she exhibited would have softened the most obdurate anger. Indeed, I feared some immediate and fatal effect. I therefore seated myself beside her; and assuming an air of kindness, compose yourself, Eliza, said I; I repeat what I told you before, it is the purest friendship, which thus interests me in your concerns. This, under the direction of charity, induces me again to offer you my hand. Yet you have erred against knowledge and reason; against warning and counsel. You have forfeited the favor of your friends; and reluctant will be their forgiveness. I plead guilty, said she, to all your charges. From the general voice I expect no clemency. If I can make my peace with my mother, it is all I seek or wish on this side the grave.

In your benevolence I confide for this. In you I hope to find an intercessor. By the remembrance of our former affection and happiness, I conjure you, refuse me not. At present, I entreat you to conceal from her this distressing tale. A short reprieve is all I ask. Why said I, should you defer it? When the painful task is over, you may find relief in her lenient kindness. After she knows my condition, I cannot see her, resumed she, till I am assured of her forgiveness. I have not strength to support the appearance of her anger and grief. I will write to her what I cannot speak. You must bear the melancholy message, and plead for me, that her displeasure may not follow me to the grave; whither I am rapidly hastening. Be assured, replied I, that I will keep your secret as long as prudence requires. But I must leave you now; your mamma will wonder at our being thus closetted together. When opportunity presents, we will converse further on the subject. In the mean time, keep yourself as composed as possible, if you would avoid suspicion. She raised her clasped hands, and with a piteous look, threw her handkerchief over her face, and reclined in her chair, without speaking a word. I returned to my chamber, and endeavored to dissipate every idea which might tend to disorder my countenance, and break the silence I wished to observe, relative to what had happened.

When I went down, Mrs. Wharton desired me to step up, and inform Eliza that breakfast was ready. She told me she could not yet compose herself sufficiently to see her mamma; she begged me to excuse her absence as I thought proper. I accordingly returned for answer to Mrs. Wharton, that Eliza had rested but indifferently, and being somewhat indisposed, would not come down, but wished me to bring her a bowl of chocolate, when we had breakfasted. I was obliged studiously to suppress even my thoughts concerning her, lest the emotions they excited might be observed. Mrs. Wharton conversed much of her daughter, and expressed great concern about her health and state of mind. Her return to this state of dejection, after having recovered her spirits and cheerfulness, in a great degree, was owing, she feared, to some cause unknown to her; and she entreated me to extract the secret, if possible. I assured her of my best endeavors, and doubted not, I told her, but I should be able in a few days to effect what she wished.

Eliza came down and walked in the garden before dinner; at which she commanded herself much better than I expected. She said that a little ride might, she imagined, be of service to her; and asked me if I would accompany her a few miles in the afternoon. Her mamma was much pleased with the proposition; and the chaise was accordingly ordered.

I observed to Eliza, as we rode, that with her natural and acquired abilities, with her advantages of education, with her opportunities of knowing the world, and of tracing the virtues and vices of mankind to their origin, I was surprised at her becoming the prey of an insidious libertine, with whose character she was well acquainted, and whose principles she was fully apprised would prompt him to deceive and betray her. Your surprise is very natural, said she. The same will doubtless be felt and expressed by every one to whom my sad story is related. But the cause may be found in that unrestrained levity of disposition, that fondness for

dissipation and coquetry which alienated the affections of Mr. Boyer from me. This event fatally depressed, and enfeebled my mind. I embraced with avidity the consoling power of friendship, ensnaringly offered by my seducer; vainly inferring from his marriage with a virtuous woman, that he had seen the error of his ways, and forsaken his licentious practices, as he affirmed, and I, fool that I was, believed it!

It is needless for me to rehearse the perfidious arts, by which he insinuated himself into my affections, and gained my confidence. Suffice it to say, he effected his purpose! But not long did I continue in the delusive dream of sensual gratification. I soon awoke to a most poignant sense of his baseness, and of my own crime and misery. I would have fled from him; I would have renounced him forever; and by a life of sincere humility and repentance, endeavored to make my peace with heaven, and to obliterate, by the rectitude of my future conduct, the guilt I had incurred; but I found it too late! My circumstances called for attention; and I had no one to participate my cares, to witness my distress, and to alleviate my sorrows, but him. I could not therefore prevail on myself, wholly to renounce his society. At times I have admitted his visits; always meeting him in the garden, or grove adjoining; till of late, the weather, and my ill health induced me to comply with his solicitations, and receive him into the parlor.

Not long, however, shall I be subject to these embarrassments. Grief has undermined my constitution. My health has fallen a sacrifice to a disordered mind. But I regret not its departure! I have not a single wish to live. Nothing which the world affords can restore my former serenity and happiness!

The little innocent I bear, will quickly disclose its mother's shame! God Almighty grant it may not live as a monument of my guilt, and a partaker of the infamy and sorrow, which is all I have to bequeath it! Should it be continued in life, it will never know the tenderness of a parent; and, perhaps, want and disgrace may be its wretched portion! The greatest consolation I can have, will be to carry it with me to a state of eternal rest; which, vile as I am, I hope to obtain, through the infinite mercy of heaven, as revealed in the gospel of Christ.

I must see Major Sanford again. It is necessary to converse further with him, in order to carry my plan of operation into execution. What is this plan of operation, Eliza? said I. I am on the rack of anxiety for your safety. Be patient, continued she, and you shall soon be informed. Tomorrow I shall write my dreadful story to my mother. She will be acquainted with my future intentions; and you shall know, at the same time, the destination of your lost friend. I hope, said I, that you have formed no resolution against your own life. God forbid, rejoined she. My breath is in his hands, let him do what seemeth good in his sight! Keep my secret one day longer, and I will never more impose so painful a silence upon you.

By this time we had reached home. She drank tea with composure, and soon retired to rest. Mrs. Wharton eagerly inquired whether I had found out the cause of Eliza's melancholy. I have urged her, said I, on the subject; but she alleges that she has particular reasons for present concealment. She has, notwithstanding, promised to let me know, the day after to-morrow. Oh, said she, I shall not rest till the period arrives. Dear, good woman, said I to myself, I fear you will never rest afterwards!

This is our present situation. Think what a scene rises to the view of your Julia! She must share the distresses of others, though her own feelings, on this unhappy occasion, are too keen to admit a moment's serenity! My greatest relief is in writing to you; which I shall do again by the next post. In the mean time, I must beg leave to subscribe myself, sincerely yours,

JULIA GRANBY

LETTER LXVII

To the same

Hartford

All is now lost; lost, indeed! She is gone! Yes, my dear friend, our beloved Eliza, is gone! Never more shall we behold this once amiable companion, this once innocent and happy girl. She has forsaken, and, as she says, bid an everlasting adieu to her home, her afflicted parent and her friends! But I will take up my melancholy story where I left it in my last.

She went, as she told me she expected, into the garden, and met her detestable paramour. In about an hour she returned, and went directly to her chamber. At one o'clock I went up, and found her writing, and weeping. I begged her to compose herself, and go down to dinner. No, she said, she could not eat; and was not fit to ap-

pear before any body. I remonstrated against her immoderate grief; represented the injury she must sustain by the indulgence of it, and conjured her to suppress the violence of its emotions.

She entreated me to excuse her to her mamma; said she was writing to her, and found it a task too painful to be performed with any degree of composure; that she was almost ready to sink under the weight of her affliction; but hoped and prayed for support, both in this, and another trying scene, which awaited her. In compliance with her desire, I now left her; and told her mamma that she was very busy in writing; wished not to be interrupted at present; but would take some refreshment, an hour or two hence. I visited her again about four o'clock; when she appeared more calm and tranquil.

It is finished, said she, as I entered her apartment, it is finished. What said I, is finished? No matter, replied she; you will know all to-morrow, Julia. She complained of excessive fatigue, and expressed an inclination to lie down; in which I assisted her, and then retired. Some time after, her mamma went up, and found her still on the bed. She rose, however, and accompanied her down stairs. I met her at the door of the parlor, and taking her by the hand, inquired how she did? Oh, Julia, miserably indeed, said she. How severely does my mother's kindness reproach me! How insupportably it increases my self-condemnation! She wept; she wrung her hands, and walked the room in the greatest agony! Mrs. Wharton was exceedingly distressed by her appearance. Tell me, Eliza, said she, tell me the cause of your trouble! Oh, kill me not by your mysterious concealment! My dear child, let me, by sharing, alleviate your affliction! Ask me not, madam, said she; O my mother, I conjure you not to insist on my divulging to night, the fatal secret which engrosses and distracts my mind! To morrow I will hide nothing from you. I will press you no further, rejoined her mamma. Chuse your own time, my dear; but remember, I must participate your grief, though I know not the cause.

Supper was brought in; and we endeavored to prevail on Eliza to eat, but in vain. She sat down, in compliance with our united importunities; but neither of us tasted food. It was removed untouched. For a while, Mrs. Wharton and I gazed in silent anguish upon the spectacle of woe, before us! At length, Eliza rose to retire. Julia, said she, will you call at my chamber as you pass to your own? I assented. She then approached her mamma, fell upon her knees before her, and clasping her hand, said, in broken accents, Oh madam! can you forgive a wretch, who has forfeited your love, your kindness, and your compassion? Surely, Eliza, said she, you are not that being! No, it is impossible! But however great your transgression, be assured of my forgiveness, my compassion, and my continued love! Saying this, she threw her arms about her daughter's neck, and affectionately kissed her. Eliza struggled from her embrace, and looking at her with wild despair, exclaimed, this is too much! Oh, this unmerited goodness is more than I can bear! She then rushed precipitately out of the room, and left us overwhelmed in sympathy and astonishment!

When Mrs. Wharton had recovered herself a little, she observed, that Eliza's brain was evidently disordered. Nothing else, continued she, could impel her to act in this extraordinary manner. At first she was resolved to follow her; but I dissuaded her from it, alledging, that as she had desired me to come into her chamber, I thought it better for me to go alone. She acquiesced; but said she should not think of going to bed; but would, however, retire to her chamber, and seek consolation there. I bade her good night; and went up to Eliza, who took me by the hand and led me to the toilet, upon which she laid the two inclosed letters, the one to her mamma, and the other to me. These, said she, contain what I had not resolution to express. Promise me, Julia, that they shall not be opened till to morrow morning. I will, said I. I have thought and wept, continued she, till I have almost exhausted my strength, and my reason. I would now obtain a little respite, that I may prepare my mind for the account I am one day to give at a higher tribunal than that of earthly friends. For this purpose, what I have written, and what I shall yet say to you, must close the account between you and me. I have certainly no balance against you, said I. In my breast you are fully acquitted. Your penitential tears have obliterated your guilt, and blotted out your errors with your Julia. Henceforth, be they all forgotten. Live, and be happy. Talk not, said she, of life. It would be a vain hope, though I cherished it myself.

> "That I must die, it is my only comfort;
> Death is the privilege of human nature;
> And life without it were not worth our taking.
> Thither the poor, the prisoner and the mourner
> Fly for relief, and lay their burden down!"

You have forgiven me, Julia; my mother has assured me of her forgiveness, and what have I more to wish? my heart is much lightened by these kind assurances; they will be a great support to me in the dreadful hour which awaits me! What mean you, Eliza? said I. I fear some dreadful purpose labors in your mind. Oh, no, she replied; you may be assured your fear is groundless. I know not what I say: my brain is on fire; I am all confusion! Leave me, Julia; when I have had a little rest, I shall be composed. These letters have almost distracted me; but they are written, and I am comparatively easy. I will not leave you, Eliza, said I, unless you will go directly to bed, and endeavor to rest. I will, said she, and the sooner the better. I tenderly embraced her, and retired, though not to bed. About an hour after, I returned to her chamber, and opening the door very softly, found her apparently asleep. I acquainted Mrs. Wharton with her situation, which was a great consolation to us both; and encouraged us to go to bed. Having suffered much in my mind, and being much fatigued, I soon fell asleep; but the rattling of a carriage, which appeared to stop a little distance from the house, awoke me. I listened a moment, and heard the door turn slowly on its hinges. I sprang from my bed, and reached the window just in time to see a female handed into a chaise by a man who hastily followed her, and drove furiously away! I at once concluded they could be no other than Eliza and Major Sanford. Under this impression I made no delay, but ran immediately to her chamber. A candle was burning on the table; but Eliza was not there! I thought it best to acquaint her mamma with the melancholy discovery; and stepping to her apartment for the purpose, found her rising. She had heard me walk, and was anxious to know the cause. What is the matter, Julia, said she; what is the matter? Dear madam, said I, arm yourself with fortitude! What new occurrence demands it? rejoined she. Eliza has left us! Left us! what mean you? She is just gone! I saw her handed into a chaise, which instantly disappeared!

At this intelligence she gave a shriek, and fell back on her bed! I alarmed the family, and by their assistance soon recovered her. She desired me to inform her of every particular relative to her elopement, which I did; and then delivered her the letter which Eliza had left for her. I suspect, said she, as she took it; I have long suspected, what I dared not believe! The anguish of my mind has been known only to myself, and my God! I could not answer her, and therefore withdrew. When I had read Eliza's letter to me, and wept over the sad fall; and, as I fear the total loss of this once amiable and accomplished girl, I returned to Mrs. Wharton. She was sitting in her easy chair; and still held the fatal letter in her hand. When I entered, she fixed her streaming eyes upon me, and exclaimed, O Julia, this is more than the bitterness of death! True, madam, said I, your affliction must be great; yet that all-gracious Being, who controls every event, is able, and I trust, disposed to support you! To Him, replied she, I desire humbly to resign myself; but I think I could have borne almost any other calamity with greater resignation and composure than this. With how much comparative ease could I have followed her to the grave, at any period since her birth! Oh, my child, my child! dear, very dear hast thou been to my fond heart! Little did I think it possible for you to prepare so dreadful a cup of sorrow for your widowed mother! But where, continued she, where can the poor fugitive have fled? Where can she find that protection and tenderness, which, notwithstanding her great apostacy, I should never have withheld? From whom can she receive those kind attentions, which her situation demands.

The agitation of her mind had exhausted her strength; and I prevailed on her to refresh, and endeavor to compose herself to rest; assuring her of my utmost exertions to find out Eliza's retreat, and restore her to a mother's arms.

I am obliged to suppress my own emotions; and to bend all my thoughts towards the alleviation of Mrs. Wharton's anxiety and grief.

Major Sanford is from home, as I expected; and I am determined, if he return, to see him myself, and extort from him the place of Eliza's concealment. Her flight, in her present state of health, is inexpressibly distressing to her mother; and unless we find her soon, I dread the effects!

I shall not close this, till I have seen or heard from the vile miscreant who has involved a worthy family in wretchedness!

Friday morning.—Two days have elapsed without affording us much relief. Last evening, I was told that Major Sanford was at home. I immediately wrote him a billet, entreating and conjuring him to let me know where the hapless Eliza had fled. He returned me the following answer.

"Miss Granby need be under no apprehensions, respecting the situation of our beloved Eliza. She is well provided for, conveniently accommodated, and has every thing to make her happy, which love or affluence can give.

Major Sanford has solemnly sworn not to discover her retreat. She wishes to avoid the accusations of her friends, till she is better able to bear them.

Her mother may rest assured of immediate information, should any danger threaten her amiable daughter; and also of having seasonable notice of her safety."

Although little dependence can be placed upon this man; yet these assurances have, in a great degree, calmed our minds. We are, however, contriving means to explore the refuge of the wanderer; and hope, by tracing his steps, to accomplish our purpose. This we have engaged a friend to do.

I know, my dear Mrs. Sumner, the kind interest you will take in this disastrous affair. I tremble to think what the event may be! To relieve your suspense, however, I shall write you every circumstance, as it occurs. But at present, I shall only enclose Eliza's letters to her mamma, and me, and, subscribe myself your sincere and obliged friend,

JULIA GRANBY

LETTER LXVIII

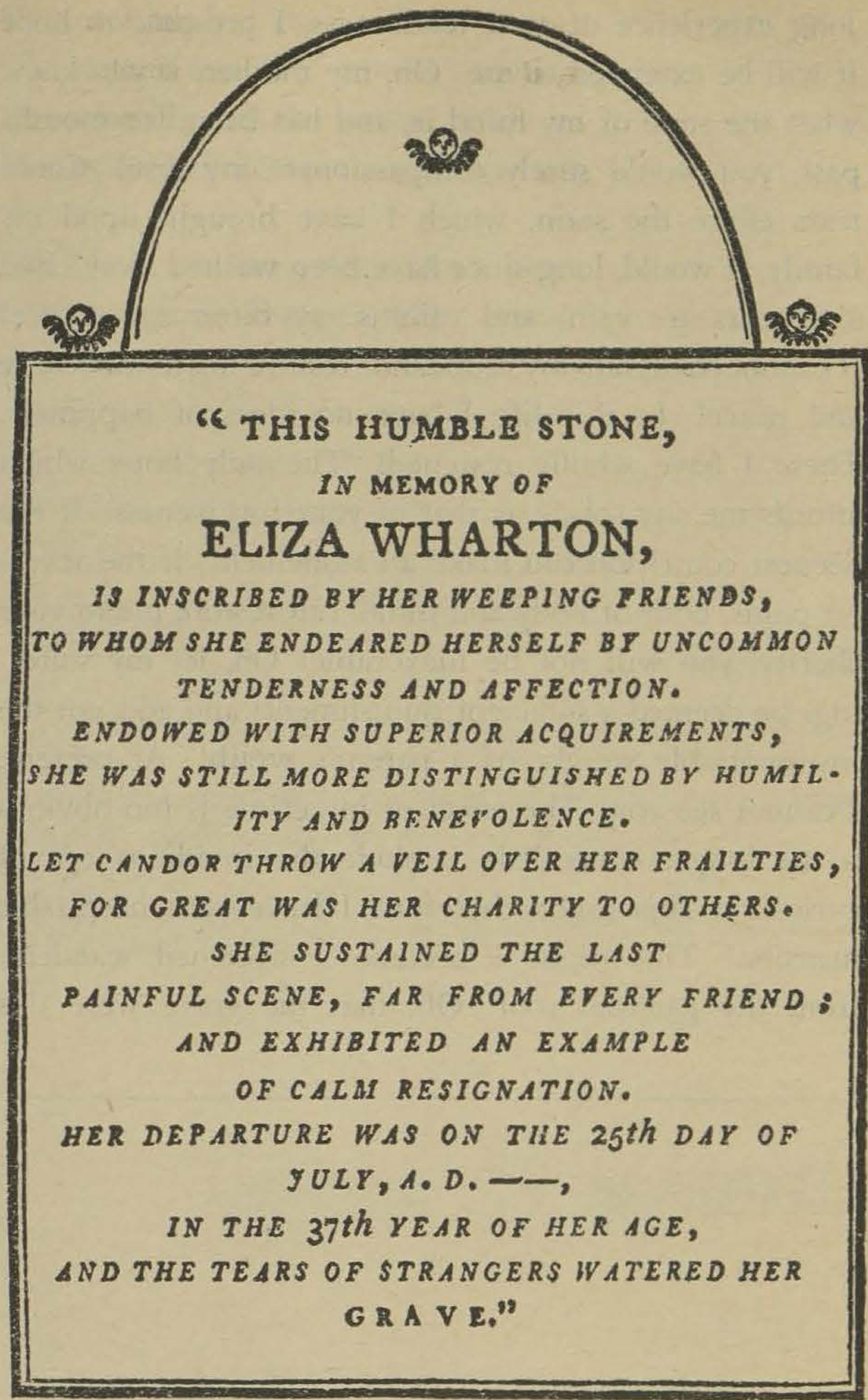
To Mrs. M. Wharton

Tuesday

My Honored and Dear Mamma,

In what words, in what language shall I address you? What shall I say on a subject which deprives me of the power of expression? Would to God I had been totally deprived of that power before so fatal a subject required its exertion? Repentance comes too late, when it cannot prevent the evil lamented. For your kindness, your more than maternal affection towards me, from my infancy to the present moment, a long life of filial duty and unerring rectitude could hardly compensate. How greatly deficient in gratitude must I appear then, while I confess, that precept and example, counsel and advice, instruction and admonition, have been all lost upon me!

Your kind endeavors to promote my happiness have been repaid by the inexcusable folly of sacrificing it. The various emotions of shame, and remorse, penitence and regret, which torture and distract my guilty breast, exceed description. Yes, madam, your Eliza has fallen; fallen, indeed! She has become the victim of her own indiscretion, and of the intrigue and artifice of a designing libertine, who is the husband of another! She is polluted, and no more worthy of her parentage! She flies from you, not to conceal her guilt, that she humbly and penitently owns; but to avoid what she has never experienced, and feels herself unable to support, a mother's frown; to escape the heart-rending sight of a parent's grief, occasioned by the crimes of her guilty child!



I have become a reproach and disgrace to my friends. The consciousness of having forfeited their favor, and incurred their disapprobation and resentment, induces me to conceal from them the place of my retirement; but, lest your benevolence should render you anxious for my comfort in my present situation, I take the liberty to assure you that I am amply provided for.

I have no claim even upon your pity; but from my

long experience of your tenderness, I presume to hope it will be extended to me. Oh, my mother, if you knew what the state of my mind is, and has been, for months past, you would surely compassionate my case! Could tears efface the stain, which I have brought upon my family, it would, long since have been washed away! But, alas, tears are vain; and vain is my bitter repentance! It cannot obliterate my crime, nor restore me to innocence and peace! In this life I have no ideas of happiness. These I have wholly resigned! The only hope which affords me any solace, is that of your forgiveness. If the deepest contrition can make an atonement; if the severest pains, both of body and mind, can restore me to your charity, you will not be inexorable! Oh, let my sufferings be deemed a sufficient punishment; and add not the insupportable weight of a parent's wrath! At present, I cannot see you. The effect of my crime is too obvious to be longer concealed, to elude the invidious eye of curiosity. This night, therefore, I leave your hospitable mansion! This night I become a wretched wanderer from thy paternal roof! Oh, that the grave were this night to be my lodging! Then should I lie down and be at rest! Trusting in the mercy of God, through the mediation of his son; I think I could meet my heavenly father with more composure and confidence, than my earthly parent!

Let not the faults and misfortunes of your daughter oppress your mind. Rather let the conviction of having faithfully discharged your duty to your lost child, support and console you in this trying scene.

Since I wrote the above, you have kindly granted me your forgiveness, though you knew not how great, how aggravated was my offence! You forgive me, you say: Oh, the harmonious, the transporting sound! It has revived my drooping spirits; and will enable me to encounter, with resolution, the trials before me!

Farewell, my dear mamma! pity and pray for your ruined child; and be assured, that affection and gratitude will be the last sentiments, which expire in the breast of your repenting daughter,

ELIZA WHARTON

1797

Richard Henry Wilde

1789 · 1847

From the time it was first printed about 1815, without the author's consent, "The Lament of the Captive" (sometimes titled "Stanzas") was well liked by nineteenth-century Americans. It was frequently reprinted, not only in the United States but in Scotland and Ireland as well, and at least six composers wrote musical settings for it. It is a fine example of the self-pity which characterizes much sentimental writing.

Wilde was borne in Dublin, Ireland, the son of an Irish merchant and of Mary Newitt Wilde, whose Tory family had left America at the beginning of the Revolution. The Wildes came to this country when Richard was a boy of eight, lived in Baltimore for five years, and then in Georgia. Wilde became a lawyer, then turned to politics and served several terms in the United States Congress. He spent a number of years in Italy, studying the lives of Tasso and Dante. Though he wrote a great deal, he is remembered chiefly for the poem which follows.

C. C. Jones, The Life, Literary Labors, and Neglected Grave of Richard Henry Wilde, 1887 • T. W. Koch, Dante in America

The Lament of the Captive

My life is like the summer rose,
  That opens to the morning sky,
But, ere the shades of evening close,
  Is scattered on the ground—to die!
Yet on the rose's humble bed
The sweetest dews of night are shed,
As if she wept the waste to see—
But none shall weep a tear for me!

My life is like the autumn leaf
  That trembles in the moon's pale ray:
Its hold is frail—its date is brief,
  Restless—and soon to pass away!
Yet, ere that leaf shall fall and fade,
The parent tree will mourn its shade,
The winds bewail the leafless tree—
But none shall breathe a sigh for me!

My life is like the prints which feet
  Have left on Tampa's desert strand;
Soon as the rising tide shall beat,
  All trace will vanish from the sand;
Yet, as if grieving to efface
All vestige of the human race,
On that lone shore loud moans the sea—
But none, alas! shall mourn for me!

1814?-1815?

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18 **Tampa's desert strand.** The poem, written as a part of a larger piece, was supposedly the song of a captive in Florida

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Samuel Woodworth

1785 · 1842

Scituate, Massachusetts, was the birthplace of Samuel Woodworth and the scene of a childhood which, contrary to the claims of his most famous poem, was a rather unhappy one. After somewhat scanty formal schooling, Woodworth became a printer, then a literary man, well-known in his day as editor, playwright, fictionist, and poet.

His most famous song, originally called "The Bucket," published in the New York *Republican Chronicle,* June 3, 1818, was immediately reprinted widely and hailed as a masterpiece. The poem was written to be sung to the melody of "The Flower of Dunblane," but another musical setting by George Kiallmark (1781-1835) became popularly associated with it and helped spread and maintain its fame.

William Leggett's criticism of this piece, written in 1828, indicated the contemporary appeal of the song: "Its merit consists in the graphic accuracy of the description, the simplicity and nature of its sentiments, and the melodious flow of the versification. It appeals to feelings cherished in every human bosom . . . and forms around us, with the delusive power of a dream, a chain of young and heart-hoarded circumstances. . . ."

S. J. Kunitz and Howard Haycraft, **American Authors 1600-1900,** New York, 1938 • A. H. Quinn, **A History of the American Drama from the Beginning to the Civil War,** New York, 1943

The Old Oaken Bucket

How dear to this heart are the scenes of my childhood,
When fond recollection presents them to view!
The orchard, the meadow, the deep-tangled wild-wood,
And every loved spot which my infancy knew!
The wide-spreading pond, and the mill that stood by it,
The bridge, and the rock where the cataract fell,
The cot of my father, the dairy-house nigh it,
And e'en the rude bucket that hung in the well—
The old oaken bucket, the iron-bound bucket,
The moss-covered bucket which hung in the well.

That moss-covered vessel I hail'd as a treasure,
For often at noon, when return'd from the field,
I found it the source of an exquisite pleasure,
The purest and sweetest that nature can yield.
How ardent I seized it, with hands that were glowing,
And quick to the white-pebbled bottom it fell;
Then soon, with the emblem of truth overflowing,
And dripping with coolness, it rose from the well—
The old oaken bucket, the iron-bound bucket,
The moss-covered bucket, arose from the well.

How sweet from the green mossy brim to receive it,
As poised on the curb it inclined to my lips!
Not a full blushing goblet could tempt me to leave it
The brightest that beauty or revelry sips.
And now, far removed from the loved habitation,
The tear of regret will intrusively swell,
As fancy reverts to my father's plantation,
And sighs for the bucket that hangs in the well—
The old oaken bucket, the iron-bound bucket,
The moss-covered bucket that hangs in the well!

1818

EARLY PORTRAYERS OF AMERICAN TYPES: Thomas, Neville, Tyler

Robert Bailey Thomas

1766 · 1846

The first number of *The Farmer's Almanack,* later called *The Old Farmer's Almanack,* was the issue of 1793; the publication is still flourishing. Founder of this long-lived publication and its chief genius during the years when farmers bought 100,000 copies of it each winter was Robert Bailey Thomas. Thomas was born in Massachusetts in 1766, the son of a New Englander who had a varied career as schoolmaster, tradesman, soldier, and farmer. Having inherited some of his father's versatility, Thomas, after a moderate amount of schooling, became a schoolmaster, then a bookbinder, then a bookseller, then a Boston publisher and author.

As a publisher, he made the annual issuance of his almanac an important and highly profitable task. He compiled its astronomical predictions, its calendars, its various useful charts; he selected and edited contributions sent in by clever readers; and he wrote a large amount of copy himself. "A man," as a co-worker testi-



Panel (l. to r.): Captain Sam Brady, Indian fighter • Flatboat on the Mississippi River

fied, "of strong practical good sense," Thomas early began to include in each issue a column for every month called "Farmer's Calendar." Here, using and displaying his sound horse sense, he handed out seasonable advice, sometimes in proverb form, sometimes in the form of sketches or fables. A selection from these direct and apparently artless little pieces will show that, incidentally and quite unpretentiously, Thomas achieved in them a surprisingly inclusive portrait of New England life and manners. (The titles have been supplied by the editors.)

Clarence Brigham, **An Account of American Almanacs and Their Value for Historical Study**, American Antiquarian Society, Worcester, 1925 • J. H. Fitts, "The Thomas Almanacs," **Historical Collections of the Essex Institute**, October 1874, XII, 243-270 • G. L. Kittredge, **The Old Farmer and His Almanack**, Boston, 1904

From

The Farmer's Almanack

NEIGHBOR BRAGGADOCIA

I *have more pork in my cellar,* said neighbor Braggadocia, *than all the Almanack makers in christendom. Fie on your larnin, and all that stuff; I want none of your nonsense. No man shall teach me, faith.* Now I forbore to dispute with this great man; for the proverb says, *you cannot make a silken purse out of a sow's ear.*

July 1807

BREAD AND CHEESE

Cut your early winter grain while the blades are yellow and the joints are green. Gather herbs. About five o'clock let the boy carry out some bread and cheese. It is the most agreeable time in the whole day to eat; and such a rural repast, which needs not take but a few moments, will do your workmen more good than a barrel of flip. I would not however have you be sparing of your liquor.

July 1807

FARMER-SOLDIERS

Now if you have been a good husband, and kept your sheep well thro' the winter, you may wash and shear them about this time. Let spring calves go to grass and

salt them well. "Every farmer," says my old friend Tom, "should be soldier enough to understand the word attention."

May 1809

THE HAPPY FARMER

The farmer now must be as busy as a woman with twins. See daddy Spriggins! he considers the importance of strict attention to business. He is up at the peep of the dawn—the boys are called, and Tabathy has long ago been at milking! What pleasure exceeds that of the farmer? Now he exultingly beholds the fair fruits of his labour. He picks his apples; he gathers his corn; he digs his potatoes, and dances around the cider mill with a delight that kings and emperors cannot enjoy with all their pompous parade and tinsel splendor.

October 1809

NOVEMBER CHORES

The maltsters are calling for your barley—so make haste to thresh it. Breed horses and fat cattle. It will do to thresh all your grain. You may set fruit trees. Secure cellars from frost. Rack off cyder—put it into clean casks. See that your loose boards are nailed. Take care of your bees by sheltering them. Do not let geese, turkeys, &c. suffer for want of food. Be not impatient to get away to the grog shop.

November 1809

MINDING THE MAIN CHANCE

"There, there! run, John, the hogs are in the cornfield," cried old lady Lookout, as she stood slipshod over the cheese-tub. "I told your father, John, that this would be the case; but he would rather go day after day up to 'Squire Plunket's to drink grog and swap horses, than go to a little pains to stop the gap in the wall, by which he might prevent the destruction of our beautiful cornfield; and then, Jonny, you know if we have corn to sell we can afford to rig up a little and go and see your aunt Winnypucker's folks."

"Aye, aye, mother, let us mind the main chance, as our minister told us the other day. You look to your cheese-tubs, I'll see to the hogs, and with a little good luck, by jinks, mother, we may be able to hold up our heads yet."

July 1812

SLIPPERY TIMES

"Slippery times, slippery times," cried father Simpkins, when he saw his neighbor's mare fall and break her leg for want of shoeing.

A blacksmith is of great use to a neighborhood. Farmer Heedless acknowledges this, yet he seldom employs one. 'Tis but a few days since I visited him. When I entered the house the good woman was complaining to him of his negligence.

"There," said she, "it is going on five years since you broke the crane in heating water to scald the hogs, and all this time I have had to set my kettle on the coals! Look at these tongs—they have been broke ever since Caleb was born! And as for the andirons, you have soaked them so much in your flip-pitcher that they have been useless this long time. John, take the mare over to Captain Smite's and have her shod all over, for the poor creature ha'n't had but a piece of a shoe on since last June, when I rode her up to your uncle Clumpet's. Ask him when he can shoe the oxen. O, by jingo! I wish I was a man—I would make business fly, like a hornet's nest in a pair of breeches, as the saying is," &c, &c, &c, &c.

February 1813

MY NEIGHBOR FREEPORT

My neighbor Freeport had a knack at telling a story, cracking a joke and singing a song, and these talents made him a favourite of his townsmen. Every town meeting and training was sure to gather round him a crowd of jovial fellows, and my neighbour pretty soon added to his other acquisitions that of handsomely swigging a glass of grog. The demands for stories, jokes and songs encreased with the reward he received for them; and Freeport had not a heart to refuse either, till the tavern became his common resort. But while Freeport was so musical at the tavern his affairs got out of tune at home. His wife took a high pitch, and often gave him an unwelcome solo. Her stories had much of pith, and her sarcasms were of the keenest sort. She insisted that their affairs were going to rack and ruin. Sometimes the neigh-

bour's cattle had broken into the corn—the rye had been ruined by laying out in the storm—the hogs had broken in and rooted up the garden—the hay was half lost for want of attention—the fences were broken down, &c. &c. And then the children—

Alas! the poor children were shoeless, coatless and heartless; for they had become the scoff and sport of their little companions by reason of their father's neglect to provide them with decent and comfortable apparel. They were unable to read, for they had no books. The sheep—here the poor woman sorely wept—were sold by the collector to pay taxes. So there was no chance for any wool to knit the children's stockings. No flax had been raised, and of course they could have no shirts. To hear all this and ten times more was not very welcome to the ears of Freeport, whose heart was naturally tender and humane, so to get rid of it, he used to return to the tavern like a sow to her wallowing. His shop bills run up fast, while his character was running down. In this way he went on about two years, till old Scrapewell and Screwpenny got his farm; for all this time these usurers had been lending him money, and thus encouraging him to pursue this dreadful course.

Old Capt. Gripe also came in for a share of poor Freeport's estate; and there was Plunket, the cobler, he had lent him nine pence several times and now had cobbled it up to a court demand. Bob Raikins had swapped watches with him, and came in for the boot. The widow Nippet had lent him her mare twice to mill and once to a funeral, and had sold the boys an old tow jacket for a peck of whortleberries, and also given them a mess of turnips, and so she made out her account and got a writ. Tom Teazer, well known at the grog shops for a dabster at shoemaker loo, old Jeremiah Jenkins, the Jew, Stephen Staball, the butcher, and all the village mooncursers came in for their portion of the wreck. So poor Freeport gave up vessel and cargo to these land pirates, sent his disconsolate wife again to her father with one of their babes, the rest were provided for by the town; and as for himself, miserable wretch, he became an outcast, a vagabond, and died drunk in the highway!

October-December 1813

TURBULENT MARCH

'Tis almost as much as any one can do to keep his hat upon his head, and his head upon his shoulders, during this turbulent month! See old aunt Betty Beeswax half leg deep in splash, combating a gust of wind that has laid seige to her petticoat! Alas, poor Betty! These are searching, saucy and pitiless winds. Take heed from this and have mercy on those poor wretches whose characters you have a thousand times thus belabored and writhed and twisted and turned topsyturvy. Perhaps you are now on some *backbitical* expedition.

Take no alarm, ladies. Every fair dairy maid is not as Betty Beeswax, but lest some of you should wax warm and with a vengeance tear up my Calendar, I will change to a sweeter theme and sing of Maple Sugar. *Come thou sweet, delicious juice, and from the pregnant maple pour and fill my cauldrons. The sweat and tears of sorrowing slaves shall ne'er impair thy charming flavour!*

March 1815

TOM TWILIGHT

Through drifting snow and cutting sleet
I've trudged and toiled my friends to greet;
And tug'd beneath my lumb'ring gear,
To wish you all a *happy year.*
Ye, gentle folks, shall I unpack,
The precious store upon my back,
My wallet, crowded to the brim,
And all the wealth of *Pedlar Tim!*
I've books of various sorts and sizes;
Come, buy just as your fancy prizes!

Walk up, gemmen! Now's your time to make a fortune! Come, who takes this? Here is Thacher's Orchardist; a book that ought to be in the possession of every farmer. The price one dollar, and Capt. Thrifty says he would give five dollars rather than be without one. Here's another excellent work, a Treatise on Gardening, by William Cobbett, the great Porcupine! Be not afraid of his quills. The tiger is softened to the lamb. He was once as fierce as a bull; but now he is as calm as a sheep. His arrows were as sharp as a pitchfork; but now they are as blunt as a beetle! Now, my friends, is the time to read books, crack nuts and tell stories—so here's another of my Almanacks, which contains as much as the former ones, and is, I hope, as entertaining.

January 1824

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34 shoemaker loo, a round game of cards • 35 moon-cursers, wreckers

This is the month for cattle shows, and other agricultural exhibitions—Premiums are offered by various societies for the greatest crops; the best stock, and the best domestic manufactures, and thousands are pulling away for the prize, with all their might.

The great Bull of farmer Lumpkins is a nonsuch!

Peter Nibble has raised a monstrous field of white beans!

Jo Lucky's acre of corn has seven stout ears to the stalk!

Dolly Dilligence has outstript all in the bonnet line!

Tabitha Twistem's hearth rug is up to all Market-street!

The Linsey-Woolsey Manufacturing Company have made the finest piece of satinet that ever mortals set eyes on!

There is the widow Clacket's heifer, she is to be driven!

And, O, if you could only see, Squire Trulliber's great boar! They say it is as big as a full grown rhinoceros!

Huzza, huzza for the premiums! Here's to the girl that can best darn a stocking, and to the lad that shall raise the biggest pumpkin!

October 1824

Morgan Neville

1783 · 1840

The first fictionist of note to hail from west of the Alleghenies, Morgan Neville was born in Pittsburgh in 1783. He was the descendant of a family which for many years had been important in western Pennsylvania and which had included two Revolutionary War heroes. After studying at the Pittsburgh Academy, he began a varied career typical of the West of the day. At various times he was a lawyer, a bank cashier, a sheriff, a business secretary, a journalist, and an editor.

Neville's writings included—in addition to newspaper editorials and lyric poems, happily forgotten—a number of sketches and tales. One of these, still remembered, is "Reminiscence of Pittsburgh" (1831), a story of a French *émigré* who wandered to Pittsburgh in the days of the French Revolution and became the proprietor of a confectionery shop there. His most famous story is "The Last of the Boatmen," published in a Cincinnati giftbook, *The Western Souvenir,* in 1828.

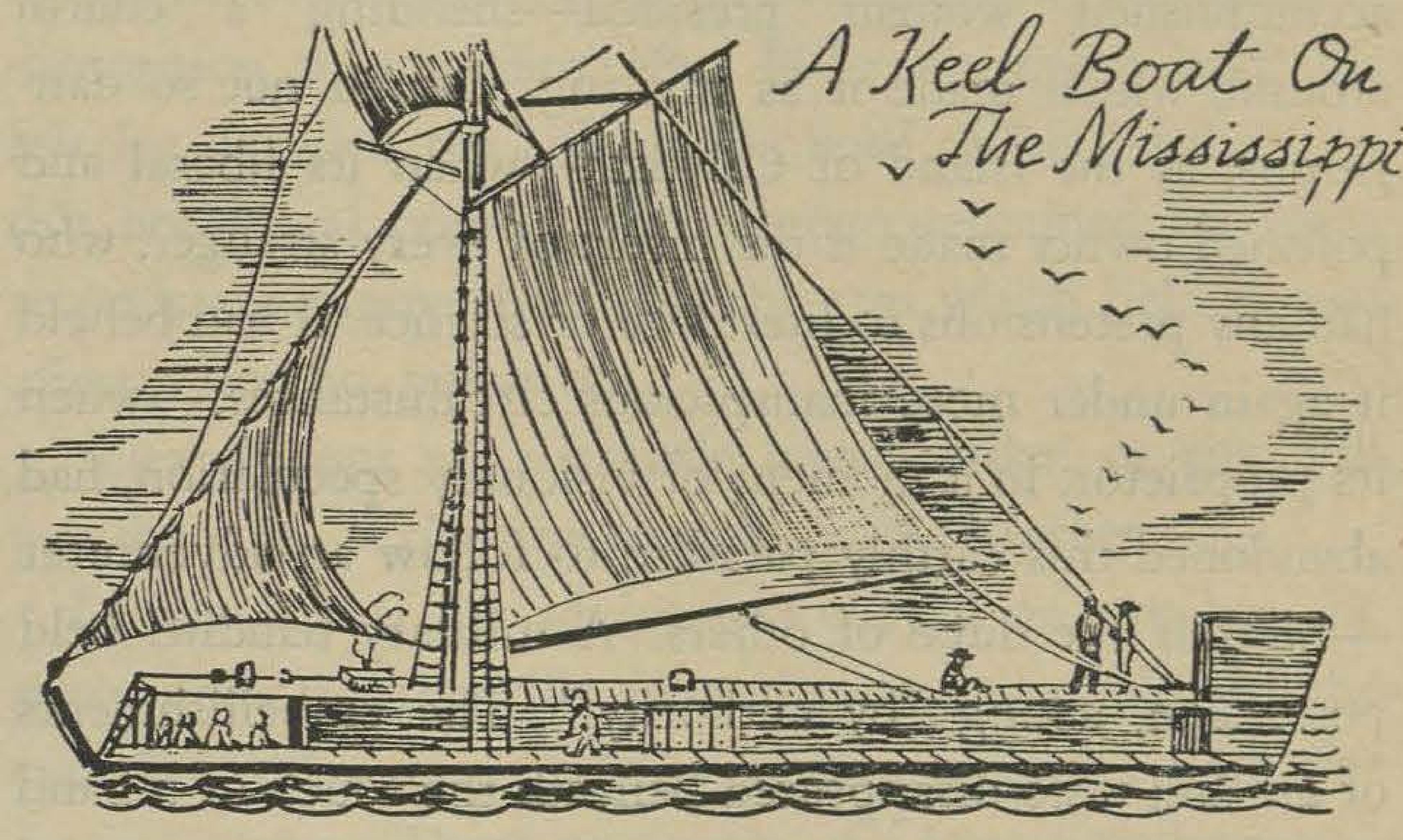
"The Last of the Boatmen" is a portrayal of the famed Mike Fink (1770?-1823). Mike had been one of the keelboatmen on the Ohio and Mississippi rivers and later one of the trappers operating in the country far to the west of St. Louis. He became a representative, in popular thought, of the frontier, and during his lifetime and after his death he was the hero of much lore retailed by word of mouth up and down the rivers. Young Abe Lincoln and young Sam Clemens were destined to hear traditional yarns about him, and Clemens was to consider putting a passage about him in *Huckleberry Finn.*

Mike's story, as Neville told it, was transitional in the way much fiction of the 1820's and 1830's was—a com-

bination of the elegant and leisurely method of the essay with the salty materials of the campfire yarn. Despite its stiffness and its embroidered elegance, it pointed the way for later writers who were to portray more and more indigenous American characters in a style like that of the fireside storyteller. Neville's work, in other words, was preparatory for that of some of the best humorists of the prewar period.

Walter Blair and F. J. Meine, **Mike Fink, King of Mississippi Keelboatmen,** New York, 1933 • J. T. Flanagan, "Morgan Neville, Early Western Chronicler," **Western Pennsylvania Historical Magazine,** December 1938, XXI, 255-266

The Last of the Boatmen



I embarked a few years since, at Pittsburgh, for Cincinnati, on board of a steam boat—more with a view of realising the possibility of a speedy return against the current, than in obedience to the call of either business or pleasure. It was a voyage of speculation. I was born on the banks of the Ohio, and the only vessels associated with my early recollections were the canoes of the Indians, which brought to Fort Pitt their annual cargoes of skins and bear's oil. The Flat boat of Kentucky, destined only to float with the current, next appeared; and after many years of interval, the Keel boat of the Ohio, and the Barge of the Mississippi were introduced for the convenience of the infant commerce of the West.

At the period, at which I have dated my trip to Cincinnati, the steam boat had made but few voyages back to Pittsburgh. We were generally skeptics as to its practicability. The mind was not prepared for the change that was about to take place in the West. It is now consummated; and we yet look back with astonishment at the result.

The rudest inhabitant of our forests;—the man whose mind is least of all imbued with a relish for the picturesque—who would gaze with vacant stare at the finest painting—listen with apathy to the softest melody, and turn with indifference from a mere display of ingenious mechanism, is struck with the sublime power and self-moving majesty of a steam boat;—lingers on the shore where it passes—and follows its rapid, and almost magic course with silent admiration. The steam engine in five years has enabled us to anticipate a state of things, which, in the ordinary course of events, it would have required a century to have produced. The art of printing scarcely surpassed it in its beneficial consequences.

In the old world, the places of the greatest interest to the philosophic traveller are ruins, and monuments, that speak of faded splendour, and departed glory. The broken columns of Tadmor—the shapeless ruins of Babylon, are rich in matter for almost endless speculation. Far different is the case in the western regions of America. The stranger views here, with wonder, the rapidity with which cities spring up in forests; and with which barbarism retreats before the approach of art

9 **Flat boat,** a boat used by pioneers in moving downriver. These were flat-bottomed, boxlike structures of green oak fastened with wooden pins to timber frames, averaging about forty feet long, twelve feet wide, and eight feet deep • 11 **Keel boat,** a vessel used for transporting cargoes not only downstream but upstream as well. These boats, averaging about fifty feet in length and nine feet or less in width, were built on a keel covered with planks. They had a draught of only twenty or thirty inches, and could be poled, bushwhacked, rowed, sailed, or cordelled—by manpower—upstream • 12 **Barge,** a long boat, similar to a keelboat, sixty feet long, propelled by fifty oars

and civilization. The reflection possessing the most intense interest is—not what has been the character of the country, but what shall be her future destiny.

As we coasted along this cheerful scene, one reflection crossed my mind to diminish the pleasure it excited. This was caused by the sight of the ruins of the once splendid mansion of Blennerhassett. I had spent some happy hours here, when it was the favourite residence of taste and hospitality. I had seen it when a lovely and accomplished woman presided—shedding a charm around, which made it as inviting, though not so dangerous, as the island of Calypso;—when its liberal and polished owner made it the resort of every stranger, who had any pretensions to literature or science. I had beheld it again under more inauspicious circumstances:—when its proprietor, in a moment of visionary speculation, had abandoned this earthly paradise to follow an adventurer—himself the dupe of others. A military banditti held possession, acting "by authority." The embellishments of art and taste disappeared beneath the touch of a band of Vandals, and the beautiful domain which presented the imposing appearance of a palace, and which had cost a fortune in the erection, was changed in one night, into a scene of devastation! The chimneys of the house remained for some years—the insulated monument of the folly of their owner, and pointed out to the stranger the place where once stood the temple of hospitality. Driftwood covered the pleasure grounds; and the massive, cut stone, that formed the columns of the gateway, were scattered more widely than the fragments of the Egyption Memnon.

When we left Pittsburgh, the season was not far advanced in vegetation. But as we proceeded, the change was more rapid than the difference of latitude justified. I had frequently observed this in former voyages, but it never was so striking, as on the present occasion. The old mode of travelling, in the sluggish flat boat seemed to give time for the change of season; but now a few hours carried us into a different climate. We met spring with all her laughing train of flowers and verdure, rapidly advancing from the south. The buck-eye, cottonwood, and maple, had already assumed, in this region, the rich livery of summer. The thousand varieties of the floral kingdom spread a gay carpet over the luxuriant bottoms on each side of the river. The thick woods resounded with the notes of the feathered tribe—each striving to out-do his neighbor in noise, if not in melody. We had not yet reached the region of paroquets; but the clear toned whistle of the cardinal was heard in every bush; and the cat-bird was endeavouring, with its usual zeal, to rival the powers of the more gifted mocking-bird.

A few hours brought us to one of those stopping points, known by the name of "wooding places." It was situated immediately above Letart's Falls. The boat, obedient to the wheel of the pilot, made a graceful sweep towards the island above the chute, and rounding to, approached the wood pile. As the boat drew near the shore, the escape steam reverberated through the forest and hills, like the chafed bellowing of the caged tiger. The root of a tree, concealed beneath the water, prevented the boat from getting sufficiently near the bank, and it became necessary to use the paddles to take a different position.

"Back out! Mannee—and try it again!" exclaimed a voice from the shore. "Throw your pole wide—and brace off—or you'll run against a snag!"

This was a kind of language long familiar to us on the Ohio. It was a sample of the slang of the keel-boatmen.

The speaker was immediately cheered by a dozen of voices from the deck; and I recognized in him the person of an old acquaintance, familiarly known to me from my boyhood. He was leaning carelessly against a large beech; and as his left arm negligently pressed a rifle to his side, presented a figure, that Salvator would have chosen from a million, as a model for his wild and gloomy pencil. His stature was upwards of six feet, his proportions perfectly symmetrical, and exhibiting the

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7 **mansion of Blennerhassett.** On an island on the Ohio, about fourteen miles below Marietta, the rich Irish emigrant, Harman Blennerhassett, built his expensive and showy mansion. Blennerhassett joined Aaron Burr in his conspiracy and was arrested with him in 1806. After the arrest, the mansion, deserted and neglected, became a picturesque ruin • 12 **island of Calypso.** Calypso was a sea nymph visited by Ulysses during his wanderings. She fell in love with the Greek hero and tried to make him stay with her forever • 30 **Egyption Memnon,** a huge statue erected on the banks of the Nile to honor the son of Aurora and Tithonus—the king of the Ethiopians • 64 **Mannee,** river-slang term for crew member • 65 **"Throw your pole wide . . ."** refers to the manipulation of keelboats with long poles. None were used, of course, on steamboats • 66 **snag,** an uprooted tree which, lying upon river shoals, menaced river traffic • 75 **Salvator,** Salvator Rosa (1615-1673), an Italian painter famed for his heroic portraits

evidence of Herculean powers. To a stranger, he would have seemed a complete mulatto. Long exposure to the sun and weather on the lower Ohio and Mississippi had changed his skin; and, but for the fine European cast of his countenance, he might have passed for the principal warrior of some powerful tribe. Although at least fifty years of age, his hair was as black as the wing of the raven. Next to his skin he wore a red flannel shirt, covered by a blue capot, ornamented with white fringe. On his feet were moccasins, and a broad leathern belt, from which hung, suspended in a sheath, a large knife, encircled his waist.

As soon as the steam boat became stationary, the cabin passengers jumped on shore. On ascending the bank, the figure I have just described advanced to offer me his hand.

"How are you, MIKE?" said I.

"How goes it?" replied the boatman—grasping my hand with a squeeze, that I can compare to nothing, but that of a blacksmith's vice.

"I am glad to see you, Mannee!"—continued he in his abrupt manner. "I am going to shoot at the tin cup for a quart—off hand—and you must be judge."

I understood Mike at once, and on any other occasion, should have remonstrated, and prevented the daring trial of skill. But I was accompanied by a couple of English tourists, who had scarcely ever been beyond the sound of Bow Bells; and who were travelling post over the United States to make up a book of observations, on our manners and customs. There were, also, among the passengers, a few bloods from Philadelphia and Baltimore, who could conceive of nothing equal to Chestnut or Howard streets; and who expressed great disappointment at not being able to find terrapins and oysters at every village—marvelously lauding the comforts of Rubicum's. My tramontane pride was aroused; and I resolved to give them an opportunity of seeing a Western Lion—for such Mike undoubtedly was—in all his glory. The philanthropist may start, and accuse me of want of humanity. I deny the charge, and refer for apology to one of the best understood principles of human nature.

Mike, followed by several of his crew, led the way to a beech grove, some little distance from the landing. I invited my fellow passengers to witness the scene. On arriving at the spot, a stout bull-headed boatman, dressed in a hunting shirt—but bare-footed—in whom I recognised a younger brother of Mike, drew a line with his toe; and stepping off thirty yards—turned round fronting his brother—took a tin cup, which hung from his belt, and placed it on his head. Although I had seen this feat performed before, I acknowledge, I felt uneasy, whilst this silent preparation was going on. But I had not much time for reflection; for this second Albert exclaimed—

"Blaze away, Mike! and let's have the quart."

My "compagnons de voyage," as soon as they recovered from the first effect of their astonishment, exhibited a disposition to interfere. But Mike, throwing back his left leg, levelled the rifle at the head of his brother. In this horizontal position the weapon remained for some seconds as immoveable, as if the arm which held it, was affected by no pulsation.

"Elevate your piece a little lower, Mike! or you will pay the corn," cried the imperturbable brother.

I know not if the advice was obeyed or not; but the sharp crack of the rifle immediately followed, and the cup flew off thirty or forty yards—rendered unfit for future service. There was a cry of admiration from the strangers, who pressed forward to see, if the fool-hardy boatman was really safe. He remained as immoveable, as if he had been a figure hewn out of stone. He had not even winked, when the ball struck within two inches of his skull.

"Mike has won!" I exclaimed; and my decision was the signal which, according to their rules, permitted him of the target to move from his position. No more sensation was exhibited among the boatmen, than if a common wager had been won. The bet being decided, they hurried back to their boat, giving me and my friends an invitation to partake of "the treat." We declined, and took leave of the thoughtless creatures. In a few minutes afterwards, we observed their "Keel" wheeling into the current,—the gigantic form of Mike, bestriding the large steering oar, and the others arranging themselves in their places in front of the cabin, that extended nearly the whole length of the boat, covering merchandize of immense value. As they left the shore, they gave the Indian yell; and broke out into a sort of unconnected chorus—commencing with—

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8 red . . . capot, parts of the boatman's typical costume • **27 Bow Bells,** the bells of Bow Church (St. Mary-in-Arcubus) in Cheapside

"Hard upon the beech oar!—
She moves too slow!—
All the way to Shawneetown,
Long while ago."

In a few moments the boat "took the chute" of Letart's Falls, and disappeared behind the point, with the rapidity of an Arabian courser.

Our travellers returned to the boat, lost in speculation on the scene, and the beings they had just beheld; and, no doubt, the circumstance has been related a thousand times with all the necessary amplifications of finished tourists.

Mike Fink may be viewed, as the correct representative of a class of men now extinct; but who once possessed as marked a character, as that of the Gipsies of England, or the Lazaroni of Naples. The period of their existence was not more than the third of a century. The character was created by the introduction of trade on the Western waters; and ceased with the successful establishment of the steam boat.

There is something inexplicable in the fact, that there could be men found, for ordinary wages, who would abandon the systematic, but not laborious pursuits of agriculture, to follow a life, of all others, except that of the soldier, distinguished by the greatest exposure and privation. The occupation of a boatman was more calculated to destroy the constitution, and to shorten life, than any other business. In ascending the river, it was a continued series of toil, rendered more irksome by the snail like rate, at which they moved. The boat was propelled by poles, against which the shoulder was placed; and the whole strength, and skill of the individual were applied in this manner. As the boatmen moved along the running board, with their heads nearly touching the plank on which they walked, the effect produced on the mind of an observer was similar to that, on beholding the ox, rocking before an overloaded cart. Their bodies, naked to their waist for the purpose of moving with greater ease, and of enjoying the breeze of the river, were exposed to the burning suns of summer, and to the rains of autumn.—After a hard day's push, they would take their "fillee," or ration of whiskey, and having swallowed a miserable supper of meat half burnt, and of bread half baked, stretch themselves, without covering, on the deck, and slumber till the steersman's call invited them to the morning "fillee." Notwithstanding this, the boatman's life had charms as irresistible, as those presented by the splendid illusion of the stage. Sons abandoned the comfortable farms of their fathers, and apprentices fled from the service of their masters. There was a captivation in the idea of "going down the river;" and the youthful boatman who had "pushed a keel" from New Orleans, felt all the pride of a young merchant, after his first voyage to an English sea port. From an exclusive association together, they had formed a kind of slang peculiar to themselves; and from the constant exercise of wit, with "the squatters" on shore, and crews of other boats, they acquired a quickness, and smartness of vulgar retort, that was quite amusing. The frequent battles they were engaged in with the boatmen of different parts of the river, and with the less civilized inhabitants of the lower Ohio, and Mississippi, invested them with that ferocious reputation, which has made them spoken of throughout Europe.

On board of the boats thus navigated, our merchants entrusted valuable cargoes, without insurance, and with no other guarantee than the receipt of the steersman, who possessed no property but his boat; and the confidence so reposed was seldom abused.

Among these men, Mike Fink stood an acknowledged leader for many years. Endowed by nature with those qualities of intellect, that give the possessor influence, he would have been a conspicuous member of any society, in which his lot might have been cast. An acute observer of human nature has said—"Opportunity alone makes the hero. Change but their situations, and Caesar would have been but the best wrestler on the green." With a figure cast in a mould that added much of the symmetry of an Apollo to the limbs of a Hercules, he possessed gigantic strength; and accustomed from an early period of life to brave the dangers of a frontier life, his character was noted for the most daring intrepidity. At the court of Charlemagne, he might have been a Roland; with the Crusaders, he would have been the favourite of the Knight of the Lion-heart; and in our revolution, he would have ranked with the Morgans and the Putnams

56 "the squatters," settlers who occupied land without paying for it • 82 **Roland,** a hero of the army of Charlemagne which invaded Spain in 778 • 84 **Knight of the Lion-heart,** Richard Coeur de Lion, King of England, 1189-1199 • 85 **Morgans and Putnams.** Daniel Morgan (1736?-1802) and Israel Putnam (1718-1790) were Revolutionary War heroes

of the day. He was the hero of a hundred fights, and the leader in a thousand daring adventures. From Pittsburgh to St. Louis, and New Orleans, his fame was established. Every farmer on the shore kept on good terms with Mike; otherwise, there was no safety for his property. Wherever he was an enemy, like his great prototype, Rob Roy, he levied the contribution of Black Mail for the use of his boat. Often at night, when his tired companions slept, he would take an excursion of five or six miles, and return before morning, rich in spoil. On the Ohio, he was known among his companions by the appellation of the "Snapping Turtle;" and on the Mississippi, he was called "The Snag."

At the early age of seventeen, Mike's character was displayed, by enlisting himself in a corps of Scouts—a body of irregular rangers, which was employed on the North-western frontiers of Pennsylvania, to watch the Indians, and to give notice of any threatened inroad.

At that time, Pittsburgh was on the extreme verge of white population, and the spies, who were constantly employed, generally extended their explorations forty or fifty miles to the west of this post. They went out, singly, lived as did the Indian, and in every respect, became perfectly assimilated in habits, taste, and feeling, with the red men of the desert. A kind of border warfare was kept up, and the scout thought it as praiseworthy to bring in the scalp of a Shawnee, as the skin of a panther. He would remain in the woods for weeks together, using parched corn for bread, and depending on his rifle for his meat—and slept at night in perfect comfort, rolled in his blanket.

In this corps, whilst yet a stripling, Mike acquired a reputation for boldness, and cunning, far beyond his companions. A thousand legends illustrate the fearlessness of his character. There was one, which he told, himself, with much pride, and which made an indelible impression on my boyish memory. He had been out on the hills of Mahoning, when, to use his own words, "he saw signs of Indians being about."—He had discovered the recent print of the moccasin on the grass; and found drops of the fresh blood of a deer on the green bush. He became cautious, skulked for some time in the deepest thickets of hazel and briar, and, for several days, did not discharge his rifle. He subsisted patiently on parched corn and jerk, which he had dried on his first coming into the woods. He gave no alarm to the settlements, because he discovered with perfect certainty, that the enemy consisted of a small hunting party, who were receding from the Alleghany.

As he was creeping along one morning, with the stealthy tread of a cat, his eye fell upon a beautiful buck, browsing on the edge of a barren spot, three hundred yards distant. The temptation was too strong for the woodsman, and he resolved to have a shot at every hazard.—Re-priming his gun, and picking his flint, he made his approaches in the usual noiseless manner. At the moment he reached the spot, from which he meant to take his aim, he observed a large savage, intent upon the same object, advancing from a direction a little different from his own. Mike shrunk behind a tree, with the quickness of thought, and keeping his eye fixed on the hunter, waited the result with patience.—In a few moments, the Indian halted within fifty paces, and levelled his piece at the deer. In the meanwhile, Mike presented his rifle at the body of the savage; and at the moment the smoke issued from the gun of the latter, the bullet of Fink passed through the red man's breast. He uttered a yell, and fell dead at the same instant with the deer. Mike re-loaded his rifle, and remained in his covert for some minutes, to ascertain whether there were more enemies at hand. He then stepped up to the prostrate savage, and having satisfied himself, that life was extinguished, turned his attention to the buck, and took from the carcass those pieces, suited to the process of jerking.

In the meantime, the country was filling up with a white population; and in a few years the red men, with the exception of a few fractions of tribes, gradually receded to the Lakes and beyond the Mississippi. The corps of Scouts was abolished, after having acquired habits, which unfitted them for the pursuits of civilized society. Some incorporated themselves with the Indians; and others, from a strong attachment to their erratic mode of life, joined the boatmen, then just becoming a distinct class. Among these was our hero, Mike Fink, whose talents were soon developed; and for many years, he was as celebrated on the rivers of the West, as he had been in the woods.

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7 Rob Roy, says Walter Scott, was "the Robin Hood of Scotland—the dread of the wealthy and the friend of the poor"

I gave to my fellow travellers the substance of the foregoing narrative, as we sat on deck by moonlight, and cut swiftly through the magnificent sheet of water between Letart and the Great Kanhawa. It was one of those beautiful nights, which permitted every thing to be seen with sufficient distinctness to avoid danger;—yet created a certain degree of illusion, that gave reins to the imagination. The outline of the river hills lost all its harshness; and the occasional bark of the house dog from the shore, and the distant scream of the solitary loon, gave increased effect to the scene. It was altogether so delightful, that the hours till morning flew swiftly by, whilst our travellers dwelt with rapture on the surrounding scenery, which shifted every moment like the capricious changes of the kaleidoscope—and listening to tales of border warfare, as they were brought to mind, by passing the places where they happened. The celebrated Hunter's Leap, and the bloody battle of Kanhawa, were not forgotten.

The afternoon of the next day brought us to the beautiful city of Cincinnati, which, in the course of thirty years, has risen from a village of soldiers' huts to a town,—giving promise of future splendour, equal to any on the sea-board.

Some years after the period, at which I have dated my visit to Cincinnati, business called me to New Orleans. On board of the steam boat, on which I had embarked, at Louisville, I recognized, in the person of the pilot, one of those men, who had formerly been a patroon, or keel boat captain. I entered into conversation with him on the subject of his former associates.

"They are scattered in all directions," said he. "A few, who had capacity, have become pilots of steam boats. Many have joined the trading parties that cross the Rocky mountains; and a few have settled down as farmers."

"What has become," I asked, "of my old acquaintance, Mike Fink?"

"Mike was killed in a skrimmage," replied the pilot. "He had refused several good offers on steam boats. He said he could not bear the hissing of steam, and he wanted room to throw his pole. He went to the Missouri, and about a year since he was shooting the tin cup, when he had corned too heavy. He elevated too low, and shot his companion through the head. A friend of the deceased, who was present, suspecting foul play, shot Mike through the heart, before he had time to re-load his rifle."

With Mike Fink expired the spirit of the Boatmen.

1828

Royall Tyler

1757 · 1826

The most sophisticated of the early portrayers of American types was probably Royall Tyler, soldier, lawyer, dramatist, essayist, novelist, poet, now known almost exclusively as the author of *The Contrast,* the first comedy by an American to achieve production by a professional theatrical company. Colonel Manly, the hero of *The Contrast,* is both a Federalist and a "100% American"; his waiter-orderly, Jonathan, is acknowledged to be the first "stage Yankee," a rural New Englander with that peculiar mixture of ignorance and horse sense which unwary outlanders have often found a snare and a delusion.

Tyler was born in Boston in 1757. Despite a youthful

predilection for mischief, he was graduated as valedictorian of the Harvard Class of 1776. He then turned to the study of law, and was admitted to the bar in 1780. He practiced in Falmouth (now Portland), Maine, for a time, then at Braintree, Massachusetts, where he became engaged to Abigail, the daughter of John Adams. In 1785, after Abigail had joined her father in England and had broken the engagement, he practiced in Boston. He took an active part in the suppression of Shays' Rebellion in the latter part of 1786, and in March of the following year visited New York on a mission related to that uprising. There he saw his first play and, within three weeks, was himself a successful playwright. In 1791 he left Boston to settle in Vermont, where he lived the rest of his life. He was Chief Justice of the Supreme Court of Vermont from 1807 until 1813, and in 1811-1814 was professor of jurisprudence in the university of that state.

Tyler wrote at least eight other plays besides *The Contrast,* among them an opera and three "sacred dramas" in blank verse. A considerable number of poems and essays may be found in the various periodicals edited by Joseph Dennie (1768-1812), the foremost of the Federalist essayists, with whom Tyler occasionally collaborated. Two works of fiction (*The Algerine Captive,* 1797, and *The Yankey In London,* 1809) express more elaborately the same ardent nationalism which may be seen in *The Contrast. The Algerine Captive* is particularly worth reading (it merits a modern edition), for its narrator, Doctor Updike Underhill, is even more the enemy of false pretensions than Colonel Manly and Jonathan; his rambling comments on New England history, medical practice, Benjamin Franklin, Thomas Paine, religion, law, slavery, and other matters make an excellent picture of Tyler's times.

In a number of ways—his nationalism, his Federalistic political views, his pursuit of literature as an avocation, and his easy mastery of the dominant literary types of his day—Tyler was akin in spirit to the Connecticut Wits. The preface to *The Algerine Captive* is the key, perhaps, to his literary credo. That the common people should read novels he found pleasing, even if they were bad ones.

He believed, however, that Americans should write their own novels, and that they should not "excite a fondness for false splendor" in the young female mind. His didacticism, so evident in the character of Manly, was part of the sentimental tradition of his age.

A. H. Quinn, "Royall Tyler," **Dictionary of American Biography,** Vol. XIX, New York, 1936 • Frederick Tupper, "Royall Tyler, Man of Law and Man of Letters," **Proceedings of the Vermont Historical Society for 1926-1927-1928,** 1928, 63-101 • **Four Plays by Royall Tyler,** ed. A. W. Peach and G. F. Newbrough, America's Lost Plays, Vol. XV, Princeton, 1941 • A. H. Quinn, **A History of the American Drama from the Beginning to the Civil War,** Revised Edition, New York, 1936

The Contrast

The Contrast, advertised as written by a citizen of the United States, was first performed by the American Company at the John Street Theatre, New York, on April 16, 1787. Colonel Manly and Dimple were played by the partners who managed the company, John Henry and Lewis Hallam; Jonathan by Thomas Wignell, the popular comedian. The play was, for the times, successful; there are records of about a dozen performances within a few years, half of them in New York, the others in Baltimore, Philadelphia, Richmond, and Boston.

Tyler is said to have written The Contrast within three weeks of seeing his first play, **The School for Scandal** (1777) by the English playwright Richard Brinsley Sheridan (1751-1816). It is obvious, however, that he not only attended the performances of the American Company with some regularity while he was writing it, but that he was also well-read in the English literature of the eighteenth century. The character of Dimple is much like that of Joseph Surface in **The School for Scandal;** the name of Manly and to some extent the character and situation appear to be based upon **The Provoked Husband** (1702) by the Englishman Sir John Vanbrugh (1666?-1726), which the American Company may have performed during

Tyler's New York stay; part of Jonathan's entertainment at the "hocus pocus" place was clearly **The Poor Soldier**, a farce by the Irish playwright John O'Keeffe (1747-1833), presented frequently as an after-piece by the Henry-Hallam company. Other parallels are less conspicuous, but it may be said, in general, that **The Contrast** owes much to the famous **Spectator** (1711-1712; supplementary numbers, 1714), by Joseph Addison (1671-1719) and Sir Richard Steele (1671-1729), the novels of Samuel Richardson (1689-1761), founder of the "sentimental" school of English fiction, and to the **Letters** (1774) of Philip Dormer Stanhope, fourth Earl of Chesterfield (1694-1773). The play, in fact, is very largely an attack on the advice of Chesterfield, designed to instruct his illegitimate son in the social graces of a man of the world.

Nevertheless, derivative as the play is and despite its frequent awkward dialogue (the best of actresses would be hard put to it to manage such a line as "Spare me, sprightly friend"), **The Contrast** is reasonably well localized and, as an expression of Tyler's nationalistic ideas, better perhaps in the reading than on the stage. At the time the play was produced New York was a city of about twenty-five thousand—a city on which the fashions and morals of London sat somewhat absurdly, as Tyler clearly saw.

Dramatis Personae

Colonel Manly	Charlotte
Dimple	Maria
Van Rough	Letitia
Jessamy	Jenny
Jonathan	

Prologue

WRITTEN BY A YOUNG GENTLEMAN OF NEW-YORK, AND SPOKEN BY MR. WIGNELL

Exult each patriot heart!—this night is shewn
A piece, which we may fairly call our own;
Where the proud titles of "My Lord! Your Grace!"
To humble *Mr.* and plain *Sir* give place.
Our Author pictures not from foreign climes
The fashions or the follies of the times;
But has confin'd the subject of his work
To the gay scenes—the circles of New-York.
On native themes his Muse displays her pow'rs;
If ours the faults, the virtues too are ours.
Why should our thoughts to distant countries roam,
When each refinement may be found at home?
Who travels now to ape the rich or great,
To deck an equipage and roll in state;
To court the graces, or to dance with ease,
Or by hypocrisy to strive to please?
Our free-born ancestors such arts despis'd;
Genuine sincerity alone they priz'd;
Their minds, with honest emulation fir'd;
To solid good—not ornament—aspir'd;
Or, if ambition rous'd a bolder flame,
Stern virtue throve, where indolence was shame.
  But modern youths, with imitative sense,
Deem taste in dress the proof of excellence;
And spurn the meanness of your homespun arts,
Since homespun habits would obscure their parts;
Whilst all, which aims at splendour and parade,
Must come from Europe, *and be ready made.*
Strange! we should thus our native worth disclaim,
And check the progress of our rising fame.
Yet *one,* whilst imitation bears the sway,
Aspires to nobler heights, and points the way,
Be rous'd, my friends! his bold example view;
Let your own Bards be proud to copy *you!*
Should rigid critics reprobate our play,
At least the patriotic heart will say,
"Glorious our fall, since in a noble cause.
"The bold *attempt alone* demands applause."
Still may the wisdom of the Comic Muse
Exalt your merits, or your faults accuse.
But think not, 'tis her aim to be severe;—
We all are mortals, and as mortals err.
If candour pleases, we are truly blest;
Vice trembles, when compell'd to stand confess'd.
Let not light Censure on your faults offend.
Which aims not to expose them, but amend.
Thus does our Author to your candour trust;
Conscious, the *free* are generous, as just.

Text: the 1790 edition, with the stage directions revised to be consistent with other plays in this anthology. **A Young Gentleman,** never identified. **Mr. Wignell,** Thomas Wignell (1753?-1803), English-born comedian who first appeared in America in 1785

ACT I

SCENE 1. An Apartment at Charlotte's. Charlotte and Letitia discovered.

LETITIA. And so, Charlotte, you really think the pocket-hoop unbecoming.

CHARLOTTE. No, I don't say so. It may be very becoming to saunter round the house of a rainy day; to visit my grand-mamma, or go to Quakers' meeting: but to swim in a minuet, with the eyes of fifty well-dressed beaux upon me, to trip it in the Mall, or walk on the battery, give me the luxurious, jaunty, flowing, bell-hoop. It would have delighted you to have seen me the last evening, my charming girl! I was dangling o'er the battery with Billy Dimple; a knot of young fellows were upon the platform; as I passed them I faultered with one of the most betwitching false steps you ever saw, and then recovered myself with such a pretty confusion, flirting my hoop to discover a jet black shoe and brilliant buckle. Gad! how my little heart thrilled to hear the confused raptures of—"*Demme, Jack, what a delicate foot!*" "*Ha! General, what a well-turn'd——*"

LETITIA. Fie! fie! Charlotte [*stopping her mouth*], I protest you are quite a libertine.

CHARLOTTE. Why, my dear little prude, are we not all such libertines? Do you think, when I sat tortured two hours under the hands of my friseur, and an hour more at my toilet, that I had any thoughts of my aunt Susan, or my cousin Betsey? though they are both allowed to be critical judges of dress.

LETITIA. Why, who should we dress to please, but those who are judges of its merit?

CHARLOTTE. Why, a creature who does not know *Buffon* from *Souflée*—Man!—my Letitia—Man! for whom we dress, walk, dance, talk, lisp, languish, and smile. Does not the grave Spectator assure us that even our much bepraised diffidence, modesty, and blushes are all directed to make ourselves good wives and mothers as fast as we can? Why, I'll undertake with one flirt of this hoop to bring more beaux to my feet in one week than the grave Maria, and her sentimental circle, can do, by sighing sentiment till their hairs are grey.

LETITIA. Well, I won't argue with you; you always out-talk me; let us change the subject. I hear that Mr. Dimple and Maria are soon to be married.

CHARLOTTE. You hear true. I was consulted in the choice of the wedding clothes. She is to be married in a delicate white sattin, and has a monstrous pretty brocaded lutestring for the second day. It would have done you good to have seen with what an affected indifference the dear sentimentalist turned over a thousand pretty things, just as if her heart did not palpitate with her approaching happiness, and at last made her choice and arranged her dress with such apathy as if she did not know that plain white sattin and a simple blond lace would shew her clear skin and dark hair to the greatest advantage.

LETITIA. But they say her indifference to dress, and even to the gentleman himself, is not entirely affected.

CHARLOTTE. How?

LETITIA. It is whispered that if Maria gives her hand to Mr. Dimple, it will be without her heart.

CHARLOTTE. Though the giving the heart is one of the last of all laughable considerations in the marriage of a girl of spirit, yet I should like to hear what antiquated notions the dear little piece of old-fashioned prudery has got in her head.

LETITIA. Why you know that old Mr. John-Richard-Robert-Jacob-Isaac-Abraham-Cornelius Van Dumpling, Billy Dimple's father (for he has thought fit to soften his name, as well as manners, during his English tour), was the most intimate friend of Maria's father. The old folks, about a year before Mr. Van Dumpling's death, proposed this match: the young folks were accordingly introduced, and told they must love one another. Billy was then a good-natured, decent-dressing young fellow, with a little dash of the coxcomb, such as our young fellows of fortune usually have. At this time, I really believe she thought she loved him; and had they then been married, I doubt not they might have jogged on, to the end of the chapter, a good kind of a sing-song lack-a-daysaical life, as other honest married folks do.

CHARLOTTE. Why did they not then marry?

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2 **pocket-hoop**, a hoopskirt with whalebone stiffening only at the hips. The bell-hoop and court-hoop, mentioned later, were more extreme examples • 7 **the Mall**, perhaps Broadway, or what is now Bowling Green Park, at the foot of Broadway • 8 **battery**, then as now a park at the southern tip of Manhattan Island • 23 **friseur**, hairdresser • 29 **Buffon from Souflée.** A buffon, or buffont, was a piece of gauze or linen worn over the breast; a souflée, or soufflé, of course, a delicate dish baked with whipped white of egg to make it rise • 32 **Spectator.** See especially Nos. 433 and 435. The attitude described by Charlotte is characteristic of the many comments on women by Addison and Steele • 45 **lutestring**, or lustring, a silk fabric

LETITIA. Upon the death of his father, Billy went to England to see the world and rub off a little of the patroon rust. During his absence, Maria, like a good girl, to keep herself constant to her *nown true-love,* avoided company, and betook herself, for her amusement, to her books, and her dear Billy's letters. But, alas! how many ways has the mischievous demon of inconstancy of stealing into a woman's heart! Her love was destroyed by the very means she took to support it.

CHARLOTTE. How?—Oh! I have it—some likely young beau found the way to her study.

LETITIA. Be patient, Charlotte; your head so runs upon beaux. Why, she read Sir Charles Grandison, Clarissa Harlow, Shenstone, and the Sentimental Journey; and between whiles, as I said, Billy's letters. But, as her taste improved, her love declined. The contrast was so striking betwixt the good sense of her books and the flimsiness of her love-letters, that she discovered she had unthinkingly engaged her hand without her heart; and then the whole transaction, managed by the old folks, now appeared so unsentimental, and looked so like bargaining for a bale of goods, that she found she ought to have rejected, according to every rule of romance, even the man of her choice, if imposed upon her in that manner. Clary Harlow would have scorned such a match.

CHARLOTTE. Well, how was it on Mr. Dimple's return? Did he meet a more favourable reception than his letters?

LETITIA. Much the same. She spoke of him with respect abroad, and with contempt in her closet. She watched his conduct and conversation, and found that he had by travelling acquired the wickedness of Lovelace without his wit, and the politeness of Sir Charles Grandison without his generosity. The ruddy youth, who washed his face at the cistern every morning, and swore and looked eternal love and constancy, was now metamorphosed into a flippant, palid, polite beau, who devotes the morning to his toilet, reads a few pages of Chesterfield's letters, and then minces out, to put the infamous principles in practice upon every woman he meets.

CHARLOTTE. But, if she is so apt at conjuring up these sentimental bugbears, why does she not discard him at once?

LETITIA. Why, she thinks her word too sacred to be trifled with. Besides, her father, who has a great respect for the memory of his deceased friend, is ever telling her how he shall renew his years in their union, and repeating the dying injunctions of old Van Dumpling.

CHARLOTTE. A mighty pretty story! And so you would make me believe that the sensible Maria would give up Dumpling manor, and the all-accomplished Dimple as a husband, for the absurd, ridiculous reason, forsooth, because she despises and abhors him. Just as if a lady could not be privileged to spend a man's fortune, ride in his carriage, be called after his name, and call him her *nown dear lovee* when she wants money, without loving and respecting the great he-creature. Oh! my dear girl, you are a monstrous prude.

LETITIA. I don't say what I would do; I only intimate how I suppose she wishes to act.

CHARLOTTE. No, no, no! A fig for sentiment. If she breaks, or wishes to break, with Mr. Dimple, depend upon it, she has some other man in her eye. A woman rarely discards one lover until she is sure of another.—Letitia little thinks what a clue I have to Dimple's conduct. The generous man submits to render himself disgusting to Maria, in order that she may leave him at liberty to address me. I must change the subject. [*Aside, and rings a bell.*]

[*Enter* SERVANT.]

Frank, order the horses to.—Talking of marriage, did you hear that Sally Bloomsbury is going to be married next week to Mr. Indigo, the rich Carolinian?

LETITIA. Sally Bloomsbury married!—why, she is not yet in her teens.

CHARLOTTE. I do not know how that is, but you may depend upon it, 'tis a done affair. I have it from the best authority. There is my aunt Wyerly's Hannah. You know Hannah, though a black, she is a wench that was never caught in a lie in her life. Now, Hannah has a brother who courts Sarah, Mrs. Catgut the milliner's girl, and she told Hannah's brother, and Hannah, who, as I

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2 **patroon,** here meaning "provincial," from the name of the Dutch landholders of New York • 13 **Sir Charles . . . Journey: The History of Sir Charles Grandison** (1753-1754) and **Clarissa, or the History of a Young Lady** (1747-1748), by Samuel Richardson, English novelist; William Shenstone (1714-1763), English poet, author of **The Schoolmistress** (1742); and **A Sentimental Journey through France and Italy** (1768), by the English satirist, Laurence Sterne (1713-1768) • 32 **Lovelace,** the villain in Richardson's **Clarissa** • 39 **infamous principles.** Although Chesterfield doubtless emphasized the external polish of a man of the world at the expense of morality, Tyler is somewhat unfair to him

said before, is a girl of undoubted veracity, told it directly to me, that Mrs. Catgut was making a new cap for Miss Bloomsbury, which, as it was very dressy, it is very probable is designed for a wedding cap. Now, as she is to be married, who can it be to but to Mr. Indigo? Why, there is no other gentleman that visits at her papa's.

LETITIA. Say not a word more, Charlotte. Your intelligence is so direct and well grounded, it is almost a pity that it is not a piece of scandal.

CHARLOTTE. Oh! I am the pink of prudence. Though I cannot charge myself with ever having discredited a tea-party by my silence, yet I take care never to report any thing of my acquaintance, especially if it is to their credit,—*discredit,* I mean,—until I have searched to the bottom of it. It is true, there is infinite pleasure in this charitable pursuit. Oh! how delicious to go and condole with the friends of some backsliding sister, or to retire with some old dowager or maiden aunt of the family, who love scandal so well that they cannot forbear gratifying their appetite at the expense of the reputation of their nearest relations! And then to return full fraught with a rich collection of circumstances, to retail to the next circle of our acquaintance under the strongest injunctions of secrecy,—ha, ha, ha!—interlarding the melancholy tale with so many doleful shakes of the head, and more doleful "Ah! who would have thought it! so amiable, so prudent a young lady, as we all thought her, what a monstrous pity! well, I have nothing to charge myself with; I acted the part of a friend, I warned her of the principles of that rake, I told her what would be the consequence; I told her so, I told her so."—Ha, ha, ha!

LETITIA. Ha, ha, ha! Well, but, Charlotte, you don't tell me what you think of Miss Bloomsbury's match.

CHARLOTTE. Think! why I think it is probable she cried for a plaything, and they have given her a husband. Well, well, well, the puling chit shall not be deprived of her plaything: 'tis only exchanging London dolls for American babies.—Apropos, of babies, have you heard what Mrs. Affable's high-flying notions of delicacy have come to?

LETITIA. Who, she that was Miss Lovely?

CHARLOTTE. The same; she married Bob Affable of Schenectady. Don't you remember?

[*Enter* SERVANT.]

SERVANT. Madam, the carriage is ready.

LETITIA. Shall we go to the stores first, or visiting?

CHARLOTTE. I should think it rather too early to visit, especially Mrs. Prim; you know she is so particular.

LETITIA. Well, but what of Mrs. Affable?

CHARLOTTE. Oh, I'll tell you as we go; come, come, let us hasten. I hear Mrs. Catgut has some of the prettiest caps arrived you ever saw. I shall die if I have not the first sight of them. [*Exeunt.*]

SCENE 2. A Room in Van Rough's House. Maria sitting disconsolate at a Table, with Books, etc.

Song

I.

The sun sets in night, and the stars shun the day;
But glory remains when their lights fade away!
Begin, ye tormentors! your threats are in vain,
For the son of Alknomook shall never complain.

II.

Remember the arrows he shot from his bow;
Remember your chiefs by his hatchet laid low:
Why so slow?—do you wait till I shrink from the pain?
No—the son of Alknomook will never complain.

III.

Remember the wood where in ambush we lay,
And the scalps which we bore from your nation away:
Now the flame rises fast, you exult in my pain;
But the son of Alknomook can never complain.

IV.

I go to the land where my father is gone;
His ghost shall rejoice in the fame of his son:
Death comes like a friend, he relieves me from pain;
And my son, Oh Alknomook! has scorn'd to complain.

There is something in this song which ever calls forth my affections. The manly virtue of courage, that fortitude which steels the heart against the keenest misfortunes, which interweaves the laurel of glory amidst the

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Song. This piece was published anonymously under the title of "The Death Song of a Cherokee Indian" in the American Museum for January 1787. As early as 1790 it was attributed to Philip Freneau, but there is no convincing evidence that it was not Tyler's

instruments of torture and death, displays something so noble, so exalted, that in despite of the prejudices of education I cannot but admire it, even in a savage. The prepossession which our sex is supposed to entertain for the character of a soldier is, I know, a standing piece of raillery among the wits. A cockade, a lapell'd coat, and a feather, they will tell you, are irresistible by a female heart. Let it be so. Who is it that considers the helpless situation of our sex, that does not see that we each moment stand in need of a protector, and that a brave one too? Formed of the more delicate materials of nature, endowed only with the softer passions, incapable, from our ignorance of the world, to guard against the wiles of mankind, our security for happiness often depends upon their generosity and courage. Alas! how little of the former do we find! How inconsistent! that man should be leagued to destroy that honor upon which solely rests his respect and esteem. Ten thousand temptations allure us, ten thousand passions betray us; yet the smallest deviation from the path of rectitude is followed by the contempt and insult of man, and the more remorseless pity of woman; years of penitence and tears cannot wash away the stain, nor a life of virtue obliterate its remembrance. Reputation is the life of woman; yet courage to protect it is masculine and disgusting; and the only safe asylum a woman of delicacy can find is in the arms of a man of honour. How naturally, then, should we love the brave and the generous; how gratefully should we bless the arm raised for our protection, when nerv'd by virtue and directed by honour! Heaven grant that the man with whom I may be connected—may be connected! Whither has my imagination transported me—whither does it now lead me? Am I not indissolubly engaged, "by every obligation of honour which my own consent and my father's approbation can give," to a man who can never share my affections, and whom a few days hence it will be criminal for me to disapprove—to disapprove! would to heaven that were all—to despise. For, can the most frivolous manners, actuated by the most depraved heart, meet, or merit, anything but contempt from every woman of delicacy and sentiment?

[VAN ROUGH, *without.* Mary!]

Ha! my father's voice—Sir!—

[*Enter* VAN ROUGH.]

VAN ROUGH. What, Mary, always singing doleful ditties, and moping over these plaguy books.

MARIA. I hope, Sir, that it is not criminal to improve my mind with books, or to divert my melancholy with singing, at my leisure hours.

VAN ROUGH. Why, I don't know that, child; I don't know that. They us'd to say, when I was a young man, that if a woman knew how to make a pudding, and to keep herself out of fire and water, she knew enough for a wife. Now, what good have these books done you? have they not made you melancholy? as you call it. Pray, what right has a girl of your age to be in the dumps? haven't you everything your heart can wish; an't you going to be married to a young man of great fortune; an't you going to have the quit-rent of twenty miles square?

MARIA. One-hundreth part of the land, and a lease for life of the heart of a man I could love, would satisfy me.

VAN ROUGH. Pho, pho, pho! child; nonsense, downright nonsense, child. This comes of your reading your story-books; your Charles Grandisons, your Sentimental Journals, and your Robinson Crusoes, and such other trumpery. No, no, no! child; it is money makes the mare go; keep your eye upon the main chance, Mary.

MARIA. Marriage, Sir, is, indeed, a very serious affair.

VAN ROUGH. You are right, child; you are right. I am sure I found it so, to my cost.

MARIA. I mean, Sir, that as marriage is a portion for life, and so intimately involves our happiness, we cannot be too considerate in the choice of our companion.

VAN ROUGH. Right, child; very right. A young woman should be very sober when she is making her choice, but when she has once made it, as you have done, I don't see why she should not be as merry as a grig; I am sure she has reason enough to be so. Solomon says that "there is a time to laugh, and a time to weep." Now, a time for a young woman to laugh is when she has made sure of a good rich husband. Now, a time to cry, according to you, Mary, is when she is making choice of him; but I should think that a young woman's time to cry was when she despaired of *getting* one. Why, there was your mother, now: to be sure, when I popp'd the question to her she did look a little silly; but when she had once looked down on her apron-strings, as all modest young

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64 **Robinson Crusoes,** an allusion to the famous novel (1719) by Daniel Defoe. It is hardly in the same class as Maria's other reading, but Van Rough is no expert • 76 **grig,** cricket • 77 **Solomon says.** The text is actually Ecclesiastes 3:4

women us'd to do, and drawled out ye-s, she was as brisk and as merry as a bee.

MARIA. My honoured mother, Sir, had no motive to melancholy; she married the man of her choice.

VAN ROUGH. The man of her choice! And pray, Mary, an't you going to marry the man of your choice—what trumpery notion is this? It is these vile books [*throwing them away*]. I'd have you to know, Mary, if you won't make young Van Dumpling the man of *your* choice, you shall marry him as the man of *my* choice.

MARIA. You terrify me, Sir. Indeed, Sir, I am all submission. My will is yours.

VAN ROUGH. Why, that is the way your mother us'd to talk, "My will is yours, my dear Mr. Van Rough, my will is yours"; but she took special care to have her own way, though, for all that.

MARIA. Do not reflect upon my mother's memory, Sir—

VAN ROUGH. Why not, Mary, why not? She kept me from speaking my mind all her *life,* and do you think she shall henpeck me now she is *dead* too? Come, come; don't go to sniveling; be a good girl, and mind the main chance. I'll see you well settled in the world.

MARIA. I do not doubt your love, Sir, and it is my duty to obey you. I will endeavour to make my duty and inclination go hand in hand.

VAN ROUGH. Well, well, Mary; do you be a good girl, mind the main chance, and never mind inclination. Why, do you know that I have been down in the cellar this very morning to examine a pipe of Madeira which I purchased the week you were born, and mean to tap on your wedding day?—That pipe cost me fifty pounds sterling. It was well worth sixty pounds; but I overreach'd Ben Bulkhead, the supercargo. I'll tell you the whole story. You must know that—

[*Enter* SERVANT.]

SERVANT. Sir, Mr. Transfer, the broker, is below. [*Exit.*]

VAN ROUGH. Well, Mary, I must go. Remember, and be a good girl, and mind the main chance. [*Exit.*]

MARIA [*alone*]. How deplorable is my situation! How distressing for a daughter to find her heart militating with her filial duty! I know my father loves me tenderly; why then do I reluctantly obey him? Heaven knows! with what reluctance I should oppose the will of a parent, or set an example of filial disobedience; at a parent's command, I could wed awkwardness and deformity. Were the heart of my husband good, I would so magnify his good qualities with the eye of conjugal affection, that the defects of his person and manners should be lost in the emanation of his virtues. At a father's command, I could embrace poverty. Were the poor man my husband, I would learn resignation to my lot; I would enliven our frugal meal with good humour, and chase away misfortune from our cottage with a smile. At a father's command, I could almost submit to what every female heart knows to be the most mortifying, to marry a weak man, and blush at my husband's folly in every company I visited. But to marry a depraved wretch, whose only virtue is a polished exterior; who is actuated by the unmanly ambition of conquering the defenseless; whose heart, insensible to the emotions of patriotism, dilates at the plaudits of every unthinking girl; whose laurels are the sighs and tears of the miserable victims of his specious behaviour,—can he, who has no regard for the peace and happiness of other families, ever have a due regard for the peace and happiness of his own? Would to heaven that my father were not so hasty in his temper! Surely, if I were to state my reasons for declining this match, he would not compel me to marry a man whom, though my lips may solemnly promise to honour, I find my heart must ever despise. [*Exit.*]

ACT II

SCENE 1. Enter Charlotte and Letitia.

CHARLOTTE [*at entering*]. Betty, take those things out of the carriage and carry them to my chamber; see that you don't tumble them. My dear, I protest, I think it was the homeliest of the whole. I declare I was almost tempted to return and change it.

LETITIA. Why would you take it?

CHARLOTTE. Didn't Mrs. Catgut say it was the most fashionable?

LETITIA. But, my dear, it will never fit becomingly on you.

CHARLOTTE. I know that; but did not you hear Mrs. Catgut say it was fashionable?

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30 pipe of Madeira, a large cask (normally 105 gallons) of wine

LETITIA. Did you see that sweet airy cap with the white sprig?

CHARLOTTE. Yes, and I longed to take it; but, my dear, what could I do? Did not Mrs. Catgut say it was the most fashionable; and if I had not taken it, was not that awkward gawky, Sally Slender, ready to purchase it immediately?

LETITIA. Did you observe how she tumbled over the things at the next shop, and then went off without purchasing any thing, nor even thanking the poor man for his trouble? But, of all the awkward creatures, did you see Miss Blouze endeavouring to thrust her unmerciful arm into those small kid gloves?

CHARLOTTE. Ha, ha, ha, ha!

LETITIA. Then did you take notice with what an affected warmth of friendship she and Miss Wasp met? when all their acquaintance know how much pleasure they take in abusing each other in every company.

CHARLOTTE. Lud! Letitia, is that so extraordinary? Why, my dear, I hope you are not going to turn sentimentalist. Scandal, you know, is but amusing ourselves with the faults, foibles, follies, and reputations of our friends; indeed, I don't know why we should have friends, if we are not at liberty to make use of them. But no person is so ignorant of the world as to suppose, because I amuse myself with a lady's faults, that I am obliged to quarrel with her person every time we meet; believe me, my dear, we should have very few acquaintance at that rate.

[SERVANT *enters and delivers a letter to* CHARLOTTE, *and—exit.*]

CHARLOTTE. You'll excuse me, my dear. [*Opens and reads to herself.*]

LETITIA. Oh, quite excusable.

CHARLOTTE. As I hope to be married, my brother Henry is in the city.

LETITIA. What, your brother, Colonel Manly?

CHARLOTTE. Yes, my dear; the only brother I have in the world.

LETITIA. Was he never in this city?

CHARLOTTE. Never nearer than Harlem Heights, where he lay with his regiment.

LETITIA. What sort of a being is this brother of yours? If he is as chatty, as pretty, as sprightly as you, half the belles in the city will be pulling caps for him.

CHARLOTTE. My brother is the very counterpart and reverse of me: I am gay, he is grave; I am airy, he is solid; I am ever selecting the most pleasing objects for my laughter, he has a tear for every pitiful one. And thus, whilst he is plucking the briars and thorns from the path of the unfortunate, I am strewing my own path with roses.

LETITIA. My sweet friend, not quite so poetical, and a little more particular.

CHARLOTTE. Hands off, Letitia. I feel the rage of simile upon me; I can't talk to you in any other way. My brother has a heart replete with the noblest sentiments, but then, it is like—it is like—Oh! you provoking girl, you have deranged all my ideas—it is like—Oh! I have it—his heart is like an old maiden lady's bandbox; it contains many costly things, arranged with the most scrupulous nicety, yet the misfortune is that they are too delicate, costly, and antiquated for common use.

LETITIA. By what I can pick out of your flowery description, your brother is no beau.

CHARLOTTE. No, indeed; he makes no pretension to the character. He'd ride, or rather fly, an hundred miles to relieve a distressed object, or to do a gallant act in the service of his country; but should you drop your fan or bouquet in his presence, it is ten to one that some beau at the farther end of the room would have the honour of presenting it to you before he had observed that it fell. I'll tell you one of his antiquated anti-gallant notions. He said once in my presence, in a room full of company,—would you believe it?—in a large circle of ladies, that the best evidence a gentleman could give a young lady of his respect and affection was to endeavour in a friendly manner to rectify her foibles. I protest I was crimson to the eyes, upon reflecting that I was known as his sister.

LETITIA. Insupportable creature! tell a lady of her faults! if he is so grave, I fear I have no chance of captivating him.

CHARLOTTE. His conversation is like a rich, old-fashioned brocade,—it will stand alone; every sentence is a sentiment. Now you may judge what a time I had with him, in my twelve months' visit to my father. He read me such lectures, out of pure brotherly affection, against the extremes of fashion, dress, flirting, and

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38 Harlem Heights, at the northern end of Manhattan Island, scene of a minor battle on September 16, 1776

coquetry, and all the other dear things which he knows I doat upon, that I protest his conversation made me as melancholy as if I had been at church; and heaven knows, though I never prayed to go there but on one occasion, yet I would have exchanged his conversation for a psalm and a sermon. Church is rather melancholy, to be sure; but then I can ogle the beaux, and be regaled with "here endeth the first lesson," but his brotherly *here,* you would think had no end. You captivate him! Why, my dear, he would as soon fall in love with a box of Italian flowers. There is Maria, now, if she were not engaged, she might do something. Oh! how I should like to see that pair of penserosos together, looking as grave as two sailors' wives of a stormy night, with a flow of sentiment meandering through their conversation like purling streams in modern poetry.

LETITIA. Oh! my dear fanciful—

CHARLOTTE. Hush! I hear some person coming through the entry.

[*Enter* SERVANT.]

SERVANT. Madam, there's a gentleman below who calls himself Colonel Manly; do you chuse to be at home?

CHARLOTTE. Shew him in. [*Exit* SERVANT.] Now for a sober face.

[*Enter* COLONEL MANLY.]

MANLY. My dear Charlotte, I am happy that I once more enfold you within the arms of fraternal affection. I know you are going to ask (amiable impatience!) how our parents do,—the venerable pair transmit you their blessings by me. They totter on the verge of a well-spent life, and wish only to see their children settled in the world, to depart in peace.

CHARLOTTE. I am very happy to hear that they are well. [*Coolly.*] Brother, will you give me leave to introduce you to our uncle's ward, one of my most intimate friends?

MANLY [*saluting* LETITIA]. I ought to regard your friends as my own.

CHARLOTTE. Come, Letitia, do give us a little dash of your vivacity; my brother is so sentimental and so grave, that I protest he'll give us the vapours.

MANLY. Though sentiment and gravity, I know, are banished the polite world, yet I hoped they might find some countenance in the meeting of such near connections as brother and sister.

CHARLOTTE. Positively, brother, if you go one step further in this strain, you will set me crying, and that, you know, would spoil my eyes; and then I should never get the husband which our good papa and mamma have so kindly wished me—never be established in the world.

MANLY. Forgive me, my sister,—I am no enemy to mirth; I love your sprightliness; and I hope it will one day enliven the hours of some worthy man; but when I mention the respectable authors of my existence,—the cherishers and protectors of my helpless infancy, whose hearts glow with such fondness and attachment that they would willingly lay down their lives for my welfare,—you will excuse me if I am so unfashionable as to speak of them with some degree of respect and reverence.

CHARLOTTE. Well, well, brother; if you won't be gay, we'll not differ; I will be as grave as you wish. [*Affects gravity.*] And so, brother, you have come to the city to exchange some of your commutation notes for a little pleasure?

MANLY. Indeed you are mistaken; my errand is not of amusement, but business; and as I neither drink nor game, my expenses will be so trivial, I shall have no occasion to sell my notes.

CHARLOTTE. Then you won't have occasion to do a very good thing. Why, here was the Vermont General—he came down some time since, sold all his musty notes at one stroke, and then laid the cash out in trinkets for his dear Fanny. I want a dozen pretty things myself; have you got the notes with you?

MANLY. I shall be ever willing to contribute, as far as it is in my power, to adorn or in any way to please my sister; yet I hope I shall never be obliged for this to sell my notes. I may be romantic, but I preserve them as a sacred deposit. Their full amount is justly due to me, but as embarrassments, the natural consequences of a long war, disable my country from supporting its credit, I shall wait with patience until it is rich enough

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11 Italian flowers, of wax • 13 **penserosos,** thoughtful, melancholy persons, from "Il Penseroso" (1632) by John Milton (1608-1674), English poet • 62 **commutation notes.** The American Army in the Revolution was paid in script issued either by the Continental Congress or by the state legislatures. Since these notes were in effect bonds, negotiable at the value which the purchaser was willing to place on the credit of the government, they were likely to fall into the hands of speculators, as Manly's remarks indicate • 69 **the Vermont General,** almost certainly Ethan Allen (1737-1789), whose second wife was named Fanny

to discharge them. If that is not in my day, they shall be transmitted as an honourable certificate to posterity, that I have humbly imitated our illustrious WASHINGTON, in having exposed my health and life in the service of my country, without reaping any other reward than the glory of conquering in so arduous a contest.

CHARLOTTE. Well said heroics. Why, my dear Henry, you have such a lofty way of saying things, that I protest I almost tremble at the thought of introducing you to the polite circles in the city. The belles would think you were a player run mad, with your head filled with old scraps of tragedy; and as to the beaux, they might admire, because they would not understand you. But, however, I must, I believe, introduce you to two or three ladies of my acquaintance.

LETITIA. And that will make him acquainted with thirty or forty beaux.

CHARLOTTE. Oh! brother, you don't know what a fund of happiness you have in store.

MANLY. I fear, sister, I have not refinement sufficient to enjoy it.

CHARLOTTE. Oh! you cannot fail being pleased.

LETITIA. Our ladies are so delicate and dressy.

CHARLOTTE. And our beaux are dressy and delicate.

LETITIA. Our ladies chat and flirt so agreeably.

CHARLOTTE. And our beaux simper and bow so gracefully.

LETITIA. With their hair so trim and neat.

CHARLOTTE. And their faces so soft and sleek.

LETITIA. Their buckles so tonish and bright.

CHARLOTTE. And their hands so slender and white.

LETITIA. I vow, Charlotte, we are quite poetical.

CHARLOTTE. And then, brother, the faces of the beaux are of such a lily-white hue! None of that horrid robustness of constitution, that vulgar corn-fed glow of health, which can only serve to alarm an unmarried lady with apprehension, and prove a melancholy memento to a married one, that she can never hope for the happiness of being a widow. I will say this to the credit of our city beaux, that such is the delicacy of their complexion, dress, and address, that, even had I no reliance upon the honour of the dear Adonises, I would trust myself in any possible situation with them, without the least apprehensions of rudeness.

MANLY. Sister Charlotte!

CHARLOTTE. Now, now, now, brother [*interrupting him*], now don't go to spoil my mirth with a dash of your gravity; I am so glad to see you, I am in tiptop spirits. Oh! that you could be with us at a little snug party. There is Billy Simper, Jack Chaffé, and Colonel Van Titter, Miss Promonade, and the two Miss Tambours, sometimes make a party, with some other ladies, in a side-box at the play. Everything is conducted with such decorum. First we bow round to the company in general, then to each one in particular, then we have so many inquiries after each other's health, and we are so happy to meet each other, and it is so many ages since we last had that pleasure, and if a married lady is in company, we have such a sweet dissertation upon her son Bobby's chin-cough; then the curtain rises, then our sensibility is all awake, and then, by the mere force of apprehension, we torture some harmless expression into a double meaning, which the poor author never dreamt of, and then we have recourse to our fans, and then we blush, and then the gentlemen jog one another, peep under the fan, and make the prettiest remarks; and then we giggle and they simper, and they giggle and we simper, and then the curtain drops, and then for nuts and oranges, and then we bow, and it's pray, Ma'am, take it, and pray, Sir, keep it, and oh! not for the world, Sir; and then the curtain rises again, and then we blush and giggle and simper and bow all over again. Oh! the sentimental charms of a side-box conversation. [*All laugh.*]

MANLY. Well, sister, I join heartily with you in the laugh; for, in my opinion, it is as justifiable to laugh at folly as it is reprehensible to ridicule misfortune.

CHARLOTTE. Well, but brother, positively I can't introduce you in these clothes: why, your coat looks as if it were calculated for the vulgar purpose of keeping yourself comfortable.

MANLY. This coat was my regimental coat in the late war. The public tumults of our state have induced me

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42 Adonises, male beauties, from Adonis, a youth beloved by Venus • 83 public tumults, the so-called Shays' Rebellion of 1786-1787, in part caused by the feeling of the farmers of western Massachusetts that they were being taxed unfairly by the owning classes of Boston. To put down what amounted to armed rebellion, the governor enlisted an army of over four thousand men. Tyler was active in this incident, and visited both Vermont and New York in an effort to arrange for the extradition of Daniel Shays (1747-1825), the leader of the farmers

to buckle on the sword in support of that government which I once fought to establish. I can only say, sister, that there was a time when this coat was respectable, and some people even thought that those men who had endured so many winter campaigns in the service of their country, without bread, clothing, or pay, at least deserved that the poverty of their appearance should not be ridiculed.

CHARLOTTE. We agree in opinion entirely, brother, though it would not have done for me to have said it: it is the coat makes the man respectable. In the time of the war, when we were almost frightened to death, why, your coat was respectable, that is, fashionable; now another kind of coat is fashionable, that is, respectable. And pray direct the taylor to make yours the height of the fashion.

MANLY. Though it is of little consequence to me of what shape my coat is, yet, as to the height of the fashion, there you will please to excuse me, sister. You know my sentiments on that subject. I have often lamented the advantage which the French have over us in that particular. In Paris, the fashions have their dawnings, their routine, and declensions, and depend as much upon the caprice of the day as in other countries; but there every lady assumes a right to deviate from the general *ton* as far as will be of advantage to her own appearance. In America, the cry is, what is the fashion? and we follow it indiscriminately, because it is so.

CHARLOTTE. Therefore it is, that when large hoops are in fashion, we often see many a plump girl lost in the immensity of a hoop-petticoat, whose want of height and *en-bon-point* would never have been remarked in any other dress. When the high head-dress is the mode, how then do we see a lofty cushion, with a profusion of gauze, feathers, and ribband, supported by a face no bigger than an apple! whilst a broad full-faced lady, who really would have appeared tolerably handsome in a large head-dress, looks with her smart chapeau as masculine as a soldier.

MANLY. But remember, my dear sister, and I wish all my fair country-women would recollect, that the only excuse a young lady can have for going extravagantly into a fashion is because it makes her look extravagantly handsome.—Ladies, I must wish you a good morning.

CHARLOTTE. But, brother, you are going to make home with us.

MANLY. Indeed I cannot. I have seen my uncle and explained that matter.

CHARLOTTE. Come and dine with us, then. We have a family dinner about half-past four o'clock.

MANLY. I am engaged to dine with the Spanish ambassador. I was introduced to him by an old brother officer; and instead of freezing me with a cold card of compliment to dine with him ten days hence, he, with the true old Castilian frankness in a friendly manner, asked me to dine with him to-day—an honour I could not refuse. Sister, adieu—Madam, your most obedient—

[*Exit.*]

CHARLOTTE. I will wait upon you to the door, brother; I have something particular to say to you.

[*Exit.*]

LETITIA [*alone*]. What a pair!—She the pink of flirtation, he the essence of everything that is *outré* and gloomy.—I think I have completely deceived Charlotte by my manner of speaking of Mr. Dimple; she's too much the friend of Maria to be confided in. He is certainly rendering himself disagreeable to Maria, in order to break with her and proffer his hand to me. This is what the delicate fellow hinted in our last conversation.

[*Exit.*]

SCENE 2. The Mall.

[*Enter* JESSAMY.]

JESSAMY. Positively this Mall is a very pretty place. I hope the cits won't ruin it by repairs. To be sure, it won't do to speak of in the same day with Ranelagh or Vauxhall; however, it's a fine place for a young fellow to display his person to advantage. Indeed, nothing is lost here; the girls have taste, and I am very happy to find they have adopted the elegant London fashion of looking back, after a genteel fellow like me has passed

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55 Castilian, from Castile, in central Spain, notable for the purity of its manners and language • 61 **outré**, unfashionable • 71 **Ranelagh or Vauxhall**, popular pleasure resorts of eighteenth-century Londoners, up the Thames River. Ranelagh was on the north bank, in what is now Chelsea, Vauxhall on the south bank, in modern Lambeth. Each was provided with an excellent orchestra and a pipe organ, so that the visitors could listen to music as they strolled about. There were apparently similar halls or gardens, with the same names, in New York, not long after Tyler wrote

them.—Ah! who comes here? This, by his awkwardness, must be the Yankee colonel's servant. I'll accost him. [*Enter* JONATHAN.]

JESSAMY. Votre très—humble serviteur, Monsieur. I understand Colonel Manly, the Yankee officer, has the honour of your services.

JONATHAN. Sir!—

JESSAMY. I say, Sir, I understand that Colonel Manly has the honour of having you for a servant.

JONATHAN. Servant! Sir, do you take me for a neger,—I am Colonel Manly's waiter.

JESSAMY. A true Yankee distinction, egad, without a difference. Why, Sir, do you not perform all the offices of a servant? do you not even blacken his boots?

JONATHAN. Yes; I do grease them a bit sometimes; but I am a true blue son of liberty, for all that. Father said I should come as Colonel Manly's waiter, to see the world, and all that; but no man shall master me. My father has a good a farm as the colonel.

JESSAMY. Well, Sir, we will not quarrel about terms upon the eve of an acquaintance from which I promise myself so much satisfaction;—therefore, sans ceremonie—

JONATHAN. What?—

JESSAMY. I say I am extremely happy to see Colonel Manly's waiter.

JONATHAN. Well, and I vow, too, I am pretty considerably glad to see you; but what the dogs need of all this outlandish lingo? Who may you be, Sir, if I may be so bold?

JESSAMY. I have the honour to be Mr. Dimple's servant, or, if you please, waiter. We lodge under the same roof, and should be glad of the honour of your acquaintance.

JONATHAN. You a waiter! By the living jingo, you look so topping, I took you for one of the agents to Congress.

JESSAMY. The brute has discernment, nothwithstanding his appearance.—Give me leave to say I wonder then at your familiarity.

JONATHAN. Why, as to the matter of that, Mr.—; pray, what's your name?

JESSAMY. Jessamy, at your service.

JONATHAN. Why, I swear we don't make any great matter of distinction in our state between quality and other folks.

JESSAMY. This is, indeed, a levelling principle.—I hope, Mr. Jonathan, you have not taken part with the insurgents.

JONATHAN. Why, since General Shays has sneaked off and given us the bag to hold, I don't care to give my opinion; but you'll promise not to tell—put your ear this way—you won't tell?—I vow I did think the sturgeons were right.

JESSAMY. I thought, Mr. Jonathan, you Massachusetts men always argued with a gun in your hand. Why didn't you join them?

JONATHAN. Why, the colonel is one of those folks called the Shin—Shin—dang it all, I can't speak them lignum vitæ words—you know who I mean—there is a company of them—they wear a china goose at their button-hole—a kind of gilt thing.—Now the colonel told father and brother,—you must know there are, let me see—there is Elnathan, Silas, and Barnabas, Tabitha —no, no, she's a she—tarnation, now I have it—there's Elnathan, Silas, Barnabas, Jonathan, that's I—seven of us, six went into the wars, and I staid at home to take care of mother. Colonel said that it was a burning shame for the true blue Bunker Hill sons of liberty, who had fought Governor Hutchinson, Lord North and the Devil, to have any hand in kicking up a cursed dust against a government which we had, every mother's son of us, a hand in making.

JESSAMY. Bravo!—Well, have you been abroad in the city since your arrival? What have you seen that is curious and entertaining?

JONATHAN. Oh! I have seen a power of fine sights. I went to see two marble-stone men and a leaden horse that stands out in doors in all weathers; and when I came where they was, one had got no head, and t'other

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3 **Votre . . . serviteur,** your very humble servant • 10 **waiter,** orderly or valet • 21 **sans ceremonie,** without ceremony • 36 **Congress,** which met in New York under the Confederation, 1785-1788 • 52 **sturgeons,** insurgents. Tyler, judging from this speech by Jonathan, was aware that there were two sides to the Shays uprising • 58 **Shin—Shin,** Jonathan's version of the Society of the Cincinnati, organized by officers under Washington on May 13, 1783, and, because of its hereditary membership, suspected of undemocratic aims. Its emblem was a bald eagle • 59 **lignum vitæ,** tough, very hard, from the wood of that name • 69 **Governor Hutchinson, Lord North.** See notes, pp. 310 and 340 • 77 **two marble-stone . . . horse,** evidently statues, which the editor has been unable to identify

wern't there. They said as how the leaden man was a damn'd tory, and that he took wit in his anger and rode off in the time of the troubles.

JESSAMY. But this was not the end of your excursion?

JONATHAN. Oh, no; I went to a place they call Holy Ground. Now I counted this was a place where folks go to meeting; so I put my hymn-book in my pocket, and walked softly and grave as a minister; and when I came there, the dogs a bit of a meeting-house could I see. At last I spied a young gentlewoman standing by one of the seats which they have here at the doors. I took her to be the deacon's daughter, and she looked so kind, and so obliging, that I thought I would go and ask her the way to lecture, and—would you think it?—she called me dear, and sweeting, and honey, just as if we were married: by the living jingo, I had a month's mind to buss her.

JESSAMY. Well, but how did it end?

JONATHAN. Why, as I was standing talking with her, a parcel of sailor men and boys got round me, the snarl-headed curs fell a-kicking and cursing of me at such a tarnal rate, that I vow I was glad to take my heels and split home, right off, tail on end, like a stream of chalk.

JESSAMY. Why, my dear friend, you are not acquainted with the city; that girl you saw was a— [*Whispers.*]

JONATHAN. Mercy on my soul! was that young woman a harlot!—Well! if this is New-York Holy Ground, what must the Holy-day Ground be!

JESSAMY. Well, you should not judge of the city too rashly. We have a number of elegant, fine girls here that make a man's leisure hours pass very agreeably. I would esteem it an honour to announce you to some of them.—Gad! that announce is a select word; I wonder where I picked it up.

JONATHAN. I don't want to know them.

JESSAMY. Come, come, my dear friend, I see that I must assume the honour of being the director of your amusements. Nature has given us passions, and youth and opportunity stimulate to gratify them. It is no shame, my dear Blueskin, for a man to amuse himself with a little gallantry.

JONATHAN. Girl huntry! I don't altogether understand. I never played at that game. I know how to play hunt the squirrel, but I can't play anything with the girls; I am as good as married.

JESSAMY. Vulgar, horrid brute! Married, and above a hundred miles from his wife, and thinks that an objection to his making love to every woman he meets! He never can have read, no, he never can have been in a room with a volume of the divine Chesterfield.—So you are married?

JONATHAN. No, I don't say so; I said I was as good as married, a kind of promise.

JESSAMY. As good as married!—

JONATHAN. Why yes; there's Tabitha Wymen, the deacon's daughter, at home; she and I have been courting a great while, and folks say as how we are to be married; and so I broke a piece of money with her when we parted, and she promised not to spark it with Solomon Dyer while I am gone. You wouldn't have me false to my true-love, would you?

JESSAMY. May be you have another reason for constancy; possibly the young lady has a fortune? Ha! Mr. Jonathan, the solid charms: the chains of love are never so binding as when the links are made of gold.

JONATHAN. Why, as to fortune, I must needs say her father is pretty dumb rich; he went representative for our town last year. He will give her—let me see—four times seven is—seven times four—nought and carry one,—he will give her twenty acres of land—somewhat rocky though—a Bible, and a cow.

JESSAMY. Twenty acres of rock, a Bible, and a cow! Why, my dear Mr. Jonathan, we have servant-maids, or, as you would more elegantly express it, waitresses, in this city, who collect more in one year from their mistresses' cast clothes.

JONATHAN. You don't say so!—

JESSAMY. Yes, and I'll introduce you to one of them. There is a little lump of flesh and delicacy that lives at next door, waitress to Miss Maria; we often see her on the stoop.

JONATHAN. But are you sure she would be courted by me?

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5 **Holy Ground**, an ironical name • 17 **buss**, kiss • 40 **Blueskin**, an ardent supporter of the Revolution (obsolete Americanism) • 44 **hunt the squirrel**. See The Spectator, No. 67: "Hunt the Squirrel, in which while the Woman flies the man pursues her, but as soon as she turns, he runs away, and she is obliged to follow" • 58 **broke . . . money**, as a pledge of constancy

JESSAMY. Never doubt it; remember a faint heart never—blisters on my tongue—I was going to be guilty of a vile proverb; flat against the authority of Chesterfield. I say there can be no doubt that the brilliancy of your merit will secure you a favourable reception.

JONATHAN. Well, but what must I say to her?

JESSAMY. Say to her! why, my dear friend, though I admire your profound knowledge on every other subject, yet, you will pardon my saying that your want of opportunity has made the female heart escape the poignancy of your penetration. Say to her! Why, when a man goes a-courting, and hopes for success, he must begin with doing, and not saying.

JONATHAN. Well, what must I do?

JESSAMY. Why, when you are introduced you must make five or six elegant bows.

JONATHAN. Six elegant bows! I understand that; six, you say? Well—

JESSAMY. Then you must press and kiss her hand; then press and kiss, and so on to her lips and cheeks; then talk as much as you can about hearts, darts, flames, nectar, and ambrosia—the more incoherent the better.

JONATHAN. Well, but suppose she should be angry with I?

JESSAMY. Why, if she should pretend—please to observe, Mr. Jonathan—if she should pretend to be offended, you must—But I'll tell you how my master acted in such a case: He was seated by a young lady of eighteen upon a sofa, plucking with a wanton hand the blooming sweets of youth and beauty. When the lady thought it necessary to check his ardour, she called up a frown upon her lovely face, so irresistably alluring, that it would have warmed the frozen bosom of age; remember, said she, putting her delicate arm upon his, remember your character and my honour. My master instantly dropped upon his knees, with eyes swimming with love, cheeks glowing with desire, and in the gentlest modulation of voice he said: My dear Caroline, in a few months our hands will be indissolubly united at the altar; our hearts I feel are already so; the favours you now grant as evidence of your affection are favours indeed; yet, when the ceremony is once past, what will now be received with rapture will then be attributed to duty.

JONATHAN. Well, and what was the consequence?

JESSAMY. The consequence—Ah! forgive me, my dear friend, but you New England gentlemen have such a laudable curiosity of seeing the bottom of every thing;—why, to be honest, I confess I saw the blooming cherub of a consequence smiling in its angelic mother's arms, about ten months afterwards.

JONATHAN. Well, if I follow all your plans, make them six bows, and all that, shall I have such little cherubim consequences?

JESSAMY. Undoubtedly.—What are you musing upon?

JONATHAN. You say you'll certainly make me acquainted?—Why, I was thinking then how I should contrive to pass this broken piece of silver—won't it buy a sugar-dram?

JESSAMY. What is that, the love-token from the deacon's daughter?—You come on bravely. But I must hasten to my master. Adieu, my dear friend.

JONATHAN. Stay, Mr. Jessamy—must I buss her when I am introduced to her?

JESSAMY. I told you, you must kiss her.

JONATHAN. Well, but must I buss her?

JESSAMY. Why kiss and buss, and buss and kiss, is all one.

JONATHAN. Oh! my dear friend, though you have a profound knowledge of all, a pugnency of tribulation, you don't know everything. [*Exit.*]

JESSAMY [*alone*]. Well, certainly I improve; my master could not have insinuated himself with more address into the heart of a man he despised. Now will this blundering dog sicken Jenny with his nauseous pawings, until she flies into my arms for very ease. How sweet will the contrast be between the blundering Jonathan and the courtly and accomplished Jessamy!

ACT III

SCENE 1. Dimple's Room. Dimple discovered at a Toilet, Reading.

DIMPLE. "Women have in general but one object, which is their beauty." Very true, my lord; positively

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3 **a vile proverb.** See Chesterfield to his son, September 27, 1749: "A man of fashion never has recourse to proverbs and vulgar aphorisms" • 58 **sugar-dram,** probably a small piece of candy • 78 **Women, etc.** See Chesterfield to his son, October 16, 1747, here directly quoted

very true. "Nature has hardly formed a woman ugly enough to be insensible to flattery upon her person." Extremely just, my lord; every day's delightful experience confirms this. "If her face is so shocking that she must, in some degree, be conscious of it, her figure and air, she thinks, make ample amends for it." The sallow Miss Wan is a proof of this. Upon my telling the distasteful wretch, the other day, that her countenance spoke the pensive language of sentiment, and that Lady Wortley Montague declared that if the ladies were arrayed in the garb of innocence, the face would be the last part which would be admired, as Monsieur Milton expresses it, she grinn'd horribly a ghastly smile. "If her figure is deformed, she thinks her face counterbalances it."

[*Enter* JESSAMY *with letters.*]

DIMPLE. Where got you these, Jessamy?

JESSAMY. Sir, the English packet is arrived.

DIMPLE [*opens and reads a letter enclosing notes*]. "Sir,

"I have drawn bills on you in favour of Messrs. Van Cash and Co. as per margin. I have taken up your note to Col. Piquet, and discharged your debts to my Lord Lurcher and Sir Harry Rook. I herewith enclose you copies of the bills, which I have no doubt will be immediately honoured. On failure, I shall empower some lawyer in your country to recover the amounts.

"I am, Sir,

"Your most humble servant,

"JOHN HAZARD."

Now, did not my lord expressly say that it was unbecoming a well-bred man to be in a passion, I confess I should be ruffled. [*Reads.*] "There is no accident so unfortunate, which a wise man may not turn to his advantage; nor any accident so fortunate, which a fool will not turn to his disadvantage." True, my lord; but how advantage can be derived from this I can't see. Chester~~field himself, who made, however, the worst practice of~~ the most excellent precepts, was never in so embarrassing a situation. I love the person of Charlotte, and it is necessary I should command the fortune of Letitia. As to Maria!—I doubt not by my *sang-froid* behaviour I shall compel her to decline the match; but the blame must not fall upon me. A prudent man, as my lord says, should take all the credit of a good action to himself, and throw the discredit of a bad one upon others. I must break with Maria, marry Letitia, and as for Charlotte—why, Charlotte must be a companion to my wife.—Here, Jessamy.

[*Enter* JESSAMY. DIMPLE *folds and seals two letters.*]

DIMPLE. Here, Jessamy, take this letter to my love. [*Gives one.*]

JESSAMY. To which of your honour's loves?—Oh! [*reading*] to Miss Letitia, your honour's rich love.

DIMPLE. And this [*delivers another*] to Miss Charlotte Manly. See that you deliver them privately.

JESSAMY. Yes, your honour. [*Going.*]

DIMPLE. Jessamy, who are these strange lodgers that came to the house last night?

JESSAMY. Why, the master is a Yankee colonel; I have not seen much of him; but the man is the most unpolished animal your honour ever disgraced your eyes by looking upon. I have had one of the most *outré* conversations with him!—He really has a most prodigious effect upon my risibility.

DIMPLE. I ought, according to every rule of Chesterfield, to wait on him and insinuate myself into his good graces.—Jessamy, wait on the colonel with my compliments, and if he is disengaged I will do myself the honour of paying him my respects.—Some ignorant unpolished boor— [JESSAMY *goes off and returns.*]

JESSAMY. Sir, the colonel is gone out, and Jonathan his servant says that he is gone to stretch his legs upon the Mall.—Stretch his legs! what an indelicacy of diction!

DIMPLE. Very well. Reach me my hat and sword. I'll accost him there, in my way to Letitia's, as by accident; pretend to be struck by his person and address, and endeavour to steal into his confidence. Jessamy, I have no business for you at present. [*Exit.*]

JESSAMY [*taking up the book*]. My master and I obtain our knowledge from the same source;—though, gad! I think myself much the prettier fellow of the two. [*Surveying himself in the glass.*] That was a brilliant thought, to insinuate that I folded my master's letters for him; the folding is so neat, that it does honour to the operator. I once intended to have insinuated that I wrote his

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9 **Lady [Mary] Wortley Montague** (1689-1762), English author of letters from Turkey and Italy, published in 1763 • 12 **Monsieur Milton.** See **Paradise Lost**, Bk. II, ll. 845-846:

"And Death
Grinn'd horrible a ghastly smile . . ."

• 40 **sang-froid**, cool, unexcited. Not usually an adjective; Jessamy misuses his French words

letters too; but that was before I saw them; it won't do now; no honour there, positively.—"Nothing looks more vulgar [*reading affectedly*], ordinary, and illiberal than ugly, uneven, and ragged nails; the ends of which should be kept even and clean, not tipped with black, and cut in small segments of circles."—Segments of circles! surely my lord did not consider that he wrote for the beaux. Segments of circles; what a crabbed term! Now I dare answer that my master, with all his learning, does not know that this means, according to the present mode, to let the nails grow long, and then cut them off even at top. [*Laughing without.*] Ha! that's Jenny's titter. I protest I despair of ever teaching that girl to laugh; she has something so execrably natural in her laugh, that I declare it absolutely discomposes my nerves. How came she into our house! [*Calls.*] Jenny!

[*Enter* JENNY.]

JESSAMY. Prythee, Jenny, don't spoil your fine face with laughing.

JENNY. Why, mustn't I laugh, Mr. Jessamy?

JESSAMY. You may smile, but, as my lord says, nothing can authorise a laugh.

JENNY. Well, but I can't help laughing.—Have you seen him, Mr. Jessamy? Ha, ha, ha!

JESSAMY. Seen whom?—

JENNY. Why, Jonathan, the New England colonel's servant. Do you know he was at the play last night, and the stupid creature don't know where he has been. He would not go to a play for the world; he thinks it was a show, as he calls it.

JESSAMY. As ignorant and unpolished as he is, do you know, Miss Jenny, that I propose to introduce him to the honour of your acquaintance?

JENNY. Introduce him to me! for what?

JESSAMY. Why, my lovely girl, that you may take him under your protection, as Madame Ramboulliet did young Stanhope; that you may, by your plastic hand, mould this uncouth cub into a gentleman. He is to make love to you.

JENNY. Make love to me!—

JESSAMY. Yes, Mistress Jenny, make love to you; and, I doubt not, when he shall become *domesticated* in your kitchen, that this boor, under your auspices, will soon become *un amiable petit Jonathan.*

JENNY. I must say, Mr. Jessamy, if he copies after me, he will be vastly, monstrously polite.

JESSAMY. Stay here one moment, and I will call him.—Jonathan!—Mr. Jonathan!— [*Calls.*]

JONATHAN [*within*]. Holla! there.—[*Enters.*] You promise to stand by me—six bows you say. [*Bows.*]

JESSAMY. Mrs. Jenny. I have the honour of presenting Mr. Jonathan, Colonel Manly's waiter, to you. I am extremely happy that I have it in my power to make two worthy people acquainted with each other's merits.

JENNY. So, Mr. Jonathan, I hear you were at the play last night.

JONATHAN. At the play! why, did you think I went to the devil's drawing-room?

JENNY. The devil's drawing-room!

JONATHAN. Yes; why an't cards and dice the devil's device, and the play-house the shop where the devil hangs out the vanities of the world upon the tenter-hooks of temptation? I believe you have not heard how they were acting the old boy one night, and the wicked one came among them sure enough, and went right off in a storm, and carried one quarter of the play-house with him. Oh! no, no, no! you won't catch me at a play-house, I warrant you.

JENNY. Well, Mr. Jonathan, though I don't scruple your veracity, I have some reasons for believing you were there: pray, where were you about six o'clock?

JONATHAN. Why, I went to see one Mr. Morrison, the *hocus pocus* man; they said as how he could eat a case knife.

JENNY. Well, and how did you find the place?

JONATHAN. As I was going about here and there, to and again, to find it, I saw a great crowd of folks going into a long entry that had lantherns over the door; so I asked a man whether that was not the place where they played *hocus pocus?* He was a very civil, kind man, though he did speak like the Hessians; he lifted up his

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2 **Nothing . . . vulgar.** See Chesterfield to his son, November 12, 1750 • 20 **my lord.** See Chesterfield to his son, March 9 and October 19, 1748 • 35 **Madame Ramboulliet.** The Marquise de Rambouillet (1588-1665) presided over a famous Paris salon, at which many poets and scholars gathered. Young Stanhope may be one of Lord Chesterfield's ancestors, or Jessamy may simply have been confused • 43 **un amiable petit Jonathan,** a good-natured little Jonathan • 72 **hocus pocus man,** magician. A search of the newspapers of Tyler's day might bring Mr. Morrison to light, but the editor has not identified him • 80 **Hessians.** See note, p. 352.

eyes and said, "They play *hocus pocus* tricks enough there, Got knows, mine friend."

JENNY. Well—

JONATHAN. So I went right in, and they shewed me away, clean up to the garret, just like meeting-house gallery. And so I saw a power of topping folks, all sitting round in little cabbins, "just like father's corn-cribs"; and then there was such a squeaking with the fiddles, and such a tarnal blaze with the lights, my head was near turned. At last the people that sat near me set up such a hissing—hiss—like so many mad cats; and then they went thump, thump, thump, just like our Peleg threshing wheat, and stampt away, just like the nation; and called out for one Mr. Langolee,—I suppose he helps act the tricks.

JENNY. Well, and what did you do all this time?

JONATHAN. Gor, I—I liked the fun, and so I thumpt away, and hiss'd as lustily as the best of 'em. One sailor-looking man that sat by me, seeing me stamp, and knowing I was a cute fellow, because I could make a roaring noise, clapt me on the shoulder and said, "you are a d——d hearty cock, smite my timbers!" I told him so I was, but I thought he need not swear so, and make use of such naughty words.

JESSAMY. The savage!—Well, and did you see the man with his tricks?

JONATHAN. Why, I vow, as I was looking for him, they lifted up a great green cloth and let us look right into the next neighbour's house. Have you a good many houses in New-York made so in that 'ere way?

JENNY. Not many: but did you see the family?

JONATHAN. Yes, swamp it; I see'd the family.

JENNY. Well, and how did you like them?

JONATHAN. Why, I vow they were pretty much like other families;—there was a poor, good-natured, curse of a husband, and a sad rantipole of a wife.

JENNY. But did you see no other folks?

JONATHAN. Yes. There was one youngster; they called him Mr. Joseph; he talked as sober and as pious as a minister; but, like some ministers that I know, he was a sly tike in his heart for all that. He was going to ask a young woman to spark it with him, and—the Lord have mercy on my soul!—she was another man's wife.

JESSAMY. The Wabash!

JENNY. And did you see any more folks?

JONATHAN. Why, they came on as thick as mustard. For my part, I thought the house was haunted. There was a soldier fellow, who talked about his row de dow, dow, and courted a young woman; but, of all the cute folk I saw, I liked one little fellow—

JENNY. Aye! who was he?

JONATHAN. Why, he had red hair, and a little round plump face like mine, only not altogether so handsome. His name was—Darby;—that was his baptizing name; his other name I forgot. Oh! it was Wig—Wag—Wag-all, Darby Wag-all—pray, do you know him?——I should like to take a sling with him, or a drap of cyder with a pepper-pod in it, to make it warm and comfortable.

JENNY. I can't say I have that pleasure.

JONATHAN. I wish you did; he is a cute fellow. But there was one thing I didn't like in that Mr. Darby; and that was, he was afraid of some of them 'ere shooting irons, such as your troopers wear on training days. Now, I'm a true born Yankee American son of liberty, and I never was afraid of a gun yet in all my life.

JENNY. Well, Mr. Jonathan, you were certainly at the play-house.

JONATHAN. I at the play-house!—Why didn't I see the play then?

JENNY. Why, the people you saw were players.

JONATHAN. Mercy on my soul! did I see the wicked players?—Mayhap that 'ere Darby that I liked so was the old serpent himself, and had his cloven foot in his pocket. Why, I vow, now I come to think on't, the candles seemed to burn blue, and I am sure where I sat it smelt tarnally of brimstone.

JESSAMY. Well, Mr. Jonathan, from your account, which I confess is very accurate, you must have been at the play-house.

JONATHAN. Why, I vow I began to smell a rat. When I came away, I went to the man for my money again; you want your money? says he; yes, says I; for what? says he; why, says I, no man shall jocky me out

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14 Mr. Langolee, apparently an actor, although no one by this name appears on the roll of the American Company • 39 Mr. Joseph, Joseph Surface, of The School for Scandal • 48 row . . . dow, disturbance; here the refrain of a song by a soldier character, Patrick, in O'Keeffe's The Poor Soldier, Act I • 54 Darby, the leading comic figure of The Poor Soldier • 57 sling, a drink, usually of gin and water • 63 afraid. In Act II of The Poor Soldier Darby, by accident, almost gets into a duel

of my money; I paid my money to see sights, and the dogs a bit of a sight have I seen, unless you call listening to people's private business a sight. Why, says he, it is the School for Scandalization.—The School for Scandalization!—Oh! ho! no wonder you New York folks are so cute at it, when you go to school to learn it; and so I jogged off.

JESSAMY. My dear Jenny, my master's business drags me from you; would to heaven I knew no other servitude than to your charms.

JONATHAN. Well, but don't go; you won't leave me so—

JESSAMY. Excuse me.—Remember the cash.

[*Aside to him, and—Exit.*]

JENNY. Mr. Jonathan, won't you please to sit down? Mr. Jessamy tells me you wanted to have some conversation with me.

[*Having brought forward two chairs, they sit.*]

JONATHAN. Ma'am!—

JENNY. Sir!—

JONATHAN. Ma'am!—

JENNY. Pray, how do you like the city, Sir?

JONATHAN. Ma'am!—

JENNY. I say, Sir, how do you like New-York?

JONATHAN. Ma'am!—

JENNY. The stupid creature! but I must pass some little time with him, if it is only to endeavour to learn whether it was his master that made such an abrupt entrance into our house, and my young mistress's heart, this morning. [*Aside.*] As you don't seem to like to talk, Mr. Jonathan—do you sing?

JONATHAN. Gor, I—I am glad she asked that, for I forgot what Mr. Jessamy bid me say, and I dare as well be hanged as act what he bid me do, I'm so ashamed. [*Aside.*] Yes, Ma'am, I can sing—I can sing Mear, Old Hundred, and Bangor.

JENNY. Oh! I don't mean psalm tunes. Have you no little song to please the ladies, such as Roslin Castle, or the Maid of the Mill?

JONATHAN. Why, all my tunes are go to meeting tunes, save one, and I count you won't altogether like that 'ere.

JENNY. What is it called?

JONATHAN. I am sure you have heard folks talk about it; it is called Yankee Doodle.

JENNY. Oh! it is the tune I am fond of; and if I know anything of my mistress, she would be glad to dance to it. Pray, sing!

JONATHAN [*sings*].

Father and I went up to camp,—
Along with Captain Goodwin;
And there we saw the men and boys,
As thick as hasty-pudding.
Yankee doodle do, etc.

And there we saw a swamping gun,
Big as log of maple,
On a little deuced cart,
A load for father's cattle.
Yankee doodle do, etc.

And every time they fired it off,
It took a horn of powder,
It made a noise—like father's gun,
Only a nation louder.
Yankee doodle do, etc.

There was a man in our town,
His name was—

No, no, that's won't do. Now, if I was with Tabitha Wymen and Jemima Cawley down at father Chase's, I shouldn't mind singing this all out before them—you would be affronted if I was to sing that, though that's a lucky thought; if you should be affronted, I have something dang'd cute, which Jessamy told me to say to you.

JENNY. Is that all! I assure you I like it of all things.

JONATHAN. No, no; I can sing more; some other time, when you and I are better acquainted, I'll sing the whole of it—no, no—that's a fib—I can't sing but a hundred and ninety verses; our Tabitha at home can sing it all.—[*Sings.*]

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33 **Mear . . . Bangor,** psalm tunes in the New England churches. "Old Hundredth," the most familiar, based on Psalm 100, is the tune of the doxology, "Praise God, from whom all blessings flow" • 36 **Roslin . . . Mill,** popular songs of the period. "Roslin Castle" (1769) was written by Richard Hewitt, with the music by James Oswald. "The Maid of the Mill" may be an obscure song by S. Adams, with the music by H. Aïdé, or an allusion to an opera of that name, by Samuel James Arnold (1740-1802) • 76 **sing it all.** "Yankee Doodle," like "Mademoiselle from Armentières" and "Dirty Gertie from Bizerte," was known in innumerable stanzas, relatively few of which have been collected. Its origin is much debated

Marblehead's a rocky place,
And Cape-Cod is sandy;
Charlestown is burnt down,
Boston is the dandy.
Yankee doodle, doodle do, etc.

I vow, my own town song has put me into such topping spirits that I believe I'll begin to do a little, as Jessamy says we must when we go a-courting.—[*Runs and kisses her.*] Burning rivers! cooling flames! red-hot roses! pig-nuts! hasty-pudding and ambrosia!

JENNY. What means this freedom? you insulting wretch. [*Strikes him.*]

JONATHAN. Are you affronted?

JENNY. Affronted! with what looks shall I express my anger?

JONATHAN. Looks! why as to the matter of looks, you look as cross as a witch.

JENNY. Have you no feeling for the delicacy of my sex?

JONATHAN. Feeling! Gor, I—I feel the delicacy of your sex pretty smartly [*Rubbing his cheek*], though, I vow, I thought when you city ladies courted and married, and all that, you put feeling out of the question. But I want to know whether you are really affronted, or only pretend to be so? 'Cause, if you are certainly right down affronted, I am at the end of my tether; Jessamy didn't tell me what to say to you.

JENNY. Pretend to be affronted!

JONATHAN. Aye, aye, if you only pretend, you shall hear how I'll go to work to make cherubim consequences. [*Runs up to her.*]

JENNY. Begone, you brute!

JONATHAN. That looks like mad; but I won't lose my speech. My dearest Jenny—your name is Jenny, I think?—My dearest Jenny, though I have the highest esteem for the sweet favours you have just now granted me—Gor, that's a fib, though; but Jessamy says it is not wicked to tell lies to the women. [*Aside.*] I say, though I have the highest esteem for the favours you have just now granted me, yet you will consider that, as soon as the dissolvable knot is tied, they will no longer be favours, but only matters of duty and matters of course.

JENNY. Marry you! you audacious monster! get out of my sight, or, rather, let me fly from you. [*Exit hastily.*]

JONATHAN. Gor, she's gone off in a swinging passion, before I had time to think of consequences. If this is the way with your city ladies, give me the twenty acres of rock, the Bible, the cow, and Tabitha, and a little peaceable bundling.

SCENE 2. The Mall. Enter Manly.

MANLY. It must be so, Montague! and it is not all the tribe of Mandevilles that shall convince me that a nation, to become great, must first become dissipated. Luxury is surely the bane of a nation: Luxury! which enervates both soul and body, by opening a thousand new sources of enjoyment, opens, also, a thousand new sources of contention and want: Luxury! which renders a people weak at home, and accessible to bribery, corruption, and force from abroad. When the Grecian states knew no other tools than the axe and the saw, the Grecians were a great, a free, and a happy people. The kings of Greece devoted their lives to the service of their country, and her senators knew no other superiority over their fellow-citizens than a glorious pre-eminence in danger and virtue. They exhibited to the world a noble spectacle,—a number of independent states united by a similarity of language, sentiment, manners, common interest, and common consent, in one grand mutual league of protection. And, thus united, long might they have continued the cherishers of arts and sciences, the protectors of the oppressed, the scourge of tyrants, and the safe asylum of liberty. But when foreign gold, and still more pernicious foreign luxury, had crept among them, they sapped the vitals of their virtue. The virtues of their ancestors were only found in their writings. Envy and suspicion, the vices of little minds, possessed them. The various states engendered jealousies of each other; and, more unfortunately, growing jealous of their great federal council, the Amphictyons, they forgot that their common safety had existed, and would exist, in giving them an honourable extensive prerogative. The

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49 **Montague**, a reference, apparently, to something which Manly had been reading, perhaps the letters of Lady Mary Wortley Montague • 50 **Mandevilles.** In **The Fable of the Bees** (1714; revision of **The Grumbling Hive**, 1705), Bernard de Mandeville (1670?-1733), an English author, argued that private vices are public benefits, since free spending and luxuries are possible only when there is general prosperity • 77 **Amphictyons**, assembly of the Greek city-states. See note, p. 544

common good was lost in the pursuit of private interest; and that people who, by uniting, might have stood against the world in arms, by dividing, crumbled into ruin;—their name is now only known in the page of the historian, and what they once were is all we have left to admire. Oh! that America! Oh! that my country, would, in this her day, learn the things which belong to her peace!

[*Enter* DIMPLE.]

DIMPLE. You are Colonel Manly, I presume?

MANLY. At your service, Sir.

DIMPLE. My name is Dimple, Sir. I have the honour to be a lodger in the same house with you, and, hearing you were in the Mall, came hither to take the liberty of joining you.

MANLY. You are very obliging, Sir.

DIMPLE. As I understand you are a stranger here, Sir, I have taken the liberty to introduce myself to your acquaintance, as possibly I may have it in my power to point out some things in this city worthy your notice.

MANLY. An attention to strangers is worthy a liberal mind, and must ever be gratefully received. But to a soldier, who has no fixed abode, such attentions are particularly pleasing.

DIMPLE. Sir, there is no character so respectable as that of a soldier. And, indeed, when we reflect how much we owe to those brave men who have suffered so much in the service of their country, and secured to us those inestimable blessings that we now enjoy, our liberty and independence, they demand every attention which gratitude can pay. For my own part, I never meet an officer, but I embrace him as my friend, nor a private in distress, but I insensibly extend my charity to him.—I have hit the Bumkin off very tolerably. [*Aside.*]

MANLY. Give me your hand, Sir! I do not proffer this hand to everybody; but you steal into my heart. I hope I am as insensible to flattery as most men; but I declare (it may be my weak side) that I never hear the name of soldier mentioned with respect, but I experience a thrill of pleasure which I never feel on any other occasion.

DIMPLE. Will you give me leave, my dear Colonel, to confer an obligation on myself, by shewing you some civilities during your stay here, and giving a similar opportunity to some of my friends?

MANLY. Sir, I thank you; but I believe my stay in this city will be very short.

DIMPLE. I can introduce you to some men of excellent sense, in whose company you will esteem yourself happy; and, by way of amusement, to some fine girls, who will listen to your soft things with pleasure.

MANLY. Sir, I should be proud of the honour of being acquainted with those gentlemen;—but, as for the ladies, I don't understand you.

DIMPLE. Why, Sir, I need not tell you, that when a young gentleman is alone with a young lady he must say some soft things to her fair cheek—indeed, the lady will expect it. To be sure, there is not much pleasure when a man of the world and a finished coquette meet, who perfectly know each other; but how delicious is it to excite the emotions of joy, hope, expectation, and delight in the bosom of a lovely girl who believes every tittle of what you say to be serious!

MANLY. Serious, Sir! In my opinion, the man who, under pretensions of marriage, can plant thorns in the bosom of an innocent, unsuspecting girl is more detestable than a common robber, in the same proportion as private violence is more despicable than open force, and money of less value than happiness.

DIMPLE. How he awes me by the superiority of his sentiments. [*Aside.*] As you say, Sir, a gentleman should be cautious how he mentions marriage.

MANLY. Cautious, Sir! No person more approves of an intercourse between the sexes than I do. Female conversation softens our manners, whilst our discourse, from the superiority of our literary advantages, improves their minds. But, in our young country, where there is no such thing as gallantry, when a gentleman speaks of love to a lady, whether he mentions marriage or not, she ought to conclude either that he meant to insult her or that his intentions are the most serious and honourable. How mean, how cruel, is it, by a thousand tender assiduities, to win the affections of an amiable girl, and, though you leave her virtue unspotted, to betray her into the appearance of so many tender partialities, that every man of delicacy would suppress his inclination towards her, by supposing her heart engaged! Can any man, for the trivial gratification of his leisure hours, affect the happiness of a whole life! His not having spoken of marriage may add to his perfidy, but can be no excuse for his conduct.

DIMPLE. Sir, I admire your sentiments;—they are

mine. The light observations that fell from me were only a principle of the tongue; they came not from the heart; my practice has ever disapproved these principles.

MANLY. I believe you, Sir. I should with reluctance suppose that those pernicious sentiments could find admittance into the heart of a gentleman.

DIMPLE. I am now, Sir, going to visit a family, where, if you please, I will have the honour of introducing you. Mr. Manly's ward, Miss Letitia, is a young lady of immense fortune; and his niece, Miss Charlotte Manly, is a young lady of great sprightliness and beauty.

MANLY. That gentleman, Sir, is my uncle, and Miss Manly my sister.

DIMPLE. The devil she is! [*Aside.*] Miss Manly your sister, Sir? I rejoice to hear it, and feel a double pleasure in being known to you.—Plague on him! I wish he was at Boston again, with all my soul. [*Aside.*]

MANLY. Come, Sir, will you go?

DIMPLE. I will follow you in a moment, Sir. [*Exit* MANLY.] Plague on it! this is unlucky. A fighting brother is a cursed appendage to a fine girl. Egad! I just stopped in time; had he not discovered himself, in two minutes more I should have told him how well I was with his sister. Indeed, I cannot see the satisfaction of an intrigue, if one can't have the pleasure of communicating it to our friends. [*Exit.*]

ACT IV

SCENE 1. **Charlotte's Apartment. Charlotte leading in Maria.**

CHARLOTTE. This is so kind, my sweet friend, to come to see me at this moment. I declare, if I were going to be married in a few days, as you are, I should scarce have found time to visit my friends.

MARIA. Do you think, then, that there is an impropriety in it?—How should you dispose of your time?

CHARLOTTE. Why, I should be shut up in my chamber; and my head would so run upon—upon—upon the solemn ceremony that I was to pass through!—I declare, it would take me above two hours merely to learn that little monosyllable—*Yes.* Ah! my dear, your sentimental imagination does not conceive what that little tiny word implies.

MARIA. Spare me your raillery, my sweet friend; I should love your agreeable vivacity at any other time.

CHARLOTTE. Why, this is the very time to amuse you. You grieve me to see you look so unhappy.

MARIA. Have I not reason to look so?

CHARLOTTE. What new grief distresses you?

MARIA. Oh! how sweet it is, when the heart is borne down with misfortune, to recline and repose on the bosom of friendship! Heaven knows that, although it is improper for a young lady to praise a gentleman, yet I have ever concealed Mr. Dimple's foibles, and spoke of him as of one whose reputation I expected would be linked with mine; but his late conduct towards me has turned my coolness into contempt. He behaves as if he meant to insult and disgust me; whilst my father, in the last conversation on the subject of our marriage, spoke of it as a matter which laid near his heart, and in which he would not bear contradiction.

CHARLOTTE. This works well; oh! the generous Dimple. I'll endeavour to excite her to discharge him. [*Aside.*] But, my dear friend, your happiness depends on yourself. Why don't you discard him? Though the match has been of long standing, I would not be forced to make myself miserable: no parent in the world should oblige me to marry the man I did not like.

MARIA. Oh! my dear, you never lived with your parents, and do not know what influence a father's frowns have upon a daughter's heart. Besides, what have I to alledge against Mr. Dimple, to justify myself to the world? He carries himself so smoothly, that every one would impute the blame to me, and call me capricious.

CHARLOTTE. And call her capricious! Did ever such an objection start into the heart of woman? For my part, I wish I had fifty lovers to discard, for no other reason than because I did not fancy them. My dear Maria, you will forgive me; I know your candour and confidence in me; but I have at times, I confess, been led to suppose that some other gentleman was the cause of your aversion to Mr. Dimple.

MARIA. No, my sweet friend, you may be assured, that though I have seen many gentleman I could prefer to Mr. Dimple, yet I never saw one that I thought I could give my hand to, until this morning.

CHARLOTTE. This morning!

MARIA. Yes; one of the strangest accidents in the world. The odious Dimple, after disgusting me with his

conversation, had just left me, when a gentleman, who, it seems, boards in the same house with him, saw him coming out of our door, and the houses looking very much alike, he came into our house instead of his lodgings; nor did he discover his mistake until he got into the parlour, where I was; he then bowed so gracefully, made such a genteel apology, and looked so manly and noble!—

CHARLOTTE. I see some folks, though it is so great an impropriety, can praise a gentleman, when he happens to be the man of their fancy. [*Aside.*]

MARIA. I don't know how it was,—I hope he did not think me indelicate,—but I asked him, I believe, to sit down, or pointed to a chair. He sat down, and, instead of having recourse to observations upon the weather, or hackneyed criticisms upon the theatre, he entered readily into a conversation worthy of a man of sense to speak, and a lady of delicacy and sentiment to hear. He was not strictly handsome, but he spoke the language of sentiment, and his eyes looked tenderness and honour.

CHARLOTTE. Oh! [*eagerly*] you sentimental, grave girls, when your hearts are once touched, beat us rattles a bar's length. And so, you are quite in love with this he-angel?

MARIA. In love with him! How can you rattle so, Charlotte? am I not going to be miserable? [*Sighs.*] In love with a gentleman I never saw but one hour in my life, and don't know his name! No; I only wished that the man I shall marry may look, and talk, and act, just like him. Besides, my dear, he is a married man.

CHARLOTTE. Why, that was good-natured—he told you so, I suppose, in mere charity, to prevent you falling in love with him?

MARIA. He didn't tell me so; [*peevishly*] he looked as if he was married.

CHARLOTTE. How, my dear; did he look sheepish?

MARIA. I am sure he has a susceptible heart, and the ladies of his acquaintance must be very stupid not to—

CHARLOTTE. Hush! I hear some person coming.

[*Enter* LETITIA.]

LETITIA. My dear Maria, I am happy to see you. Lud! what a pity it is that you have purchased your wedding clothes.

MARIA. I think so. [*Sighing.*]

LETITIA. Why, my dear, there is the sweetest parcel of silks come over you ever saw! Nancy Brilliant has a full suit come; she sent over her measure, and it fits her to a hair; it is immensely dressy, and made for a court-hoop. I thought they said the large hoops were going out of fashion.

CHARLOTTE. Did you see the hat? Is it a fact that the deep laces round the border is still the fashion?

DIMPLE [*within*]. Upon my honour, Sir.

MARIA. Ha! Dimple's voice! My dear, I must take leave of you. There are some things necessary to be done at our house. Can't I go through the other room?

[*Enter* DIMPLE *and* MANLY.]

DIMPLE. Ladies, your most obedient.

CHARLOTTE. Miss Van Rough, shall I present my brother Henry to you? Colonel Manly, Maria,—Miss Van Rough, brother.

MARIA. Her brother! [*Turns and sees* MANLY.] Oh! my heart! the very gentleman I have been praising.

MANLY. The same amiable girl I saw this morning!

CHARLOTTE. Why, you look as if you were acquainted.

MANLY. I unintentionally intruded into this lady's presence this morning, for which she was so good as to promise me her forgiveness.

CHARLOTTE. Oh! ho! is that the case! Have these two penserosos been together? Were they Henry's eyes that looked so tenderly? [*Aside.*] And so you promised to pardon him? and could you be so good-natured? have you really forgiven him? I beg you would do it for my sake [*whispering loud to* MARIA]. But, my dear, as you are in such haste, it would be cruel to detain you; I can show you the way through the other room.

MARIA. Spare me, my sprightly friend.

MANLY. The lady does not, I hope, intend to deprive us of the pleasure of her company so soon.

CHARLOTTE. She has only a mantua-maker who waits for her at home. But, as I am to give my opinion of the dress, I think she cannot go yet. We were talking of the fashions when you came in, but I suppose the subject must be changed to something of more importance now. Mr. Dimple, will you favour us with an account of the public entertainments?

DIMPLE. Why, really, Miss Manly, you could not have asked me a question more *mal-apropos*. For my part, I must confess that, to a man who has travelled, there is nothing that is worthy the name of amusement to be found in this city.

CHARLOTTE. Except visiting the ladies.

DIMPLE. Pardon me, Madam; that is the avocation of a man of taste. But for amusement, I positively know of nothing that can be called so, unless you dignify with that title the hopping once a fortnight to the sound of two or three squeaking fiddles, and the clattering of the old tavern windows, or sitting to see the miserable mummers, whom you call actors, murder comedy and make a farce of tragedy.

MANLY. Do you never attend the theatre, Sir?

DIMPLE. I was tortured there once.

CHARLOTTE. Pray, Mr. Dimple, was it a tragedy or a comedy?

DIMPLE. Faith, Madam, I cannot tell; for I sat with my back to the stage all the time, admiring a much better actress than any there—a lady who played the fine woman to perfection; though, by the laugh of the horrid creatures round me, I suppose it was comedy. Yet, on second thoughts, it might be some hero in a tragedy, dying so comically as to set the whole house in an uproar. Colonel, I presume you have been in Europe?

MANLY. Indeed, Sir, I was never ten leagues from the continent.

DIMPLE. Believe me, Colonel, you have an immense pleasure to come; and when you shall have seen the brilliant exhibitions of Europe, you will learn to despise the amusements of this country as much as I do.

MANLY. Therefore I do not wish to see them; for I can never esteem that knowledge valuable which tends to give me a distaste for my native country.

DIMPLE. Well, Colonel, though you have not travelled, you have read.

MANLY. I have, a little; and by it have discovered that there is a laudable partiality which ignorant, untravelled men entertain for everything that belongs to their native country. I call it laudable; it injures no one; adds to their own happiness; and, when extended, becomes the noble principle of patriotism. Travelled gentlemen rise superior, in their own opinion, to this; but if the contempt which they contract for their country is the most valuable acquisition of their travels, I am far from thinking that their time and money are well spent.

MARIA. What noble sentiments!

CHARLOTTE. Let my brother set out where he will in the fields of conversation, he is sure to end his tour in the temple of gravity.

MANLY. Forgive me, my sister. I love my country; it has its foibles undoubtedly;——some foreigners will with pleasure remark them—but such remarks fall very ungracefully from the lips of her citizens.

DIMPLE. You are perfectly in the right, Colonel—America has her faults.

MANLY. Yes, Sir; and we, her children, should blush for them in private, and endeavour, as individuals, to reform them. But, if our country has its errors in common with other countries, I am proud to say America—I mean the United States—has displayed virtues and achievements which modern nations may admire, but of which they have seldom set us the example.

CHARLOTTE. But, brother, we must introduce you to some of our gay folks, and let you see the city, such as it is. Mr. Dimple is known to almost every family in town; he will doubtless take a pleasure in introducing you.

DIMPLE. I shall esteem every service I can render your brother an honour.

MANLY. I fear the business I am upon will take up all my time, and my family will be anxious to hear from me.

MARIA. His family! but what is it to me that he is married! [*Aside.*] Pray, how did you leave your lady, Sir?

CHARLOTTE. My brother is not married [*observing her anxiety*]; it is only an odd way he has of expressing himself. Pray, brother, is this business, which you make your continual excuse, a secret?

MANLY. No, sister; I came hither to solicit the honourable Congress, that a number of my brave old soldiers may be put upon the pension-list, who were, at first, not judged to be so materially wounded as to need the public assistance. My sister says true [*to* MARIA]: I call my late soldiers my family. Those who were not in the field in the late glorious contest, and those who were, have their respective merits; but, I confess, my old brother-soldiers are dearer to me than the former description. Friendships made in adversity are lasting; our countrymen may forget us, but that is no reason why we should forget one another. But I must leave you; my time of engagement approaches.

CHARLOTTE. Well, but, brother, if you will go, will you please to conduct my fair friend home? You live in the same street—I was to have gone with her myself—[*Aside.*] A lucky thought.

MARIA. I am obliged to your sister, Sir, and was just intending to go. [*Going.*]

MANLY. I shall attend her with pleasure.

[*Exit with* MARIA, *followed by* DIMPLE *and* CHARLOTTE.]

MARIA. Now, pray, don't betray me to your brother.

CHARLOTTE [*Just as she sees him make a motion to take his leave*]. One word with you, brother, if you please. [*Follows them out.*]

[*Manent,* DIMPLE *and* LETITIA.]

DIMPLE. You received the billet I sent you, I presume?

LETITIA. Hush!—Yes.

DIMPLE. When shall I pay my respects to you?

LETITIA. At eight I shall be unengaged.

[*Reënter* CHARLOTTE.]

DIMPLE. Did my lovely angel receive my billet? [*to* CHARLOTTE.]

CHARLOTTE. Yes.

DIMPLE. What hour shall I expect with impatience?

CHARLOTTE. At eight I shall be at home unengaged.

DIMPLE. Unfortunate! I have a horrid engagement of business at that hour. Can't you finish your visit earlier and let six be the happy hour?

CHARLOTTE. You know your influence over me.

[*Exeunt severally.*]

SCENE 2. Van Rough's House. Van Rough, alone.

VAN ROUGH. It cannot possibly be true! The son of my old friend can't have acted so unadvisedly. Seventeen thousand pounds! in bills! Mr. Transfer must have been mistaken. He always appeared so prudent, and talked so well upon money matters, and even assured me that he intended to change his dress for a suit of clothes which would not cost so much, and look more substantial, as soon as he married. No, no, no! it can't be; it cannot be. But, however, I must look out sharp. I did not care what his principles or his actions were, so long as he minded the main chance. Seventeen thousand pounds! If he had lost it in trade, why the best men may have ill-luck; but to game it away, as Transfer says—why, at this rate, his whole estate may go in one night, and, what is ten times worse, mine into the bargain. No, no; Mary is right. Leave women to look out in these matters; for all they look as if they didn't know a journal from a ledger, when their interest is concerned they know what's what; they mind the main chance as well as the best of us. I wonder Mary did not tell me she knew of his spending his money so foolishly. Seventeen thousand pounds! Why, if my daughter was standing up to be married, I would forbid the banns, if I found it was to a man who did not mind the main chance.—Hush! I hear somebody coming. 'Tis Mary's voice; a man with her too! I shouldn't be surprised if this should be the other string to her bow. Aye, aye, let them alone; women understand the main chance.—Though, i' faith, I'll listen a little. [*Retires into a closet.*]

[MANLY *leading in* MARIA.]

MANLY. I hope you will excuse my speaking upon so important a subject so abruptly; but, the moment I entered your room, you struck me as the lady whom I had long loved in imagination, and never hoped to see.

MARIA. Indeed, Sir, I have been led to hear more upon this subject than I ought.

MANLY. Do you, then, disapprove my suit, Madam, or the abruptness of my introducing it? If the latter, my peculiar situation, being obliged to leave the city in a few days, will, I hope, be my excuse; if the former, I will retire, for I am sure I would not give a moment's inquietude to her whom I could devote my life to please. I am not so indelicate as to seek your immediate approbation; permit me only to be near you, and by a thousand tender assiduities to endeavour to excite a grateful return.

MARIA. I have a father, whom I would die to make happy; he will disapprove—

MANLY. Do you think me so ungenerous as to seek a place in your esteem without his consent? You must—you ever ought to consider that man as unworthy of you who seeks an interest in your heart contrary to a father's approbation. A young lady should reflect that the loss of a lover may be supplied, but nothing can compensate for the loss of a parent's affection. Yet, why do you suppose your father would disapprove? In our country, the affections are not sacrificed to riches, or family aggrandizement: should you approve, my family is decent, and my rank honourable.

MARIA. You distress me, Sir.

MANLY. Then I will sincerely beg your excuse for obtruding so disagreeable a subject, and retire. [*Going.*]

Manent, remaining

MARIA. Stay, Sir! your generosity and good opinion of me deserve a return; but why must I declare what, for these few hours, I have scarce suffered myself to think?—I am—

MANLY. What?

MARIA. Engaged, Sir; and, in a few days, to be married to the gentleman you saw at your sister's.

MANLY. Engaged to be married! And have I been basely invading the rights of another? Why have you permitted this? Is this the return for the partiality I declared for you?

MARIA. You distress me, Sir. What would you have me say? You are too generous to wish the truth. Ought I to say that I dared not suffer myself to think of my engagement, and that I am going to give my hand without my heart? Would you have me confess a partiality for you? If so, your triumph is compleat, and you can be only more so when days of misery with the man I cannot love will make me think of him whom I could prefer.

MANLY [*after a pause*]. We are both unhappy; but it is your duty to obey your parent—mine to obey my honour. Let us, therefore, both follow the path of rectitude; and of this we may be assured, that if we are not happy, we shall, at least, deserve to be so. Adieu! I dare not trust myself longer with you.

[*Exeunt severally.*]

ACT V

SCENE 1. Dimple's Lodgings. Jessamy meeting Jonathan.

JESSAMY. Well, Mr. Jonathan, what success with the fair?

JONATHAN. Why, such a tarnal cross tike you never saw. You would have counted she had lived upon crab-apples and vinegar for a fortnight. But what the rattle makes you look so tarnation glum?

JESSAMY. I was thinking, Mr. Jonathan, what could be the reason of her carrying herself so coolly to you.

JONATHAN. Coolly, do you call it? Why, I vow, she was fire-hot angry: may be it was because I buss'd her.

JESSAMY. No, no, Mr. Jonathan; there must be some other cause; I never yet knew a lady angry at being kissed.

JONATHAN. Well, if it is not the young woman's bashfulness, I vow I can't conceive why she shouldn't like me.

JESSAMY. May be it is because you have not the Graces, Mr. Jonathan.

JONATHAN. Grace! Why, does the young woman expect I must be converted before I court her?

JESSAMY. I mean graces of person: for instance, my lord tells us that we must cut off our nails even at top, in small segments of circles—though you won't understand that; in the next place, you must regulate your laugh.

JONATHAN. Maple-log seize it! don't I laugh natural?

JESSAMY. That's the very fault, Mr. Jonathan. Besides, you absolutely misplace it. I was told by a friend of mine that you laughed outright at the play the other night, when you ought only to have tittered.

JONATHAN. Gor! I—what does one go to see fun for if they can't laugh?

JESSAMY. You may laugh; but you must laugh by rule.

JONATHAN. Swamp it—laugh by rule! Well, I should like that tarnally.

JESSAMY. Why, you know, Mr. Jonathan, that to dance, a lady to play with her fan, or a gentleman with his cane, and all other natural motions, are regulated by art. My master has composed an immensely pretty gamut, by which any lady or gentleman, with a few years' close application, may learn to laugh as gracefully as if they were born and bred to it.

JONATHAN. Mercy on my soul! A gamut for laughing—just like fa, la, sol?

JESSAMY. Yes. It comprises every possible display of jocularity, from an *affettuoso* smile to a *piano* titter, or full chorus *fortissimo* ha, ha, ha! My master employs his leisure hours in marking out the plays, like a cathedral chanting-book, that the ignorant may know where to laugh; and that pit, box, and gallery may keep time together, and not have a snigger in one part of the house, a broad grin in the other, and a d——d grum look in the third. How delightful to see the audience all smile together, then look on their books, then twist their mouths

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45 Grace. Jonathan takes the word in its theological sense • 66 gamut, scale. In The Spectator, No. 102, the art of handling a fan is treated much as Jessamy deals with laughter • 72 affettuoso . . . piano . . . fortissimo, "with feeling," "softly," "very loudly"—musical terms

into an agreeable simper, then altogether shake the house with a general ha, ha, ha! loud as a full chorus of Handel's at an Abbey commemoration.

JONATHAN. Ha, ha, ha! that's dang'd cute, I swear.

JESSAMY. The gentlemen, you see, will laugh the tenor; the ladies will play the counter-tenor; the beaux will squeak the treble; and our jolly friends in the gallery a thorough bass, ho, ho, ho!

JONATHAN. Well, can't you let me see that gamut?

JESSAMY. Oh! yes, Mr. Jonathan, here it is. [*Takes out a book.*] Oh! no, this is only a titter with its variations. Ah, here it is. [*Takes out another.*] Now, you must know, Mr. Jonathan, this is a piece written by Ben Jonson, which I have set to my master's gamut. The places where you must smile, look grave, or laugh outright, are marked below the line. Now look over me. "There was a certain man"—now you must smile.

JONATHAN. Well, read it again; I warrant I'll mind my eye.

JESSAMY. "There was a certain man, who had a sad scolding wife,"—now you must laugh.

JONATHAN. Tarnation! That's no laughing matter though.

JESSAMY. "And she lay sick a-dying";—now you must titter.

JONATHAN. What, snigger when a good woman's a-dying! Gor, I—

JESSAMY. Yes, the notes say you must—"and she asked her husband leave to make a will,"—now you must begin to look grave;—"and her husband said"—

JONATHAN. Ay, what did her husband say? Something dang'd cute, I reckon.

JESSAMY. "And her husband said, you have had your will all your life-time, and would you have it after you are dead, too?"

JONATHAN. Ho, ho, ho! There the old man was even with her! he was up to the notch—ha, ha, ha!

JESSAMY. But, Mr. Jonathan, you must not laugh so. Why, you ought to have tittered *piano,* and you have laughed *fortissimo.* Look here; you see these marks, A, B, C, and so on; these are the references to the other part of the book. Let us turn to it, and you will see the directions how to manage the muscles. This [*turns over*] was note D you blundered at.—You must purse the mouth into a smile, then titter, discovering the lower part of the three front upper teeth.

JONATHAN. How? read it again.

JESSAMY. "There was a certain man"—very well!—"who had a sad scolding wife,"—why don't you laugh?

JONATHAN. Now, that scolding wife sticks in my gizzard so pluckily that I can't laugh for the blood and nowns of me. Let me look grave here, and I'll laugh your belly full, where the old creature's a-dying.—

JESSAMY. "And she asked her husband"—[*Bell rings.*] My master's bell! he's returned, I fear—Here Mr. Jonathan, take this gamut; and I make no doubt but with a few years' application, you may be able to smile gracefully. [*Exeunt severally.*]

SCENE 2. Charlotte's Apartment. Enter Manly.

MANLY. What, no one at home? How unfortunate to meet the only lady my heart was ever moved by, to find her engaged to another, and confessing her partiality for me! Yet engaged to a man who, by her intimation, and his libertine conversation with me, I fear, does not merit her. Aye! there's the sting; for, were I assured that Maria was happy, my heart is not so selfish but that it would dilate in knowing it, even though it were with another. But to know she is unhappy!—I must drive these thoughts from me. Charlotte has some books; and this is what I believe she calls her little library.

[*Enters a closet.*]

[*Enter* DIMPLE *leading* LETITIA.]

LETITIA. And will you pretend to say now, Mr. Dimple, that you propose to break with Maria? Are not the banns published? Are not the clothes purchased? Are not the friends invited? In short, is it not a done affair?

DIMPLE. Believe me, my dear Letitia, I would not marry her.

LETITIA. Why have you not broke with her before this, as you all along deluded me by saying you would?

DIMPLE. Because I was in hopes she would, ere this, have broke with me.

LETITIA. You could not expect it.

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2 **Handel's . . . commemoration.** Georg Friedrich Händel (1685-1759), German-born composer, who lived in England most of the time after 1710, was pensioned by Queen Anne for composing a "Te Deum" celebrating the Peace of Utrecht (1713). He is now best known for such oratorios as "The Messiah" • **Ben Jonson** (1573-1637), English dramatist. It seems likely that the situation described by Jessamy comes from some farce well known to the audience

DIMPLE. Nay, but be calm a moment; 'twas from my regard to you that I did not discard her.

LETITIA. Regard to me!

DIMPLE. Yes; I have done everything in my power to break with her, but the foolish girl is so fond of me that nothing can accomplish it. Besides, how can I offer her my hand, when my heart is indissolubly engaged to you?

LETITIA. There may be reason in this; but why so attentive to Miss Manly?

DIMPLE. Attentive to Miss Manly! For heaven's sake, if you have no better opinion of my constancy, pay not so ill a compliment to my taste.

LETITIA. Did I not see you whisper her to-day?

DIMPLE. Possibly I might—but something of so very trifling a nature that I have already forgot what it was.

LETITIA. I believe she has not forgot it.

DIMPLE. My dear creature, how can you for a moment suppose I should have any serious thoughts of that trifling, gay, flighty coquette, that disagreeable—

[*Enter* CHARLOTTE.]

DIMPLE. My dear Miss Manly, I rejoice to see you; there is a charm in your conversation that always marks your entrance into company as fortunate.

LETITIA. Where have you been, my dear?

CHARLOTTE. Why, I have been about to twenty shops, turning over pretty things, and so have left twenty visits unpaid. I wish you would step into the carriage and whisk round, make my apology, and leave my cards where our friends are not at home; that, you know, will serve as a visit. Come, do go.

LETITIA. So anxious to get me out! but I'll watch you. [*Aside.*] Oh! yes, I'll go; I want a little exercise. Positively [DIMPLE *offering to accompany her.*], Mr. Dimple, you shall not go; why, half my visits are cake and caudle visits; it won't do, you know, for you to go.

[*Exit, but returns to the door in the back scene and listens.*]

DIMPLE. This attachment of your brother to Maria is fortunate.

CHARLOTTE. How did you come to the knowledge of it?

DIMPLE. I read it in their eyes.

CHARLOTTE. And I had it from her mouth. It would have amused you to have seen her! She, that thought it so great an impropriety to praise a gentleman that she could not bring out one word in your favour, found a redundancy to praise him.

DIMPLE. I have done everything in my power to assist his passion there: your delicacy, my dearest girl, would be shocked at half the instances of neglect and misbehaviour.

CHARLOTTE. I don't know how I should bear neglect; but Mr. Dimple must misbehave himself indeed, to forfeit my good opinion.

DIMPLE. Your good opinion, my angel, is the pride and pleasure of my heart; and if the most respectful tenderness for you, and an utter indifference for all your sex besides, can make me worthy of your esteem, I shall richly merit it.

CHARLOTTE. All my sex besides, Mr. Dimple!—you forgot your tête-à-tête with Letitia.

DIMPLE. How can you, my lovely angel, cast a thought on that insipid, wry-mouthed, ugly creature!

CHARLOTTE. But her fortune may have charms?

DIMPLE. Not to a heart like mine. The man, who has been blessed with the good opinion of my Charlotte, must despise the allurements of fortune.

CHARLOTTE. I am satisfied.

DIMPLE. Let us think no more on the odious subject, but devote the present hour to happiness.

CHARLOTTE. Can I be happy when I see the man I prefer going to be married to another?

DIMPLE. Have I not already satisfied my charming angel, that I can never think of marrying the puling Maria? But, even if it were so, could that be any bar to our happiness? for, as the poet sings,

"Love, free as air, at sight of human ties,
Spreads his light wings, and in a moment flies."

Come, then, my charming angel! why delay our bliss? The present moment is ours; the next is in the hand of fate. [*Kissing her.*]

CHARLOTTE. Begone, Sir! By your delusions you had almost lulled my honour asleep.

DIMPLE. Let me lull the demon to sleep again with kisses. [*He struggles with her; she screams.*]

[*Enter* MANLY.]

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35 **caudle,** hot spiced wine or ale, a woman's drink • 74 **the poet,** Alexander Pope (1688-1744). The lines are from the "Epistle from Eloisa to Abelard" (1717)

MANLY. Turn, villain! and defend yourself.—[*Draws.* VAN ROUGH *enters and beats down their swords.*]

VAN ROUGH. Is the devil in you? are you going to murder one another? [*Holding* DIMPLE.]

DIMPLE. Hold him, hold him,—I can command my passion.

[*Enter* JONATHAN.]



"I feel chock-full of fight,—do you want to kill the colonel?—"

JONATHAN. What the rattle ails you? Is the old one in you? Let the colonel alone, can't you? I feel chock-full of fight,—do you want to kill the colonel?—

MANLY. Be still, Jonathan; the gentleman does not want to hurt me.

JONATHAN. Gor! I—I wish he did; I'd shew him Yankee boys play, pretty quick—Don't you see you have frightened the young woman into the *hystrikes?*

VAN ROUGH. Pray, some of you explain this; what has been the occasion of all this racket?

MANLY. That gentleman can explain it to you; it will be a very diverting story for an intended father-in-law to hear.

VAN ROUGH. How was this matter, Mr. Van Dumpling?

DIMPLE. Sir,—upon my honour,—all I know is, that I was talking to this young lady, and this gentleman broke in on us in a very extraordinary manner.

VAN ROUGH. Why, all this is nothing to the purpose; can you explain it, Miss? [*To* CHARLOTTE.]

[*Enter* LETITIA *through the back scene.*]

LETITIA. I can explain it to that gentleman's confusion. Though long betrothed to your daughter [*to* VAN ROUGH], yet, allured by my fortune, it seems (with shame do I speak it) he has privately paid his addresses to me. I was drawn in to listen to him by his assuring me that the match was made by his father without his consent, and that he proposed to break with Maria, whether he married me or not. But, whatever were his intentions respecting your daughter, Sir, even to me he was false; for he has repeated the same story, with some cruel reflections upon my person, to Miss Manly.

JONATHAN. What a tarnal curse!

LETITIA. Nor is this all, Miss Manly. When he was with me this very morning, he made the same ungenerous reflections upon the weakness of your mind as he has so recently done upon the defects of my person.

JONATHAN. What a tarnal curse and damn, too!

DIMPLE. Ha! since I have lost Letitia, I believe I had as good make it up with Maria. [*Aside.*] Mr. Van Rough, at present I cannot enter into particulars; but, I believe, I can explain everything to your satisfaction in private.

VAN ROUGH. There is another matter, Mr. Van Dumpling, which I would have you explain. Pray, Sir, have Messrs. Van Cash and Co. presented you those bills for acceptance?

DIMPLE. The deuce! Has he heard of those bills! Nay, then, all's up with Maria, too; but an affair of this sort can never prejudice me among the ladies; they will rather long to know what the dear creature possesses to make him so agreeable. [*Aside.*] Sir, you'll hear from me. [*To* MANLY.]

MANLY. And you from me, Sir—

DIMPLE. Sir, you wear a sword—

MANLY. Yes, Sir. This sword was presented to me by that brave Gallic hero, the Marquis De La Fayette. I

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60 Marquis De La Fayette (1757-1834), who had revisited America in 1784. His services in the Revolution extended from 1777 to 1781

have drawn it in the service of my country, and in private life, on the only occasion where a man is justified in drawing his sword, in defence of a lady's honour. I have fought too many battles in the service of my country to dread the imputation of cowardice. Death from a man of honour would be a glory you do not merit; you shall live to bear the insult of man and the contempt of that sex whose general smiles afforded you all your happiness.

DIMPLE. You won't meet me, Sir? Then I'll post you for a coward.

MANLY. I'll venture that, Sir. The reputation of my life does not depend upon the breath of a Mr. Dimple. I would have you to know, however, Sir, that I have a cane to chastise the insolence of a scoundrel, and a sword and the good laws of my country to protect me from the attempts of an assassin—

DIMPLE. Mighty well! Very fine, indeed! Ladies and gentlemen, I take my leave; and you will please to observe in the case of my deportment, the contrast between a gentleman who has read Chesterfield and received the polish of Europe and an unpolished, untravelled American.

[*Exit.*]

[*Enter* MARIA.]

MARIA. Is he indeed gone?—

LETITIA. I hope, never to return.

VAN ROUGH. I am glad I heard of those bills; though it's plaguy unlucky: I hoped to see Mary married before I died.

MANLY. Will you permit a gentleman, Sir, to offer himself as a suitor to your daughter? Though a stranger to you, he is not altogether so to her, or unknown in this city. You may find a son-in-law of more fortune, but you can never meet with one who is richer in love for her, or respect for you.

VAN ROUGH. Why, Mary, you have not let this gentleman make love to you without my leave?

MANLY. I did not say, Sir—

MARIA. Say, Sir!—I—the gentleman, to be sure, met me accidentally.

VAN ROUGH. Ha, ha, ha! Mark me, Mary; young folks think old folks to be fools; but old folks know young folks to be fools. Why, I knew all about this affair. This was only a cunning way I had to bring it about. Hark ye! I was in the closet when you and he were at our house. [*Turns to the company.*] I heard that little baggage say she loved her old father, and would die to make him happy! Oh! how I loved the little baggage! And you talked very prudently, young man. I have inquired into your character, and find you to be a man of punctuality and mind the main chance. And so, as you love Mary and Mary loves you, you shall have my consent immediately to be married. I'll settle my fortune on you, and go and live with you the remainder of my life.

MANLY. Sir, I hope—

VAN ROUGH. Come, come, no fine speeches; mind the main chance, young man, and you and I shall always agree.

LETITIA. I sincerely wish you joy [*advancing to* MARIA]; and hope your pardon for my conduct.

MARIA. I thank you for your congratulations, and hope we shall at once forget the wretch who has given us so much disquiet, and the trouble that he has occasioned.

CHARLOTTE. And I, my dear Maria,—how shall I look up to you for forgiveness? I, who, in the practice of the meanest arts, have violated the most sacred rights of friendship? I can never forgive myself, or hope charity from the world; but, I confess, I have much to hope from such a brother; and I am happy that I may soon say, such a sister.

MARIA. My dear, you distress me; you have all my love.

MANLY. And mine.

CHARLOTTE. If repentance can entitle me to forgiveness, I have already much merit; for I despise the littleness of my past conduct. I now find that the heart of any worthy man cannot be gained by invidious attacks upon the rights and characters of others;—by countenancing the addresses of a thousand;—or that the finest assemblage of features, the greatest taste in dress, the genteelest address, or the most brilliant wit, cannot eventually secure a coquette from contempt and ridicule.

MANLY. And I have learned that probity, virtue, honour, though they should not have received the polish of Europe, will secure to an honest American the good graces of his fair countrywomen, and, I hope, the applause of THE PUBLIC.

[*Curtain.*]

1786·1790



Washington Irving

1783 · 1859

Washington Irving was both the most polished and the most popular American prose writer of his generation. Not a profound thinker and heavily indebted for his tastes and skills to European models, he was nevertheless a gifted observer of surface details, and in the course of time he developed a style which justly earned him lasting fame. Wherever the short story is read, men, women, and children continue to enjoy "Rip Van Winkle," "The Legend of Sleepy Hollow," and other story sketches by Irving. They are both historically important, being among the first mature examples of American fiction, and charmingly untouched by time, revealing their author as a man who understood the amenities of life in a world which is not always orderly and reasonable.

Irving's career is best understood when divided into three periods: (1) 1783-1815, a rather lengthy but youthful groping for a profession which would satisfy his somewhat dilettantish tastes; (2) 1815-1832, a seventeen-year residence in Europe, where he achieved international recognition as one of the romantic rediscoverers of the past; and (3) 1832-1859, in which, established as a fashionable author, he wrote chiefly as a biographer and historian.

He was born in New York City on April 3, 1783, the eleventh and last son of Scotch-English parents. The staunch Presbyterianism of his father, a well-to-do merchant, played little part in Washington Irving's unsystematic education. A delicate boy, he found his chief pleasures in light literature, the theater, art, travel, and, most particularly, in good company. At nineteen, while reading law, he contributed a series of essays dealing

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Panel (l. to r.): The Alhambra • Sunnyside, Irving's home on the Hudson River • Washington Irving at the age of 26 • Illustration from Bracebridge Hall

largely with the theater to his brother Peter's newspaper, the *Morning Chronicle,* signing them in the eighteenth-century manner as "Jonathan Oldstyle." Between 1804 and 1806 he traveled in Europe, curiously unconcerned about the political turmoil in Napoleon's empire, but much impressed with such new friends as Washington Allston, the painter.

Back in New York and admitted to the bar, he joined his brother and James Kirke Paulding in the *New Yorker*-like series, *Salmagundi,* which ran for twenty numbers in 1807-1808. A more extended burlesque, begun with Peter Irving, resulted in *A History of New York . . . By Diedrich Knickerbocker* (1809), a satire so elaborate that the law must have been much neglected during its composition. In his twenties, as a matter of fact, Irving was doubtless uncertain of himself and of his aims. He enjoyed the convivial society of New York's younger set, shared some responsibility in the family hardware business, and dabbled occasionally in Federalist politics, meanwhile pursuing a gentlemanly interest in literature. A moot question in Irving's biography is the importance of his romantic attachment to Matilda Hoffman, who died of consumption in 1809. Had he married, Irving might conceivably have settled down to the law or to the editing of literary magazines. Matilda's death made roving possible. A bachelor all his life, he cherished as he grew older a sentimental memory which did not entirely outlaw mild flirtations with living ladies.

In 1815 he went to Liverpool on business and found that family affairs there were in great disorder because of a brother's illness. Three years later the Irving firm was bankrupt, and his great decision—to make his living by authorship—was more or less forced upon him. The results were impressive: *The Sketch Book,* published serially in 1819-1820; *Bracebridge Hall* (1822); *Tales of a Traveller* (1824); and, after a stay in Spain as a diplomatic attaché, *The Alhambra* (1832). These and other books, together with his many social connections, brought fame and considerable fortune. Irving was at home in London, Paris, Dresden, and Madrid; he met and was accepted by many of the leading literary folk of Europe; he became, in short, a great success, bringing to the United States what the new nation most ardently desired in a man of letters—the respect of the Old World. Like Sir Walter Scott, whom he much admired, Irving worked hard but insisted on preserving the pleasant fiction that authorship was something that a gentleman accomplished with his left hand.

In this attitude he had the assistance of various governmental appointments which were urged upon him in his later years. He wisely refused offers of nominations to a seat in Congress, to the post of mayor of New York, to the secretaryship of the Navy. In 1841, however, he accepted the appointment of minister to Spain, and was again in Madrid between 1842 and 1845, when he resigned. The last years of his life were devoted to several relatively minor books dealing with the American West ("A Tour on the Prairies" in *The Crayon Miscellany,* 1835; *Astoria,* written in collaboration with his nephew, Pierre, 1836; and *Adventures of Captain Bonneville,* 1837), as well as to the biographical works which display his literary and political nostalgias *(Life of Oliver Goldsmith,* 1840, and *Life of Washington,* 5 vols., 1855-1859). Much of his time after 1835 was spent in the rambling, stepped-gabled cottage at Sunnyside, near Tarrytown and Sleepy Hollow on the Hudson, where he died on November 28, 1859.

Irving's historical work exemplifies the antiquarian spirit which he shared with Scott and other romanticists, but he is most significant for bringing American fiction into the main stream of world literature. He wrote with full knowledge of his immediate predecessors and contemporaries, and his work held its own in direct comparison with theirs. Irving owed much to Fielding, Sterne, Goldsmith, and Scott; he owed much, also, to such German romanticists as Ludwig Tieck and E. T. A. Hoffman. When all his literary obligations are recognized, however, there is much in Irving that is his own: a feeling for place and local customs; good-humored acceptance of eccentricities in human beings and divergent ways of looking at the world; a persistent refusal to take either himself or society too seriously; and, not least of all, a delicate balance between conformity and independence which, if not originality in the strictest sense, is still creative and individual. These are virtues which Americans have always liked to think characteristic of their nation.

Irving's Works, Author's Revised Edition, 40 vols., New York, 1848 • Washington Irving: Representative Selections, ed. H. A. Pochmann, Cincinnati, 1934 • P. M. Irving, The Life and Letters of Washington Irving, 4 vols., New York, 1862-1864 • S. T. Williams, The Life of Washington Irving, 2 vols., New York, 1935 • Van Wyck Brooks, The World of Washington Irving, New York, 1944

From

A History of New York By Diedrich Knickerbocker

Soon after the conclusion of the **Salmagundi** series in January 1808, Irving and his brother Peter planned to parody Samuel Latham Mitchill's **The Picture of New York** (1807) with a historical sketch, "followed by notices of the customs, manners, and institutions of the city; written in a serio-comic vein, and treating local errors, follies, and abuses with good-humored satire" ("The Author's Apology," in the 1848 edition). But Peter went to Europe, and in the spring of 1809, Washington Irving took up the task alone. First discarding the plan of a parody in favor of a comic history, he eventually confined himself to an account of the period of Dutch domination, in seven books. As he wrote, Irving discovered that the history of New York as a Dutch colony had never been adequately written, and he spent many hours with dusty books and manuscripts in the New York Historical Society and other libraries. Despite his humorous and satirical purposes, his account embodied fact as well as fiction, and, as he said in later life, his work provoked research into the forgotten archives of the province.

When, in October, he was ready to publish, he and his close friends devised a newspaper hoax to attract attention to the forthcoming book. An advertisement in the **Evening Post** announced that "a small elderly gentleman, dressed in an old black coat and cocked hat, by the name of KNICKERBOCKER," was missing from his lodgings; ten days later a letter to the same paper conveyed news of a person of this description seen on the Albany stage; in another ten days came the announcement that Mr. Knickerbocker had left a curious manuscript in his room at the Independent Hotel, which might be printed to pay Seth Handaside, the proprietor, for board and lodging. Thus, the **History** was published on December 6, 1809, with a dedication to the New York Historical Society and an account of the author signed by the fictitious Seth Handaside.

As Professor Williams has said, the **History** is without question "the most allusive of all American literary compositions written before 1825." Almost every page reflects Irving's wide reading of classical and English literature. He parodies or imitates Homer, Cervantes, Malory, Fielding, Sterne, Swift, and many other favorites; the work is, in effect, a patchwork quilt of references, echoes, burlesques. Footnotes cite all kinds of material, some of it created out of Irving's imagination; part of Irving's purpose was to poke fun at pompous learning. Sometimes, as in the selections from Book IV which follow, Irving indulges in thinly veiled political satire, similar to that of Swift's **Tale of a Tub** and **Gulliver's Travels**.

No one can read Irving's **History** without feeling its youthful, undisciplined, irreverent buoyancy; never again, perhaps, did he write so effortlessly and at the same time so artfully. The aping of various literary models is accomplished with such verve and evident pleasure that its occasional lack of restraint and proportion is easily forgiven. The book should be received as Irving wished it to be, "with good-humored indulgence," to "be thumbed and chuckled over by the family fireside." It is literary rather than native humor; it produces not belly laughs but appreciative smiles, and the more one reads of world literature the more smiles it offers.

BOOK IV

CONTAINING THE CHRONICLES OF THE REIGN OF WILLIAM THE TESTY

Chapter I

Showing the Nature of History in General; Containing Farthermore the Universal Acquirements of William The Testy, and How a Man May Learn So Much As To Render Himself Good for Nothing

When the lofty Thucydides is about to enter upon his description of the plague that desolated Athens, one of

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Text: the 1848 edition • **William the Testy,** i.e., William Kieft (1600?-1647), fifth director-general of New Netherland. For satirical purposes, Irving endowed Kieft with many characteristics which his readers were expected to recognize as Thomas Jefferson's • **1 Thucydides** (460?-400? B.C.), Greek historian, author of the classic account of the Peloponnesian War. The description of the plague appears in Bk. II. The "modern commentator" was evidently indebted to the comparison of Thucydides and Livy by René Rapin (1621-1687), a French Jesuit writer

his modern commentators assures the reader, that the history is now going to be exceeding solemn, serious, and pathetic; and hints, with that air of chuckling gratulation with which a good dame draws forth a choice morsel from a cupboard to regale a favorite, that this plague will give his history a most agreeable variety.

In like manner did my heart leap within me, when I came to the dolorous dilemma of Fort Goed Hoop, which I at once perceived to be the forerunner of a series of great events and entertaining disasters. Such are the true subjects for the historic pen. For what is history, in fact, but a kind of Newgate calendar, a register of the crimes and miseries that man has inflicted on his fellow-man? It is a huge libel on human nature, to which we industriously add page after page, volume after volume, as if we were building up a monument to the honor, rather than the infamy of our species. If we turn over the pages of these chronicles that man has written of himself, what are the characters dignified by the appellation of great, and held up to the admiration of posterity? Tyrants, robbers, conquerors, renowned only for the magnitude of their misdeeds, and the stupendous wrongs and miseries they have inflicted on mankind—warriors, who have hired themselves to the trade of blood, not from motives of virtuous patriotism, or to protect the injured and defenceless, but merely to gain the vaunted glory of being adroit and successful in massacring their fellow-beings! What are the great events that constitute a glorious era?—The fall of empires—the desolation of happy countries—splendid cities smoking in their ruins—the proudest works of art tumbled in the dust—the shrieks and groans of whole nations ascending unto heaven!

It is thus the historian may be said to thrive on the miseries of mankind, like birds of prey which hover over the field of battle, to fatten on the mighty dead. It was observed by a great projector of inland lock navigation, that rivers, lakes, and oceans were only formed to feed canals.—In like manner I am tempted to believe that plots, conspiracies, wars, victories, and massacres, are ordained by Providence only as food for the historian.

It is a source of great delight to the philosopher, in studying the wonderful economy of nature, to trace the mutual dependencies of things, how they are created reciprocally for each other, and how the most noxious and apparently unnecessary animal has its uses. Thus those swarms of flies, which are so often execrated as useless vermin, are created for the sustenance of spiders—and spiders, on the other hand, are evidently made to devour flies. So those heroes who have been such scourges to the world, were bounteously provided as themes for the poet and historian, while the poet and the historian were destined to record the achievements of heroes!

These, and many similar reflections, naturally arose in my mind, as I took up my pen to commence the reign of William Kieft; for now the stream of our history, which hitherto has rolled in a tranquil current, is about to depart forever from its peaceful haunts, and brawl through many a turbulent and rugged scene.

As some sleek ox, sunk in the rich repose of a clover-field, dozing and chewing the cud, will bear repeated blows before it raises itself; so the province of Nieuw Nederlandts, having waxed fat under the drowsy reign of the Doubter, needed cuffs and kicks to rouse it into action. The reader will now witness the manner in which a peaceful community advances towards a state of war; which is apt to be like the approach of a horse to a drum, with much prancing and little progress, and too often with the wrong end foremost.

Wilhelmus Kieft, who, in 1634, ascended the gubernatorial chair (to borrow a favorite though clumsy appellation of modern phraseologists), was of a lofty descent, his father being inspector of wind-mills in the ancient town of Saardam; and our hero, we are told, when a boy, made very curious investigations into the nature and operation of these machines, which was one

9 **Fort Goed Hoop**, or Fort Hope, a Dutch outpost established in 1633 near the present site of Hartford, Connecticut • 13 **Newgate calendar**, **The Newgate Calendar, or Malefactors' Bloody Register** (c. 1774; second series, c. 1826), a record of famous English crimes and criminals • 38 **projector**, promoter. Irving was probably echoing current discussion of the Erie Canal scheme, for which a survey had been ordered in 1808 • 68 **the Doubter**, Wouter van Twiller (1580?-1646?), a director-general of New Netherland, to whom Irving had devoted Bk. III of the **History** • 74 **1634**, a disputed date. Kieft actually arrived in 1637 or 1638 • 78 **Saardam**, modern Zaandam, a village a few miles from Amsterdam, in northern Holland

reason why he afterwards came to be so ingenious a governor. His name, according to the most authentic etymologists, was a corruption of Kyver, that is to say, a *wrangler* or *scolder;* and expressed the characteristic of his family, which, for nearly two centuries, had kept the windy town of Saardam in hot water, and produced more tartars and brimstones than any ten families in the place; and so truly did he inherit this family peculiarity, that he had not been a year in the government of the province, before he was universally denominated William the Testy. His appearance answered to his name. He was a brisk, wiry, waspish little old gentleman; such a one as may now and then be seen stumping about our city in a broad-skirted coat with huge buttons, a cocked hat stuck on the back of his head, and a cane as high as his chin. His face was broad, but his features were sharp; his cheeks were scorched into a dusky red, by two fiery little gray eyes; his nose turned up, and the corners of his mouth turned down, pretty much like the muzzle of an irritable pug-dog.

I have heard it observed by a profound adept in human physiology, that if a woman waxes fat with the progress of years, her tenure of life is somewhat precarious, but if haply she withers as she grows old, she lives forever. Such promised to be the case with William the Testy, who grew tough in proportion as he dried. He had withered, in fact, not through the process of years, but through the tropical fervor of his soul, which burnt like a vehement rush-light in his bosom; inciting him to incessant broils and bickerings. Ancient traditions speak much of his learning, and of the gallant inroads he had made into the dead languages, in which he had made captive a host of Greek nouns and Latin verbs; and brought off rich booty in ancient saws and apothegms; which he was wont to parade in his public harangues, as a triumphant general of yore, his *spolia opima.* Of metaphysics he knew enough to confound all hearers and himself into the bargain. In logic, he knew the whole family of syllogisms and dilemmas, and was so proud of his skill that he never suffered even a self-evident fact to pass unargued. It was observed, however, that he seldom got into an argument without getting into a perplexity, and then into a passion with his adversary for not being convinced gratis.

He had, moreover, skirmished smartly on the frontiers of several of the sciences, was fond of experimental philosophy, and prided himself upon inventions of all kinds. His abode, which he had fixed at a Bowerie or country-seat at a short distance from the city, just at what is now called Dutch-street, soon abounded with proofs of his ingenuity: patent smoke-jacks that required a horse to work them; Dutch ovens that roasted meat without fire; carts that went before the horses; weathercocks that turned against the wind; and other wrongheaded contrivances that astonished and confounded all beholders. The house, too, was beset with paralytic cats and dogs, the subject of his experimental philosophy; and the yelling and yelping of the latter unhappy victims of science, while aiding in the pursuit of knowledge, soon gained for the place the name of "Dog's Misery," by which it continues to be known even at the present day.

It is in knowledge as in swimming; he who flounders and splashes on the surface, makes more noise, and attracts more attention, than the pearl-diver who quietly dives in quest of treasures to the bottom. The vast acquirements of the new governor were the theme of marvel among the simple burghers of New Amsterdam; he figured about the place as learned a man as a Bonze at Pekin, who has mastered one half of the Chinese alphabet: and was unanimously pronounced a "universal genius!"

I have known in my time many a genius of this stamp; but, to speak my mind freely, I never knew one who, for the ordinary purposes of life, was worth his weight in straw. In this respect, a little sound judgment and plain common sense is worth all the sparkling genius that ever wrote poetry or invented theories. Let us see how the universal acquirements of William the Testy aided him in the affairs of government.

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7 **tartars and brimstones**, intractable and scolding women • 36 **spolia opima**, the richest spoils • 49 **Bowerie**, hence the street known as The Bowery, paralleling Broadway on the east in lower Manhattan. The estate is usually identified as Peter Stuyvesant's rather than as Kieft's • 52 **smoke-jacks**, spits for roasting meat, propelled by hot air ascending in the chimney and turning a flywheel placed there. The paragraph is a thrust at Jefferson's fondness for "gadgets" of all kinds • 70 **Bonze**, a Buddhist priest

Chapter II

How William the Testy Undertook to Conquer by Proclamation—How He Was A Great Man Abroad, but a Little Man In His Own House

No sooner had this bustling little potentate been blown by a whiff of fortune into the seat of government than he called his council together to make them a speech on the state of affairs.

Caius Gracchus, it is said, when he harangued the Roman populace, modulated his tone by an oratorical flute or pitch-pipe; Wilhelmus Kieft, not having such an instrument at hand, availed himself of that musical organ or trump which nature has implanted in the midst of a man's face; in other words, he preluded his address by a sonorous blast of the nose; a preliminary flourish much in vogue among public orators.

He then commenced by expressing his humble sense of his utter unworthiness of the high post to which he had been appointed; which made some of the simple burghers wonder why he undertook it, not knowing that it is a point of etiquette with a public orator never to enter upon office without declaring himself unworthy to cross the threshold. He then proceeded in a manner highly classic and erudite to speak of government generally, and of the governments of ancient Greece in particular; together with the wars of Rome and Carthage; and the rise and fall of sundry outlandish empires which the worthy burghers had never read nor heard of. Having thus, after the manner of your learned orator, treated of things in general, he came, by a natural, roundabout transition, to the matter in hand, namely, the daring aggressions of the Yankees.

As my readers are well aware of the advantage a potentate has of handling his enemies as he pleases in his speeches and bulletins, where he has the talk all on his own side, they may rest assured that William the Testy did not let such an opportunity escape of giving the Yankees what is called "a taste of his quality." In speaking of their inroads into the territories of their High Mightinesses, he compared them to the Gauls who desolated Rome; the Goths and Vandals who overran the fairest plains of Europe; but when he came to speak of the unparalleled audacity with which they of Weathersfield had advanced their patches up to the very walls of Fort Goed Hoop, and threatened to smother the garrison in onions, tears of rage started into his eyes, as though he nosed the very offense in question.

Having thus wrought up his tale to a climax, he assumed a most belligerent look, and assured the council that he had devised an instrument, potent in its effects, and which he trusted would soon drive the Yankees from the land. So saying, he thrust his hand into one of the deep pockets of his broad-skirted coat and drew forth, not an infernal machine, but an instrument in writing, which he laid with great emphasis upon the table.

The burghers gazed at it for a time in silent awe, as a wary housewife does at a gun, fearful it may go off half-cocked. The document in question had a sinister look, it is true; it was crabbed in text, and from a broad red ribbon dangled the great seal of the province, about the size of a buckwheat pancake. Still, after all, it was but an instrument in writing. Herein, however, existed the wonder of the invention. The document in question was a PROCLAMATION, ordering the Yankees to depart instantly from the territories of their High Mightinesses under pain of suffering all the forfeitures and punishments in such case made and provided. It was on the moral effect of this formidable instrument that Wilhelmus Kieft calculated; pledging his valor as a governor that, once fulminated against the Yankees, it would, in less than two months, drive every mother's son of them across the borders.

The council broke up in perfect wonder, and nothing was talked of for some time among the old men and women of New Amsterdam but the vast genius of the governor, and his new and cheap mode of fighting by proclamation.

As to Wilhelmus Kieft, having dispatched his proclamation to the frontiers, he put on his cocked hat and corduroy small-clothes, and mounting a tall raw-boned charger, trotted out to his rural retreat of Dog's Misery.

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5 **Caius Gracchus** (159-121 B.C.), Roman statesman and orator • 13 **commenced.** Compare with the **First Inaugural** (p. 389) and other messages by Jefferson • 40 **Weathersfield,** now Wethersfield, a suburb of Hartford. It is still famous for market-gardening • 60 **Proclamation,** a hit at Jefferson's effort to counter the British blockade and Napoleon's "continental system" by orders that the belligerents cease interfering with American shipping

Here, like the good Numa, he reposed from the toils of state, taking lessons in government, not from the nymph Egeria, but from the honored wife of his bosom; who was one of that class of females sent upon the earth a little after the flood, as a punishment for the sins of mankind, and commonly known by the appellation of *knowing women.* In fact, my duty as an historian obliges me to make known a circumstance which was a great secret at the time, and consequently was not a subject of scandal at more than half the tea-tables in New Amsterdam, but which, like many other great secrets, has leaked out in the lapse of years—and this was, that Wilhelmus the Testy, though one of the most potent little men that ever breathed, yet submitted at home to a species of government, neither laid down in Aristotle nor Plato; in short, it partook of the nature of a pure, unmixed tyranny, and is familiarly denominated *petticoat government.*—An absolute sway, which, although exceedingly common in these modern days, was very rare among the ancients, if we may judge from the rout made about the domestic economy of honest Socrates; which is the only ancient case on record.

The great Kieft, however, warded off all the sneers and sarcasms of his particular friends, who are ever ready to joke with a man on sore points of the kind, by alleging that it was a government of his own election, to which he submitted through choice; adding at the same time a profound maxim which he had found in an ancient author, that "he who would aspire to *govern,* should first learn to *obey.*"

BOOK V

CONTAINING THE FIRST PART OF THE REIGN OF PETER STUYVESANT, AND HIS TROUBLES WITH THE AMPHICTYONIC COUNCIL

Chapter I

In Which the Death of a Great Man Is Shown To Be No Very Inconsolable Matter of Sorrow—And How Peter Stuyvesant Acquired a Great Name from the Uncommon Strength of his Head

To a profound philosopher like myself, who am apt to see clear through a subject, where the penetration of ordinary people extends but half way, there is no fact more simple and manifest than that the death of a great man is a matter of very little importance. Much as we may think of ourselves, and much as we may excite the empty plaudits of the million, it is certain that the greatest among us do actually fill but an exceeding small space in the world; and it is equally certain, that even that small space is quickly supplied when we leave it vacant. "Of what consequence is it," said Pliny, "that individuals appear, or make their exit? the world is a theatre whose scenes and actors are continually changing." Never did philosopher speak more correctly, and I only wonder that so wise a remark could have existed so many ages, and mankind not have laid it more to heart. Sage follows on in the footsteps of sage; one hero just steps out of his triumphal car, to make way for the hero who comes after him; and of the proudest monarch, it is merely said that "he slept with his fathers, and his successor reigned in his stead."

The world, to tell the private truth, cares but little for their loss, and if left to itself would soon forget to grieve; and though a nation has often been figuratively drowned in tears on the death of a great man, yet it is ten to one if an individual tear has been shed on the occasion, excepting from the forlorn pen of some hungry author. It is the historian, the biographer, and the poet, who have the whole burden of grief to sustain; who—kind souls!—like undertakers in England, act the part of chief mourners—who inflate a nation with sighs it never heaved, and deluge it with tears it never dreamt of shedding. Thus, while the patriotic author is weeping and howling, in prose, in blank verse, and in rhyme, and collecting the drops of public sorrow into his volume, as into a lachrymal vase, it is more than probable his

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1 Numa . . . Egeria. Numa Pompilius (eighth century B.C.), successor to Romulus as legendary king of Rome, was supposed to have been instructed in the foundation of the Roman religion by Egeria, goddess of fountains and childbirth, who loved him • **15 Aristotle nor Plato,** whose **Politics** and **The Republic,** respectively, are the most important Greek works on political philosophy • **20 rout,** noise • **21 Socrates,** whose wife, Xanthippe, was the most famous shrew of antiquity • **28 maxim.** The sentence appears in the **Laws** of Solon and of Plato • **Amphictyonic,** relating to the league of Greek city-states centered around the sanctuaries of Apollo at Delphi and Demeter, near Thermopylae • **Peter Stuyvesant** (1592-1672), a director-general of New Netherland • **41 Pliny,** probably Pliny the Younger (62-113), author of a series of letters • **66 lachrymal vase,** a tiny vase in which the ancients collected tears of mourners, often to bury them with the corpse

fellow citizens are eating and drinking, fiddling and dancing, as utterly ignorant of the bitter lamentations made in their name, as are those men of straw, John Doe and Richard Roe, of the plaintiffs for whom they are generously pleased to become sureties.

The most glorious hero that ever desolated nations might have mouldered into oblivion among the rubbish of his own monument, did not some historian take him into favor, and benevolently transmit his name to posterity—and much as the valiant William Kieft worried, and bustled, and turmoiled, while he had the destinies of a whole colony in his hand, I question seriously whether he will not be obliged to this authentic history for all his future celebrity.

His exit occasioned no convulsion in the city of New Amsterdam nor its vicinity: the earth trembled not, neither did any stars shoot from their spheres—the heavens were not shrouded in black, as poets would fain persuade us they have been, on the death of a hero—the rocks (hard-hearted varlets!) melted not into tears, nor did the trees hang their heads in silent sorrow; and as to the sun, he lay a-bed the next night just as long, and showed as jolly a face when he rose, as he ever did on the same day of the month in any year, either before or since. The good people of New Amsterdam, one and all, declared that he had been a very busy, active, bustling little governor; that he was "the father of his country"—that he was "the noblest work of God"—that "he was a man, take him for all in all, they ne'er should look upon his like again"—together with sundry other civil and affectionate speeches regularly said on the death of all great men; after which they smoked their pipes, thought no more about him, and Peter Stuyvesant succeeded to his station.

Peter Stuyvesant was the last, and, like the renowned Wouter Van Twiller, the best of our ancient Dutch governors. Wouter having surpassed all who preceded him, and Peter, or Piet, as he was sociably called by the old Dutch burghers, who were ever prone to familiarize names, having never been equalled by any successor. He was in fact the very man fitted by nature to retrieve the desperate fortunes of her beloved province, had not the fates, those most potent and unrelenting of all ancient spinsters, destined them to inextricable confusion.

To say merely that he was a hero, would be doing him great injustice—he was in truth a combination of heroes—for he was of a sturdy, raw-boned make like Ajax Telamon, with a pair of round shoulders that Hercules would have given his hide for (meaning his lion's hide,) when he undertook to ease old Atlas of his load. He was, moreover, as Plutarch describes Coriolanus, not only terrible for the force of his arm, but likewise of his voice, which sounded as though it came out of a barrel; and, like the self-same warrior, he possessed a sovereign contempt for the sovereign people, and an iron aspect, which was enough of itself to make the very bowels of his adversaries quake with terror and dismay. All this martial excellency of appearance was inexpressibly heightened by an accidental advantage, with which I am surprised that neither Homer nor Virgil have graced any of their heroes. This was nothing less than a wooden leg, which was the only prize he had gained in bravely fighting the battles of his country, but of which he was so proud, that he was often heard to declare he valued it more than all his other limbs put together; indeed so highly did he esteem it, that he had it gallantly enchased and relieved with silver devices, which caused it to be related in divers histories and legends that he wore a silver leg.

Like that choleric warrior Achilles, he was somewhat subject to extempore bursts of passion, which were rather unpleasant to his favorites and attendants, whose perceptions he was apt to quicken, after the manner of his illustrious imitator, Peter the Great, by anointing their shoulders with his walking-staff.

Though I cannot find that he had read Plato, or Aristotle, or Hobbes, or Bacon, or Algernon Sydney, or Tom Paine, yet did he sometimes manifest a shrewdness and sagacity in his measures, that one would hardly expect

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3 **John Doe and Richard Roe,** fictitious figures in hypothetical law cases—an echo of Irving's legal studies • 48 **Ajax Telamon,** a Greek leader in the Trojan War, second only to Achilles in bravery, but conquered by Odysseus in the contest for the armor of Achilles • 51 **Plutarch.** See note, p. 250. The remark alluded to appears in his life of Coriolanus, a Roman hero of the fifth century B.C., at a point where Plutarch was actually quoting Cato's requirements for a soldier • 67 **enchased and relieved,** embossed and decorated • 69 **silver leg.** "See the histories of Masters Josselyn and Brome."—Irving. The references are to John Josselyn's **Account of Two Voyages to New-England** (1674) and Richard Blome's **Present State of His Majesty's Isles and Territories** (1687) • 74 **Peter the Great** (1672-1724), emperor of Russia, notorious for his brutality • 76 **Plato . . . Tom Paine,** all of whom wrote on political philosophy

from a man who did not know Greek, and had never studied the ancients. True it is, and I confess it with sorrow, that he had an unreasonable aversion to experiments, and was fond of governing his province after the simplest manner: but then he contrived to keep it in better order than did the erudite Kieft, though he had all the philosophers, ancient and modern, to assist and perplex him. I must likewise own that he made but very few laws; but then again he took care that those few were rigidly and impartially enforced: and I do not know but justice on the whole was as well administered as if there had been volumes of sage acts and statutes yearly made, and daily neglected and forgotten.

He was, in fact, the very reverse of his predecessors, being neither tranquil and inert, like Walter the Doubter, nor restless and fidgeting, like William the Testy; but a man, or rather a governor of such uncommon activity and decision of mind, that he never sought nor accepted the advice of others; depending bravely upon his single head as would a hero of yore upon his single arm, to carry him through all difficulties and dangers. To tell the simple truth, he wanted nothing more to complete him as a statesman than to think always right; for no one can say but that he always acted as he thought. He was never a man to flinch when he found himself in a scrape; but to dash forward through thick and thin, trusting, by hook or by crook, to make all things straight in the end. In a word, he possessed, in an eminent degree, that great quality in a statesman, called perseverance by the polite, but nicknamed obstinacy by the vulgar. A wonderful salve for official blunders; since he who perseveres in error without flinching, gets the credit of boldness and consistency, while he who wavers in seeking to do what is right gets stigmatized as a trimmer. This much is certain; and it is a maxim well worthy the attention of all legislators, great and small, who stand shaking in the wind, irresolute which way to steer, that a ruler who follows his own will pleases himself; while he who seeks to satisfy the wishes and whims of others runs great risk of pleasing nobody. There is nothing too like putting down one's foot resolutely, when in doubt, and letting things take their course. The clock that stands still points right twice in the four-and-twenty hours: while others may keep going continually and be continually going wrong.

Nor did this magnanimous quality escape the discernment of the good people of Nieuw Nederlands; on the contrary, so much were they struck with the independent will and vigorous resolution displayed on all occasions by their new governor, that they universally called him Hard-Koppig Piet; or Peter the Headstrong—a great compliment to the strength of his understanding.

If, from all that I have said, thou dost not gather, worthy reader, that Peter Stuyvesant was a tough, sturdy, valiant, weather-beaten, mettlesome, obstinate, leathern-sided, lion-hearted, generous-spirited old governor, either I have written to but little purpose, or thou art very dull at drawing conclusions.

This most excellent governor commenced his administration on the 29th of May, 1647; a remarkably stormy day, distinguished in all the almanacks of the time which have come down to us by the name of *Windy Friday.* As he was very jealous of his personal and official dignity, he was inaugurated into office with great ceremony; the goodly oaken chair of the renowned Wouter Van Twiller being carefully preserved for such occasions, in like manner as the chair and stone were reverentially preserved at Schone, in Scotland, for the coronation of the Caledonian monarchs.

I must not omit to mention that the tempestuous state of the elements, together with its being that unlucky day of the week termed "hanging day," did not fail to excite much grave speculation and divers very reasonable apprehensions among the more ancient and enlightened inhabitants; and several of the sager sex, who were reputed to be not a little skilled in the mystery of astrology and fortune-telling, did declare outright that they were omens of a disastrous administration—an event that came to be lamentably verified, and which proves, beyond dispute, the wisdom of attending to those preternatural intimations furnished by dreams and visions, the flying of birds, falling of stones, and cackling of geese, on which the sages and rulers of ancient times placed such reliance—or to those shooting of stars, eclipses of the moon, howlings of dogs, and flarings of candles, carefully noted and interpreted by the

34 trimmer, one who sacrifices principle to expediency • 68 Schone, or Scone, a Scottish town in whose abbey was preserved the Stone of Scone, or Stone of Destiny, on which Celtic kings are supposed to have been crowned. It was conveyed to London by Edward I, in 1296, and rests beneath the coronation chair in Westminster Abbey

oracular sibyls of our day; who, in my humble opinion, are the legitimate inheritors and preservers of the ancient science of divination. This much is certain, that Governor Stuyvesant succeeded to the chair of state at a turbulent period; when foes thronged and threatened from without; when anarchy and stiff-necked opposition reigned rampant within; when the authority of their High Mightinesses the Lords States General, though supported by economy and defended by speeches, protests, and proclamations, yet tottered to its very centre; and when the great city of New Amsterdam, though fortified by flagstaffs, trumpeters, and wind-mills, seemed, like some fair lady of easy virtue, to lie open to attack, and ready to yield to the first invader.

BOOK VI

CONTAINING THE SECOND PART OF THE REIGN OF PETER THE HEADSTRONG, AND HIS GALLANT ACHIEVEMENTS ON THE DELAWARE

Chapter VII

Showing the Great Advantage That the Author Has over His Reader in Time of Battle—Together with Divers Portentous Movements; Which Betoken That Something Terrible Is About To Happen

Like as a mighty alderman, when at a corporation feast the first spoonful of turtle-soup salutes his palate, feels his appetite but tenfold quickened, and redoubles his vigorous attacks upon the tureen; while his projecting eyes roll greedily round, devouring everything at table—so did the mettlesome Peter Stuyvesant feel that hunger for martial glory, which raged within his bowels, inflamed by the capture of Fort Casimir, and nothing could allay it but the conquest of all New Sweden. No sooner, therefore, had he secured his conquest, than he stumped resolutely on, flushed with success, to gather fresh laurels at Fort Christina.

This was the grand Swedish post, established on a small river (or, as it is improperly termed, creek) of the same name; and here that crafty governor Jan Risingh lay grimly drawn up, like a gray-bearded spider in the citadel of his web.

But before we hurry into the direful scenes which must attend the meeting of two such potent chieftains, it is advisable to pause for a moment, and hold a kind of warlike council. Battles should not be rushed into precipitately by the historian and his readers, any more than by the general and his soldiers. The great commanders of antiquity never engaged the enemy without previously preparing the minds of their followers by animating harangues; spiriting them up to heroic deeds assuring them of the protection of the gods, and inspiring them with a confidence in the prowess of their leaders. So the historian should awaken the attention and enlist the passions of his readers; and having set them all on fire with the importance of his subject, he should put himself at their head, flourish his pen, and lead them on to the thickest of the fight.

An illustrious example of this rule may be seen in that mirror of historians, the immortal Thucydides. Having arrived at the breaking out of the Peloponnesian war, one of his commentators observes that "he sounds the charge in all the disposition and spirit of Homer. He catalogues the allies on both sides. He awakens our expectations, and fast engages our attention. All mankind are concerned in the important point now going to be decided. Endeavors are made to disclose futurity. Heaven itself is interested in the dispute. The earth totters, and nature seems to labor with the great event. This is his solemn, sublime manner of setting out. Thus he magnifies a war between two, as Rapin styles them, petty states; and thus artfully he supports a little subject by treating it in a great and noble method."

In like manner, having conducted my readers into the very teeth of peril—having followed the adventurous Peter and his band into foreign regions—surrounded by foes, and stunned by the horrid din of arms—at this important moment, while darkness and doubt hang o'er each coming chapter, I hold it meet to harangue them, and prepare them for the events that are to follow.

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8 the Lords . . . General, the legislature of the Netherlands • **22 Fort Casimir,** a small post established by the Dutch in 1651 on the Delaware River near the present site of New Castle. Surrendered to the Swedes in 1654, it was recaptured by Stuyvesant and his forces in 1655 • **26 Fort Christina.** "At present a flourishing town, called Christiana, or Christeen, about thirty-seven miles from Philadelphia, on the post-road to Baltimore."—Irving. This fort, established in 1638, is usually said to have been at Wilmington • **29 Jan Risingh,** Johan Classon Rising (1617-1672), director-general of New Sweden, 1654-1655

And here I would premise one great advantage which, as historian, I possess over my reader; and this it is, that though I cannot save the life of my favorite hero, nor absolutely contradict the event of a battle (both which liberties, though often taken by the French writers of the present reign, I hold to be utterly unworthy of a scrupulous historian), yet I can now and then make him bestow on his enemy a sturdy back-stroke sufficient to fell a giant; though, in honest truth, he may never have done anything of the kind—or I can drive his antagonist clear round and round the field, as did Homer make that fine fellow Hector scamper like a poltroon round the walls of Troy; for which, if ever they have encountered one another in the Elysian fields, I'll warrant the prince of poets has had to make the most humble apology.

I am aware that many conscientious readers will be ready to cry out "foul play!" whenever I render a little assistance to my hero—but I consider it one of those privileges exercised by historians of all ages—and one which has never been disputed. An historian is, in fact, as it were, bound in honor to stand by his hero—the fame of the latter is intrusted to his hands, and it is his duty to do the best by it he can. Never was there a general, an admiral, or any other commander, who, in giving account of any battle he had fought, did not sorely belabor the enemy; and I have no doubt that, had my heroes written the history of their own achievements, they would have dealt much harder blows than any that I shall recount. Standing forth, therefore, as the guardian of their fame, it behooves me to do them the same justice they would have done themselves; and if I happen to be a little hard upon the Swedes, I give free leave to any of their descendants, who may write a story of the State of Delaware, to take fair retaliation, and belabor Peter Stuyvesant as hard as they please.

Therefore stand by for broken heads and bloody noses! —My pen hath long itched for a battle—siege after siege have I carried on without blows or bloodshed; but now I have at length got a chance, and I vow to Heaven and St. Nicholas, that, let the chronicles of the times say what they please, neither Sallust, Livy, Tacitus, Polybius, nor any other historian, did ever record a fiercer fight than that in which my valiant chieftains are now about to engage.

And you, oh most excellent readers, whom, for your faithful adherence, I could cherish in the warmest corner of my heart—be not uneasy—trust the fate of our favorite Stuyvesant with me—for by the rood, come what may, I'll stick by Hardkoppig Piet to the last. I'll make him drive about these losels vile, as did the renowned Launcelot of the Lake a herd of recreant Cornish knights—and if he does fall, let me never draw my pen to fight another battle in behalf of a brave man, if I don't make these lubberly Swedes pay for it!

No sooner had Peter Stuyvesant arrived at Fort Christina than he proceeded without delay to intrench himself, and immediately on running his first parallel, dispatched Antony Van Corlear to summon the fortress to surrender. Van Corlear was received with all due formality, hoodwinked at the portal, and conducted through a pestiferous smell of salt fish and onions to the citadel, a substantial hut built of pine logs. His eyes were here uncovered, and he found himself in the august presence of Governor Risingh. This chieftain, as I have before noted, was a very giantly man; and was clad in a coarse blue coat, strapped round the waist with a leathern belt, which caused the enormous skirts and pockets to set off with a very warlike sweep. His ponderous legs were cased in a pair of foxy-colored jackboots, and he was straddling in the attitude of the Colossus of Rhodes before a bit of broken looking-glass, shaving himself with a villanously dull razor. This afflicting operation caused him to make a series of horrible grimaces, which heightened exceedingly the grisly terrors of his visage. On Antony Van Corlear's being announced, the grim commander paused for a moment, in the midst of one of his most hard-favored contortions, and after eying him askance over the

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41 **Sallust . . . Polybius**, ancient historians. Polybius was a Greek, the others Romans • 50 **losels**, worthless fellows (archaic) • 50 **Launcelot . . . Lake**, an echo of the *Morte d'Arthur* by Sir Thomas Malory (fl. 1470). The "driving about" of Cornish knights occurs chiefly in Bk. IX • 58 **Antony Van Corlear**, or Van Curler, a figure more renowned in folklore than in history. As governor's trumpeter, he is supposed by Irving to have given his name to Anthony's Nose, a mountain across the Hudson from West Point, and to have died in 1664 on a mission from Stuyvesant. Sent to arouse the Dutch colonists to their danger from the British, he discovered that the creek separating Manhattan from the Bronx was swollen by rains. Swearing to swim it "en spuyt den Duyvil," he started out, but was seized halfway across by the Devil. He freed himself once by a blast on his trumpet, but the Devil, recovering from surprise, dragged him down. Hence the name Spuyten Duyvil Creek • 70 **Colossus of Rhodes**, a statue of Apollo over one hundred feet high which in ancient times stood astride the entrance to the harbor of that Aegean island

shoulder, with a kind of snarling grin on his countenance, resumed his labors at the glass.

This iron harvest being reaped, he turned once more to the trumpeter, and demanded the purport of his errand. Antony Van Corlear delivered in a few words, being a kind of short-hand speaker, a long message from his excellency, recounting the whole history of the province, with a recapitulation of grievances, and enumeration of claims, and concluding with a peremptory demand of instant surrender; which done, he turned aside, took his nose between his thumb and fingers, and blew a tremendous blast, not unlike the flourish of a trumpet of defiance—which it had doubtless learned from a long and intimate neighborhood with the melodious instrument.

Governor Risingh heard him through, trumpet and all, but with infinite impatience; leaning at times, as was his usual custom, on the pommel of his sword, and at times twirling a huge steel watch-chain, or snapping his fingers. Van Corlear having finished, he bluntly replied, that Peter Stuyvesant and his summons might go to the d......l, whither he hoped to send him and his crew of ragamuffins before supper-time. Then unsheathing his brass-hilted sword, and throwing away the scabbard—" 'Fore gad," quod he, "but I will not sheathe thee again until I make a scabbard of the smoke-dried leathern hide of this runagate Dutchman." Then having flung a fierce defiance in the teeth of his adversary by the lips of his messenger, the latter was reconducted to the portal, with all the ceremonious civility due to the trumpeter, squire, and ambassador of so great a commander; and being again unblinded, was courteously dismissed with a tweak of the nose, to assist him in recollecting his message.

No sooner did the gallant Peter receive this insolent reply than he let fly a tremendous volley of red-hot execrations, which would infallibly have battered down the fortifications, and blown up the powder magazine about the ears of the fiery Swede, had not the ramparts been remarkably strong, and the magazine bomb-proof. Perceiving that the works withstood this terrific blast, and that it was utterly impossible (as it really was in those unphilosophic days) to carry on a war with words, he ordered his merry men all to prepare for an immediate assault. But here a strange murmur broke out among his troops, beginning with the tribe of the Van Bummels, those valiant trenchermen of the Bronx, and spreading from man to man, accompanied with certain mutinous looks and discontented murmurs. For once in his life, and only for once, did the great Peter turn pale, for he verily thought his warriors were going to falter in this hour of perilous trial, and thus to tarnish forever the fame of the province of New Netherlands.

But soon did he discover, to his great joy, that in his suspicion he deeply wronged his most undaunted army; for the cause of this agitation and uneasiness simply was, that the hour of dinner was at hand, and it would have almost broken the hearts of these regular Dutch warriors to have broken in upon the invariable routine of their habits. Besides, it was an established rule among our ancestors always to fight upon a full stomach; and to this may be doubtless attributed the circumstance that they came to be so renowned in arms.

And now are the hearty men of the Manhattoes, and their no less hearty comrades, all lustily engaged under the trees, buffeting stoutly with the contents of their wallets, and taking such affectionate embraces of their canteens and pottles, as though they verily believed they were to be the last. And as I foresee we shall have hot work in a page or two, I advise my readers to do the same, for which purpose I will bring this chapter to a close; giving them my word of honor, that no advantage shall be taken of this armistice to surprise, or in any wise molest, the honest Nederlanders, while at their vigorous repast.

Chapter VIII

Containing the Most Horrible Battle Ever Recorded in Poetry or Prose; With the Admirable Exploits of Peter the Headstrong

"Now had the Dutchmen snatched a huge repast," and finding themselves wonderfully encouraged and animated thereby, prepared to take the field. Expectation, says the writer of the Stuyvesant manuscript—Expectation now

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25 runagate, vagabond • **45 trenchermen,** hearty eaters • **62 Manhattoes,** the inhabitants of Manhattan. The origin of the name, spelled variously as Monados, Manados, Mantoes, and Manhates, is obscure; one theory is that it came from the Spanish "monados," drunken men • **66 pottles,** two-quart tankards (obsolete) • **77 Stuyvesant manuscript,** described in Irving's Preface as "an elaborate manuscript written in exceeding pure and classic low Dutch, excepting a few errors in orthography, which was found in the archives of the Stuyvesant family." It is apparently one of Irving's few fictitious authorities

stood on stilts. The world forgot to turn round, or rather stood still, that it might witness the affray; like a round-bellied alderman, watching the combat of two chivalrous flies upon his jerkin. The eyes of all mankind, as usual in such cases, were turned upon Fort Christina. The sun, like a little man in a crowd at a puppet-show, scampered about the heavens, popping his head here and there, and endeavoring to get a peep between the unmannerly clouds that obtruded themselves in his way. The historians filled their ink-horns—the poets went without their dinners, either that they might buy paper and goose-quills, or because they could not get anything to eat. Antiquity scowled sulkily out of its grave, to see itself outdone—while even Posterity stood mute, gazing in gaping ecstasy of retrospection on the eventful field.

The immortal deities, who whilom had seen service at the "affair" of Troy—now mounted their feather-bed clouds, and sailed over the plain, or mingled among the combatants in different disguises, all itching to have a finger in the pie. Jupiter sent off his thunderbolt to a noted coppersmith, to have it furbished up for the direful occasion. Venus vowed by her chastity to patronize the Swedes, and in semblance of a blear-eyed trull paraded the battlements of Fort Christina, accompanied by Diana, as a sergeant's widow, of cracked reputation. The noted bully, Mars, stuck two horse-pistols into his belt, shouldered a rusty firelock, and gallantly swaggered at their elbow, as a drunken corporal—while Apollo trudged in their rear, as a bandy-legged fifer, playing most villanously out of tune.

On the other side, the ox-eyed Juno, who had gained a pair of black eyes over night, in one of her curtain lectures with old Jupiter, displayed her haughty beauties on a baggage-wagon—Minerva, as a brawny gin-suttler, tucked up her skirts, brandished her fists, and swore most heroically, in exceeding bad Dutch (having but lately studied the language,) by way of keeping up the spirits of the soldiers; while Vulcan halted as a club-footed blacksmith, lately promoted to be a captain of militia. All was silent awe, or bustling preparation: war reared his horrid front, gnashed loud his iron fangs, and shook his direful crest of bristling bayonets.

And now the mighty chieftains marshalled out their hosts. Here stood stout Risingh, firm as a thousand rocks—incrusted with stockades, and intrenched to the chin in mud batteries. His valiant soldiery lined the breastwork in grim array, each having his mustachios fiercely greased, and his hair pomatumed back, and queued so stiffly, that he grinned above the ramparts like a grisly death's head.

There came on the intrepid Peter—his brows knit, his teeth set, his fists clenched, almost breathing forth volumes of smoke, so fierce was the fire that raged within his bosom. His faithful squire Van Corlear trudged valiantly at his heels, with his trumpet gorgeously bedecked with red and yellow ribbons, the remembrances of his fair mistresses at the Manhattoes. Then came waddling on the sturdy chivalry of the Hudson. There were the Van Wycks, and the Van Dycks, and the Ten Eycks—the Van Nesses, the Van Tassels, the Van Grolls; the Van Hoesens, the Van Giesons and the Van Blarcoms—the Van Warts, the Van Winkles, the Van Dams; the Van Pelts, the Van Rippers, and the Van Brunts. There were the Van Hornes, the Van Hooks, the Van Bunschotens; the Van Gelders, the Van Arsdales, and the Van Bummels; the Vander Belts, the Vander Hoofs, the Vander Voorts, the Vander Lyns, the Vander Pools, and the Vander Spiegles—then came the Hoffmans, the Hooghlands, the Hoppers, the Cloppers, the Ryckmans, the Dyckmans, the Hogebooms, the Rosebooms, the Oothouts, the Quackenbosses, the Roerbacks, the Garrebrantzes, the Bensons, the Brouwers, the Waldrons, the Onderdonks, the Varra Vangers, the Schermerhorns, the Stoutenburghs, the Brinkerhoffs, the Bontecous, the Knickerbockers, the Hockstrassers, the Ten Breecheses and the Tough Breecheses, with a host more of worthies, whose names are too crabbed to be written, or if they could be written, it would be impossible for man to utter—all fortified with a mighty dinner, and, to use the words of a great Dutch poet,

"Brimful of wrath and cabbage."

For an instant the mighty Peter paused in the midst of his career, and mounting on a stump, addressed his troops in eloquent Low Dutch, exhorting them to fight like *duyvels,* and assuring them that if they conquered, they should get plenty of booty—if they fell, they should be allowed the satisfaction, while dying, of reflecting that it was in the service of their country—and after they were

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17 **the "affair" of Troy.** In this and the following paragraph Irving burlesques Bk. V of Homer's Iliad • 34 **gin-suttler,** gin-selling camp-follower • 48 **pomatumed,** smoothed with pomatum, a scented ointment • 58 **Van Wycks, etc.** See the catalogue of ships in Bk. I of the Iliad

dead, of seeing their names inscribed in the temple of renown, and handed down, in company with all the other great men of the year, for the admiration of posterity.—Finally, he swore to them, on the word of a governor (and they knew him too well to doubt it for a moment), that if he caught any mother's son of them looking pale, or playing craven, he would curry his hide till he made him run out of it like a snake in spring time. Then lugging out his trusty sabre, he brandished it three times over his head, ordered Van Corlear to sound a charge, and shouting the words "St. Nicholas and the Manhattoes!" courageously dashed forwards. His warlike followers, who had employed the interval in lighting their pipes, instantly stuck them into their mouths, gave a furious puff, and charged gallantly under cover of the smoke.

The Swedish garrison, ordered by the cunning Risingh not to fire until they could distinguish the whites of their assailants' eyes, stood in horrid silence on the covert-way, until the eager Dutchmen had ascended the glacis. Then did they pour into them such a tremendous volley, that the very hills quaked around, and were terrified even unto an incontinence of water, insomuch that certain springs burst forth from their sides, which continue to run unto the present day. Not a Dutchman but would have bitten the dust beneath that dreadful fire, had not the protecting Minerva kindly taken care that the Swedes should, one and all, observe their usual custom of shutting their eyes and turning away their heads at the moment of discharge.

The Swedes followed up their fire by leaping the counterscarp, and falling tooth and nail upon the foe with furious outcries. And now might be seen prodigies of valor, unmatched in history or song. Here was the sturdy Stoffel Brinkerhoff brandishing his quarter-staff, like the giant Blanderon his oak tree (for he scorned to carry any other weapon), and drumming a horrific tune upon the hard heads of the Swedish soldiery. There were the Van Kortlandts, posted at a distance, like the Locrian archers of yore, and plying it most potently with the longbow, for which they were so justly renowned. On a rising knoll were gathered the valiant men of Sing-Sing, assisting marvellously in the fight, by chanting the great song of St. Nicholas; but as to the Gardeniers of Hudson, they were absent on a marauding party, laying waste the neighboring watermelon patches.

In a different part of the field were the Van Grolls of Antony's Nose, struggling to get to the thickest of the fight, but horribly perplexed in a defile between two hills, by reason of the length of their noses. So also the Van Bunschotens of Nyack and Kakiat, so renowned for kicking with the left foot, were brought to a stand for want of wind, in consequence of the hearty dinner they had eaten, and would have been put to utter rout but for the arrival of a gallant corps of voltigeurs, composed of the Hoppers, who advanced nimbly to their assistance on one foot. Nor must I omit to mention the valiant achievements of Antony Van Corlear, who, for a good quarter of an hour, waged stubborn fight with a little pursy Swedish drummer; whose hide he drummed most magnificently, and whom he would infallibly have annihilated on the spot, but that he had come into the battle with no other weapon but his trumpet.

But now the combat thickened.—On came the mighty Jacobus Varra Vanger and the fighting men of the Wallabout; after them thundered the Van Pelts of Esopus, together with the Van Rippers and the Van Brunts, bearing down all before them—then the Suy Dams, and the Van Dams, pressing forward with many a blustering oath, at the head of the warriors of Hell-gate, clad in their thunder and lightning gaberdines; and lastly, the standard-bearers and body-guard of Peter Stuyvesant, bearing the great beaver of the Manhattoes.

And now commenced the horrid din, the desperate struggle, the maddening ferocity, the frantic desperation, the confusion and self-abandonment of war. Dutchman and Swede commingled, tugged, panted, and blowed. The heavens were darkened with a tempest of missives. Bang! went the guns—whack! went the broad-swords—thump! went the cudgels—crash! went the musket-stocks—blows—kicks—cuffs—scratches—black eyes and bloody noses swelling the horrors of the scene! Thick thwack, cut and hack, helter-skelter, higgledy-piggledy, hurly-burly, head over heels, rough and tumble!—Dunder and blixum! swore the Dutchmen—splitter and splutter! cried the

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18 covert-way . . . glacis. Irving's familiarity with the scientific terms of military fortification was probably derived from one of his favorite books, Tristram Shandy. (See note, p. 489.) The covert-way is a covered passage in the counterscarp, or outer wall of a trench; the glacis is the open slope in front of that wall • **35 the giant Blanderon,** a name apparently invented by Irving. Perhaps he had in mind the giants of Greek mythology who revolted against Jupiter, using tree trunks for weapons • **38 Locrian archers.** The Locrians were the most ancient of Greek peoples • **54 voltigeurs,** members of a special skirmishing company attached to a French infantry regiment (obsolete)

Swedes—Storm the works! shouted Hardkoppig Peter—Fire the mine! roared stout Risingh—Tanta-rarra-ra! twanged the trumpet of Antony Van Corlear—until all voice and sound became unintelligible—grunts of pain, yells of fury, and shouts of triumph mingling in one hideous clamor. The earth shook as if struck with a paralytic stroke—trees shrunk aghast, and withered at the sight—rocks burrowed in the ground like rabbits—and even Christina creek turned from its course, and ran up a hill in breathless terror!

Long hung the contest doubtful, for though a heavy shower of rain, sent by the "cloud-compelling Jove," in some measure cooled their ardor, as doth a bucket of water thrown on a group of fighting mastiffs, yet did they but pause for a moment, to return with tenfold fury to the charge. Just at this juncture a vast and dense column of smoke was seen slowly rolling toward the scene of battle. The combatants paused for a moment, gazing in mute astonishment, until the wind, dispelling the murky cloud, revealed the flaunting banner of Michael Paw, the Patroon of Communipaw. That valiant chieftain came fearlessly on at the head of a phalanx of oyster-fed Pavonians and a corps de reserve of the Van Arsdales and Van Bummels, who had remained behind to digest the enormous dinner they had eaten. These now trudged manfully forward, smoking their pipes with outrageous vigor, so as to raise the awful cloud that has been mentioned; but marching exceedingly slow, being short of leg, and of great rotundity in the belt.

And now the deities who watched over the fortunes of the Nederlanders having unthinkingly left the field, and stepped into a neighboring tavern to refresh themselves with a pot of beer, a direful catastrophe had wellnigh ensued. Scarce had the myrmidons of Michael Paw attained the front of battle, when the Swedes, instructed by the cunning Risingh, levelled a shower of blows full at their tobacco-pipes. Astounded at this assault, and dismayed at the havoc of their pipes, these ponderous warriors gave way, and like a drove of frightened elephants broke through the ranks of their own army. The little Hoppers were borne down in the surge: the sacred banner emblazoned with the gigantic oyster of Communipaw was trampled in the dirt: on blundered and thundered the heavy-sterned fugitives, the Swedes pressing on their rear and applying their feet *a parte poste* of the Van Arsdales and the Van Brummels with a vigor that prodigiously accelerated their movements—nor did the renowned Michael Paw himself fail to receive divers grievous and dishonorable visitations of shoe-leather.

But what, oh Muse! was the rage of Peter Stuyvesant, when from afar he saw his army giving way! In the transports of his wrath he sent forth a roar, enough to shake the very hills. The men of the Manhattoes plucked up new courage at the sound; or rather, they rallied at the voice of their leader, of whom they stood more in awe than of all the Swedes in Christendom. Without waiting for their aid, the daring Peter dashed sword in hand into the thickest of the foe. Then might be seen achievements worthy of the days of the giants. Wherever he went, the enemy shrank before him; the Swedes fled to right and left, or were driven, like dogs, into their own ditch; but as he pushed forward singly with headlong courage, the foe closed behind and hung upon his rear. One aimed a blow full at his heart; but the protecting power which watches over the great and good turned aside the hostile blade and directed it to a side-pocket, where reposed an enormous iron tobacco-box, endowed, like the shield of Achilles, with supernatural powers, doubtless from bearing the portrait of the blessed St. Nicholas. Peter Stuyvesant turned like an angry bear upon the foe, and seizing him as he fled, by an immeasurable queue, "Ah, whoreson caterpillar," roared he, "here's what shall make worms' meat of thee!" So saying, he whirled his sword, and dealt a blow that would have decapitated the varlet, but that the pitying steel struck short and shaved the queue forever from his crown. At this moment an arquebusier levelled his piece from a neighboring mound, with deadly aim; but the watchful Minerva, who had just stopped to tie up her garter, seeing the peril of her favorite hero, sent old Boreas with his bellows, who, as the match descended to the pan, gave a blast that blew the priming from the touch-hole.

Thus waged the fight, when the stout Risingh, surveying the field from the top of a little ravelin, perceived his troops banged, beaten, and kicked by the invincible Peter. Drawing his falchion and uttering a thousand anathemas, he strode down to the scene of combat with some such thundering strides as Jupiter is said by Hesiod to have

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23 **corps de reserve**, reserve corps • 45 **a parte poste**, from the part after, here meaning to the backsides • 88 **Hesiod** (fl. 900 B.C.), Greek poet

taken, when he strode down the spheres to hurl his thunder-bolts at the Titans.

When the rival heroes came face to face, each made a prodigious start in the style of a veteran stage-champion. Then did they regard each other for a moment with the bitter aspect of two furious ram-cats on the point of a clapper-clawing. Then did they throw themselves into one attitude, then into another, striking their swords on the ground, first on the right side, then on the left—at last at it they went, with incredible ferocity. Words cannot tell the prodigies of strength and valor displayed in this direful encounter—an encounter compared to which the far-famed battles of Ajax with Hector, of Æneas with Turnus, Orlando with Rodomont, Guy of Warwick with Colbrand the Dane, or of that renowned Welsh knight, Sir Owen of the Mountains with the giant Guylon, were all gentle sports and holiday recreations. At length the valiant Peter, watching his opportunity, aimed a blow, enough to cleave his adversary to the very chine; but Risingh, nimbly raising his sword, warded it off so narrowly, that glancing on one side, it shaved away a huge canteen in which he carried his liquor; thence pursuing its trenchant course, it severed off a deep coat pocket, stored with bread and cheese—which provant rolling among the armies, occasioned a fearful scrambling between the Swedes and Dutchmen, and made the general battle to wax more furious than ever.

Enraged to see his military stores laid waste, the stout Risingh, collecting all his forces, aimed a mighty blow full at the hero's crest. In vain did his fierce little cocked hat oppose its course. The biting steel clove through the stubborn ram beaver, and would have cracked the crown of any one not endowed with supernatural hardness of head; but the brittle weapon shivered in pieces on the skull of Hardkoppig Piet, shedding a thousand sparks, like beams of glory, round his grizzly visage.

The good Peter reeled with the blow, and turning up his eyes beheld a thousand suns, besides moons and stars, dancing about the firmament—at length, missing his footing, by reason of his wooden leg, down he came on his seat of honor with a crash which shook the surrounding hills, and might have wrecked his frame, had he not been received into a cushion softer than velvet, which Providence, or Minerva, or St. Nicholas, or some cow, had benevolently prepared for his reception.

The furious Risingh, in spite of the maxim, cherished by all true knights, that "fair play is a jewel," hastened to take advantage of the hero's fall; but, as he stooped to give a fatal blow, Peter Stuyvesant dealt him a thwack over the sconce with his wooden leg, which set a chime of bells ringing triple bob majors in his cerebellum. The bewildered Swede staggered with the blow, and the wary Peter seizing a pocket pistol, which lay hard by, discharged it full at the head of the reeling Risingh. Let not my reader mistake; it was not a murderous weapon loaded with powder and ball; but a little sturdy stone pottle charged to the muzzle with a double dram of true Dutch courage, which the knowing Antony Van Corlear carried about him by way of replenishing his valor; and which had dropped from his wallet during his furious encounter with the drummer. The hideous weapon sang through the air, and true to its course as was the fragment of rock discharged at Hector by bully Ajax, encountered the head of the gigantic Swede with matchless violence.

This heaven-directed blow decided the battle. The ponderous pericranium of General Jan Risingh sank upon his breast; his knees tottered under him; a deathlike torpor seized upon his frame, and he tumbled to the earth with such violence, that old Pluto started with affright, lest he should have broken through the roof of his infernal palace.

His fall was the signal of defeat and victory—the Swedes gave way—the Dutch pressed forward; the former took to their heels, the latter hotly pursued.—Some entered with them, pell-mell, through the sally-port—others stormed the bastion, and others scrambled over the curtain. Thus in a little while the fortress of Fort Christina, which, like another Troy, had stood a siege of full ten hours, was carried by assault, without the loss of a

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6 ram-cats . . . clapper-clawing, tomcats about to fight (dialectal) • **13 Ajax . . . Guylon,** a list of famous combats in literature. Irving's ultimate sources were Bk. XIV of the Iliad, Bk. XII of the **Aeneid,** Bk. VI of the **Orlando Inamorata** of Matteo Maria Boiardo (1434-1494), the metrical romance of **Guy of Warwick** (thirteenth century), and **The Mabinogion** (twelfth century) • **24 provant,** provender, an allowance of food • **32 ram beaver,** man's hat • **46 maxim,** usually attributed to Scott's **Redgauntlet** (1824). Since Irving's use is of an earlier date, it is probable that both authors drew upon some source in chivalric literature • **51 triple bob majors,** a bell-ringing term. Bob-majors are rung upon eight bells, a treble bob being a method which produces a dodging or irregular effect • **75 sally-port . . . bastion . . . curtain.** The sally-port is a small concealed gate in a fortification; the bastion, a projection; the curtain, the wall between bastions

single man on either side. Victory, in the likeness of a gigantic ox-fly, sat perched upon the cocked hat of the gallant Stuyvesant; and it was declared, by all the writers whom he hired to write the history of his expedition, that on this memorable day he gained a sufficient quantity of glory to immortalize a dozen of the greatest heroes in Christendom.

Chapter IX

In Which the Author and the Reader, While Reposing after the Battle, Fall into a Very Grave Discourse—after Which Is Recorded the Conduct of Peter Stuyvesant after His Victory

Thanks to St. Nicholas, we have safely finished this tremendous battle: let us sit down, my worthy reader, and cool ourselves, for I am in a prodigious sweat and agitation—truly this fighting of battles is hot work! and if your great commanders did not know what trouble they give their historians, they would not have the conscience to achieve so many horrible victories. But methinks I hear my reader complain, that throughout this boasted battle there is not the least slaughter, nor a single individual maimed, if we except the unhappy Swede, who was shorn of his queue by the trenchant blade of Peter Stuyvesant; all which, he observes, is a great outrage on probability, and highly injurious to the interest of the narration.

This is certainly an objection of no little moment, but it arises entirely from the obscurity enveloping the remote periods of time about which I have undertaken to write. Thus, though doubtless, from the importance of the object, and the prowess of the parties concerned, there must have been terrible carnage, and prodigies of valor displayed before the walls of Christina, yet, notwithstanding that I have consulted every history, manuscript, and tradition, touching this memorable though long-forgotten battle, I cannot find mention made of a single man killed or wounded in the whole affair.

This is, without doubt, owing to the extreme modesty of our forefathers, who, unlike their descendants, were never prone to vaunt of their achievements; but it is a virtue which places their historian in a most embarrassing predicament; for, having promised my readers a hideous and unparalleled battle, and having worked them up into a warlike and bloodthirsty state of mind, to put them off without any havoc and slaughter would have been as bitter a disappointment as to summon a multitude of good people to attend an execcution, and then cruelly balk them by a reprieve.

Had the fates only allowed me some half a score of dead men, I had been content; for I would have made them such heroes as abounded in the olden time, but whose race is now unfortunately extinct; any one of whom, if we may believe those authentic writers, the poets, could drive great armies, like sheep, before him, and conquer and desolate whole cities by his single arm.

But seeing that I had not a single life at my disposal, all that was left me was to make the most I could of my battle, by means of kicks, and cuffs, and bruises, and such like ignoble wounds. And here I cannot but compare my dilemma, in some sort, to that of the divine Milton, who, having arrayed with sublime preparation his immortal hosts against each other, is sadly put to it how to manage them, and how he shall make the end of his battle answer to the beginning, inasmuch as, being mere spirits, he cannot deal a mortal blow, nor even give a flesh wound to any of his combatants. For my part, the greatest difficulty I found was, when I had once put my warriors in a passion, and let them loose into the midst of the enemy, to keep them from doing mischief. Many a time had I to restrain the sturdy Peter from cleaving a gigantic Swede to the very waistband, or spitting half a dozen little fellows on his sword, like so many sparrows. And when I had set some hundred of missives flying in the air, I did not dare to suffer one of them to reach the ground, lest it should have put an end to some unlucky Dutchman.

The reader cannot conceive how mortifying it is to a writer thus in a manner to have his hands tied, and how many tempting opportunities I had to wink at, where I might have made as fine a death-blow as any recorded in history or song.

From my own experience I begin to doubt most potently of the authenticity of many of Homer's stories. I verily believe, that when he had once launched one of his favorite heroes among a crowd of the enemy, he cut down many an honest fellow, without any authority for so do-

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55 **Milton.** See Bk. VI of *Paradise Lost*

ing, excepting that he presented a fair mark—and that often a poor fellow was sent to grim Pluto's domains, merely because he had a name that would give a sounding turn to a period. But I disclaim all such unprincipled liberties—let me but have truth and the law on my side, and no man would fight harder than myself—but since the various records I consulted did not warrant it, I had too much conscience to kill a single soldier. By St. Nicholas, but it would have been a pretty piece of business! My enemies, the critics, who I foresee will be ready enough to lay any crime they can discover at my door, might have charged me with murder outright—and I should have esteemed myself lucky to escape with no harsher verdict than manslaughter!

And now, gentle reader, that we are tranquilly sitting down here, smoking our pipes, permit me to indulge in a melancholy reflection which at this moment passes across my mind. How vain, how fleeting, how uncertain are all those gaudy bubbles after which we are panting and toiling in this world of fair delusions! The wealth which the miser has amassed with so many weary days, so many sleepless nights, a spendthrift here may squander away in joyless prodigality; the noblest monuments which pride has ever reared to perpetuate a name, the hand of time will shortly tumble into ruins—and even the brightest laurels, gained by feats of arms, may wither, and be forever blighted by the chilling neglect of mankind. "How many illustrious heroes," says the good Boëtius, "who were once the pride and glory of the age, hath the silence of historians buried in eternal oblivion!" And this it was that induced the Spartans, when they went to battle, solemnly to sacrifice to the Muses, supplicating that their achievements might be worthily recorded. Had not Homer tuned his lofty lyre, observes the elegant Cicero, the valor of Achilles had remained unsung. And such, too, after all the toils and perils he had braved, after all the gallant actions he had achieved, such too had nearly been the fate of the chivalric Peter Stuyvesant, but that I fortunately stepped in and engraved his name on the indelible tablet of history, just as the caitiff Time was silently brushing it away forever!

The more I reflect, the more I am astonished at the important character of the historian. He is the sovereign censor to decide upon the renown or infamy of his fellow men. He is the patron of kings and conquerors, on whom it depends whether they shall live in after ages, or be forgotten as were their ancestors before them. The tyrant may oppress while the object of his tyranny exists; but the historian possesses superior might, for his power extends even beyond the grave. The shades of departed and long-forgotten heroes anxiously bend down from above, while he writes, watching each movement of his pen, whether it shall pass by their names with neglect, or inscribe them on the deathless pages of renown. Even the drop of ink which hangs trembling on his pen, which he may either dash upon the floor, or waste in idle scrawlings—that very drop, which to him is not worth the twentieth part of a farthing, may be of incalculable value to some departed worthy—may elevate half a score, in one moment, to immortality, who would have given worlds, had they possessed them, to insure the glorious meed.

Let not my readers imagine, however, that I am indulging in vainglorious boastings, or am anxious to blazon forth the importance of my tribe. On the contrary, I shrink when I reflect on the awful responsibility we historians assume—I shudder to think what direful commotions and calamities we occasion in the world—I swear to thee, honest reader, as I am a man, I weep at the very idea! Why, let me ask, are so many illustrious men daily tearing themselves away from the embraces of their families—slighting the smiles of beauty—despising the allurements of fortune, and exposing themselves to the miseries of war?—Why are kings desolating empires, and depopulating whole countries? In short, what induces all great men of all ages and countries to commit so many victories and misdeeds, and inflict so many miseries upon mankind and upon themselves, but the mere hope that some historian will kindly take them into notice, and admit them into a corner of his volume? For, in short, the mighty object of all their toils, their hardships, and privations, is nothing but *immortal fame.* And what is immortal fame?—why, half a page of dirty paper!—alas! alas! how humiliating the idea—that the renown of so great a man as Peter Stuyvesant would depend upon the pen of so little a man as Diedrich Knickerbocker!

And now, having refreshed ourselves after the fatigues and perils of the field, it behooves us to return once more to the scene of conflict, and inquire what were the results

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2 Pluto's domains, i.e., Hades • 28 Boëtius. The remark appears in Bk. II, Prose VII of The Consolations of Philosophy, written early in the sixth century • 35 Cicero. See Pro Archia Poeta, Chap. X

of this renowned conquest. The fortress of Christina being the fair metropolis, and in a manner the key to New Sweden, its capture was speedily followed by the entire subjugation of the province. This was not a little promoted by the gallant and courteous deportment of the chivalric Peter. Though a man terrible in battle, yet in the hour of victory was he endued with a spirit generous, merciful, and humane. He vaunted not over his enemies, nor did he make defeat more galling by unmanly insults; for like that mirror of knightly virtue, the renowned Paladin Orlando, he was more anxious to do great actions than to talk of them after they were done. He put no man to death; ordered no houses to be burnt down; permitted no ravages to be perpetrated on the property of the vanquished; and even gave one of his bravest officers a severe admonishment with his walking staff, for having been detected in the act of sacking a hen-roost.

He moreover issued a proclamation, inviting the inhabitants to submit to the authority of their High Mightinesses; but declaring, with unexampled clemency, that whoever refused should be lodged at the public expense in a goodly castle provided for the purpose, and have an armed retinue to wait on them in the bargain. In consequence of these beneficent terms, about thirty Swedes stepped manfully forward and took the oath of allegiance; in reward for which they were graciously permitted to remain on the banks of the Delaware, where their descendants reside at this very day. I am told, however, by divers observant travellers, that they have never been able to get over the chap-fallen looks of their ancestors; but that they still do strangely transmit from father to son manifest marks of the sound drubbing given them by the sturdy Amsterdammers.

The whole country of New Sweden, having thus yielded to the arms of the triumphant Peter, was reduced to a colony called South River, and placed under the superintendence of a lieutenant-governor, subject to the control of the supreme government of New Amsterdam. This great dignitary was called Mynheer William Beekman, or rather *Beck*-man, who derived his surname, as did Ovidious Naso of yore, from the lordly dimensions of his nose, which projected from the centre of his countenance, like the beak of a parrot. He was the great progenitor of the tribe of the Beekmans, one of the most ancient and honorable families of the province; the members of which do gratefully commemorate the origin of their dignity; not as your noble families in England would do, by having a glowing proboscis emblazoned in their escutcheon, but by one and all wearing a right goodly nose, stuck in the very middle of their faces.

Thus was this perilous enterprise gloriously terminated, with the loss of only two men—Wolfert Van Horne, a tall spare man, who was knocked overboard by the boom of a sloop in a flaw of wind; and fat Brom Van Bummel, who was suddenly carried off by an indigestion; both, however, were immortalized, as having bravely fallen in the service of their country. True it is, Peter Stuyvesant had one of his limbs terribly fractured in the act of storming the fortress; but as it was fortunately his wooden leg, the wound was promptly and effectually healed.

And now nothing remains to this branch of my history but to mention that this immaculate hero, and his victorious army, returned joyously to the Manhattoes; where they made a solemn and triumphant entry, bearing with them the conquered Risingh, and the remnant of his battered crew, who had refused allegiance; for it appears that the gigantic Swede had only fallen into a swoon, at the end of the battle, from which he was speedily restored by a wholesome tweak of the nose.

These captive heroes were lodged, according to the promise of the governor, at the public expense, in a fair and spacious castle; being the prison of state, of which Stoffel Brinkerhoff, the immortal conqueror of Oyster Bay, was appointed governor; and which has ever since remained in the possession of his descendants.

It was a pleasant and goodly sight to witness the joy of the people of New Amsterdam, at beholding their warriors once more return from this war in the wilderness. The old women thronged round Antony Van Corlear, who gave the whole history of the campaign with matchless accuracy; saving that he took the credit of fighting the whole battle himself, and especially of vanquishing the stout Risingh; which he considered himself as clearly entitled to, seeing that it was effected by his own stone pottle.

The schoolmasters throughout the town gave holiday to their little urchins, who followed in droves after the drums, with paper caps on their heads, and sticks in their

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11 Paladin Orlando, or Roland, hero of romance, celebrated in the Chanson de Roland • 30 chap-fallen, with drooping jaws • 41 Ovidious Naso, better known as Ovid (43 B.C.-17 A.D.?), Roman poet • 54 flaw, gust, squall • 75 descendants. "This castle, though very much altered and modernized, is still in being, and stands at the corner of Pearl Street, facing Coentie's slip."—Irving

breeches, thus taking the first lesson in the art of war. As to the sturdy rabble, they thronged at the heels of Peter Stuyvesant wherever he went, waving their greasy hats in the air, and shouting "Hardkoppig Piet forever!"

It was indeed a day of roaring rout and jubilee. A huge dinner was prepared at the Stadthouse in honor of the conquerors, where were assembled in one glorious constellation the great and little luminaries of New Amsterdam. There were the lordly Schout and his obsequious deputy—the burgomasters with their officious schepens at their elbows—the subaltern officers at the elbows of the schepens, and so on down to the lowest hanger-on of police: every tag having his rag at his side, to finish his pipe, drink off his heel-taps, and laugh at his flights of immortal dullness. In short—for a city feast is a city feast all the world over, and has been a city feast ever since the creation—the dinner went off much the same as do our great corporation junketings and Fourth of July banquets. Loads of fish, flesh, and fowl were devoured, oceans of liquor drank, thousands of pipes smoked, and many a dull joke honored with much obstreperous fat-sided laughter.

I must not omit to mention, that to this far-famed victory Peter Stuyvesant was indebted for another of his many titles—for so hugely delighted were the honest burghers with his achievements, that they unanimously honored him with the name of *Pieter de Groodt,* that is to say, Peter the Great, or, as it was translated into English by the people of New Amsterdam, for the benefit of their New England visitors, *Piet de pig*—an appellation which he maintained even unto the day of his death.

1809

9 **Schout . . . burgomasters . . . schepens,** Dutch administrative officers. A schout was a magistrate; a burgomaster (master of a borough) corresponded to a mayor; a schepen was an alderman

From • The Sketch Book

The Author's Account of Himself

The Sketchbook of Geoffrey Crayon, Gent. was first published in seven numbers in New York, between June 23, 1819, and September 13, 1820. In his Preface to the revised edition of 1848, Irving said that most of the essays and stories therein were part of an intended series which, before his plan had matured, he was compelled by circumstances to send piecemeal to the United States.

In addition to "The Author's Account of Himself" and "L'Envoy," collected editions usually contain thirty-two pieces; the original seven numbers offered only twenty-five. Among the additions were "Traits of Indian Character" and "Philip of Pokanoket," previously printed in the **Analectic Magazine** of Philadelphia. The greater part of **The Sketch Book** is composed of essays on English life and manners with a decidedly nostalgic flavor. Among the more famous are "Rural Life in England" (in No. II), "The Boar's Head Tavern, Eastcheap" (No. III), a series on Christmas customs at the country house of a Yorkshire squire, "Bracebridge Hall" (in No. V), "John Bull" (No. VI), and "Westminster Abbey" and "Stratford-on-Avon" (No. VII). Their emphasis upon the common literary and social heritage of Americans and Englishmen doubtless contributed to international good will in an era when misunderstanding seemed inevitable. That Irving was no sycophantic Anglophile was shown by his vigorous "English Writers on America" (No. II), a frank warning to England that "should those reverses overtake her, from which the proudest empires have not been exempt," she might regret having lost the friendship of the United States. **The Sketch Book** has remained a classic, however, largely because of two sketches or short stories, "Rip Van Winkle" (No. I) and "The Legend of Sleepy Hollow" (No. VI), which are unquestionably among the best-known tales in the English language.

Both stories were written in England in 1818, while Irving was absorbed in what he called "the rich mine of German literature," whose discovery he probably owed to the enthusiasm of Scott. Scholarly investigation has shown that Irving followed German legends for both

plots (see especially H. A. Pochmann's article in **Studies in Philology** for July 1930); his many allusions and tags of quotation reveal, in fact, how conscious he was of literary tradition. Yet, bookish as they are, both tales are skillfully localized and depend for their effect upon much the same feeling for history and folk life which characterizes the **History of New York**. Both of them, it will be noted, continue the pleasant fiction of Diedrich Knickerbocker; both, although thin in plot and unremarkable for characterization, display a perfection of tone and the delight in details of living which are Irving's finest qualities.

"I am of this mind with Homer, that as the snaile that crept out of her shel was turned eftsoons into a toad, and thereby was forced to make a stoole to sit on; so the traveller that stragleth from his owne country is in a short time transformed into so monstrous a shape, that he is faine to alter his mansion with his manners, and to live where he can, not where he would."— LYLY'S EUPHUES

I was always fond of visiting new scenes, and observing strange characters and manners. Even when a mere child I began my travels, and made many tours of discovery into foreign parts and unknown regions of my native city, to the frequent alarm of my parents, and the emolument of the town-crier. As I grew into boyhood, I extended the range of my observations. My holiday afternoons were spent in rambles about the surrounding country. I made myself familiar with all its places famous in history or fable. I knew every spot where a murder or robbery had been committed, or a ghost seen. I visited the neighboring villages, and added greatly to my stock of knowledge, by noting their habits and customs, and conversing with their sages and great men. I even journeyed one long summer's day to the summit of the most distant hill, whence I stretched my eye over many a mile of terra incognita, and was astonished to find how vast a globe I inhabited.

This rambling propensity strengthened with my years. Books of voyages and travels became my passion, and in devouring their contents, I neglected the regular exercises of the school. How wistfully would I wander about the pier-heads in fine weather, and watch the parting ships, bound to distant climes—with what longing eyes would I gaze after their lessening sails, and waft myself in imagination to the ends of the earth!

Further reading and thinking, though they brought this vague inclination into more reasonable bounds, only served to make it more decided. I visited various parts of my own country; and had I been merely a lover of fine scenery, I should have felt little desire to seek elsewhere its gratification, for on no country have the charms of nature been more prodigally lavished. Her mighty lakes, like oceans of liquid silver; her mountains, with their bright aerial tints; her valleys, teeming with wild fertility; her tremendous cataracts, thundering in their solitudes; her boundless plains, waving with spontaneous verdure; her broad deep rivers, rolling in solemn silence to the ocean; her trackless forests, where vegetation puts forth all its magnificence; her skies, kindling with the magic of summer clouds and glorious sunshine;—no, never need an American look beyond his own country for the sublime and beautiful of natural scenery.

But Europe held forth the charms of storied and poetical association. There were to be seen the masterpieces of art, the refinements of highly-cultivated society, the quaint peculiarities of ancient and local custom. My native country was full of youthful promise: Europe was rich in the accumulated treasures of age. Her very ruins told the history of times gone by, and every mouldering stone was a chronicle. I longed to wander over the scenes of renowned achievement—to tread, as it were, in the footsteps of antiquity—to loiter about the ruined castle—to meditate on the falling tower—to escape, in short, from the common-place realities of the present, and lose myself among the shadowy grandeurs of the past.

I had, beside all this, an earnest desire to see the great men of the earth. We have, it is true, our great men in America: not a city but has an ample share of them. I have mingled among them in my time, and been almost withered by the shade into which they cast me; for there is nothing so baleful to a small man as the shade of a great one, particularly the great man of a city. But I was

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Text: the revised edition of 1848 • **Lyly's Euphues.** The quotation is from near the beginning of **Euphues and His England** (1580), by John Lyly (1553?-1606), English author of prose romances and courtly comedies • **16 terra incognita,** unexplored region

anxious to see the great men of Europe; for I had read in the works of various philosophers, that all animals degenerated in America, and man among the number. A great man of Europe, thought I, must therefore be as superior to a great man of America, as a peak of the Alps to a highland of the Hudson; and in this idea I was confirmed, by observing the comparative importance and swelling magnitude of many English travellers among us, who, I was assured, were very little people in their own country. I will visit this land of wonders, thought I, and see the gigantic race from which I am degenerated.

It has been either my good or evil lot to have my roving passion gratified. I have wandered through different countries, and witnessed many of the shifting scenes of life. I cannot say that I have studied them with the eye of a philosopher; but rather with the sauntering gaze with which humble lovers of the picturesque stroll from the window of one print-shop to another; caught sometimes by the delineations of beauty, sometimes by the distortions of caricature, and sometimes by the loveliness of landscape. As it is the fashion for modern tourists to travel pencil in hand, and bring home their port-folios filled with sketches, I am disposed to get up a few for the entertainment of my friends. When, however, I look over the hints and memorandums I have taken down for the purpose, my heart almost fails me at finding how my idle humor has led me aside from the great objects studied by every regular traveller who would make a book. I fear I shall give equal disappointment with an unlucky landscape painter, who had travelled on the continent, but, following the bent of his vagrant inclination, had sketched in nooks, and corners, and by-places. His sketch-book was accordingly crowded with cottages, and landscapes, and obscure ruins; but he had neglected to paint St. Peter's, or the Coliseum; the cascade of Terni, or the bay of Naples; and had not a single glacier or volcano in his whole collection.

1819

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2 **philosophers,** e.g., the Comte de Buffon (see note, p. 263), who theorized on the harmful effects of the American climate • 8 **English travellers.** Irving was keenly aware of the "Paper War" in which his countrymen had been defending themselves against the attacks of Englishmen. Here he echoes the judgment of John Bristed (**The Resources of the United States**, New York, 1816), that among the "vilest and silliest" of those who had abused America were "**Parkinson,** an English farmer; Ashe, a **soi-disant** military officer; and one Jansen [Janson], a **non-descript.**" For a full account see Jane L. Mesick, **The English Traveller in America, 1785-1835** (New York, 1922), and see "English Writers on America" in No. II of **The Sketch Book** • 35 **cascade of Terni,** artificial waterfalls in the Apennines, about fifty miles north of Rome. They had been described by Byron in **Childe Harold's Pilgrimage**, Canto IV (1818), stanzas lxix-lxxii

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From • The Sketch Book

Rip Van Winkle

A Posthumous Writing of Diedrich Knickerbocker

By Woden, God of Saxons,
From whence comes Wensday, that is Wodensday.
Truth is a thing that ever I will keep
Unto thylke day in which I creep into
My sepulchre.—CARTWRIGHT

[The following Tale was found among the papers of the late Diedrich Knickerbocker, an old gentleman of New York, who was very curious in the Dutch history of the province, and the manners of the descendants from its primitive settlers. His historical researches, however, did not lie so much among books as among men; for the former are lamentably scanty on his favorite topics; whereas he found the old burghers, and still more their wives, rich in that legendary lore, so invaluable to true history. Whenever, therefore, he happened upon a genuine Dutch family, snugly shut up in its low-roofed farmhouse, under a spreading sycamore, he looked upon it as a little clasped volume of black-letter, and studied it with the zeal of a book-worm.

Woden, Odin, Teutonic god of storms and battles • **Cartwright,** possibly William Cartwright (1610-1643), English poet • 1 **The following Tale.** The present foreword did not appear in the original number of 1819 • 13 **black-letter,** a heavy-faced type used by early printers, now called Gothic or Old English

The result of all these researches was a history of the province during the reign of the Dutch governors, which he published some years since. There have been various opinions as to the literary character of his work, and, to tell the truth, it is not a whit better than it should be. Its chief merit is its scrupulous accuracy, which indeed was a little questioned on its first appearance, but has since been completely established; and it is now admitted into all historical collections, as a book of unquestionable authority.

The old gentleman died shortly after the publication of his work, and now that he is dead and gone, it cannot do much harm to his memory to say that his time might have been much better employed in weightier labors. He, however, was apt to ride his hobby his own way; and though it did now and then kick up the dust a little in the eyes of his neighbors, and grieve the spirit of some friends, for whom he felt the truest deference and affection; yet his errors and follies are remembered "more in sorrow than in anger," and it begins to be suspected, that he never intended to injure or offend. But however his memory may be appreciated by critics, it is still held dear by many folk, whose good opinion is well worth having; particularly by certain biscuit-bakers, who have gone so far as to imprint his likeness on their new-year cakes; and have thus given him a chance for immortality, almost equal to the being stamped on a Waterloo Medal, or a Queen Anne's Farthing.]

Whoever has made a voyage up the Hudson must remember the Kaatskill mountains. They are a dismembered branch of the great Appalachian family, and are seen away to the west of the river, swelling up to a noble height, and lording it over the surrounding country. Every change of season, every change of weather, indeed, every hour of the day, produces some change in the magical hues and shapes of these mountains, and they are regarded by all the good wives, far and near, as perfect barometers. When the weather is fair and settled, they are clothed in blue and purple, and print their bold outlines on the clear evening sky; but, sometimes, when the rest of the landscape is cloudless, they will gather a hood of gray vapors about their summits, which, in the last rays of the setting sun, will glow and light up like a crown of glory.

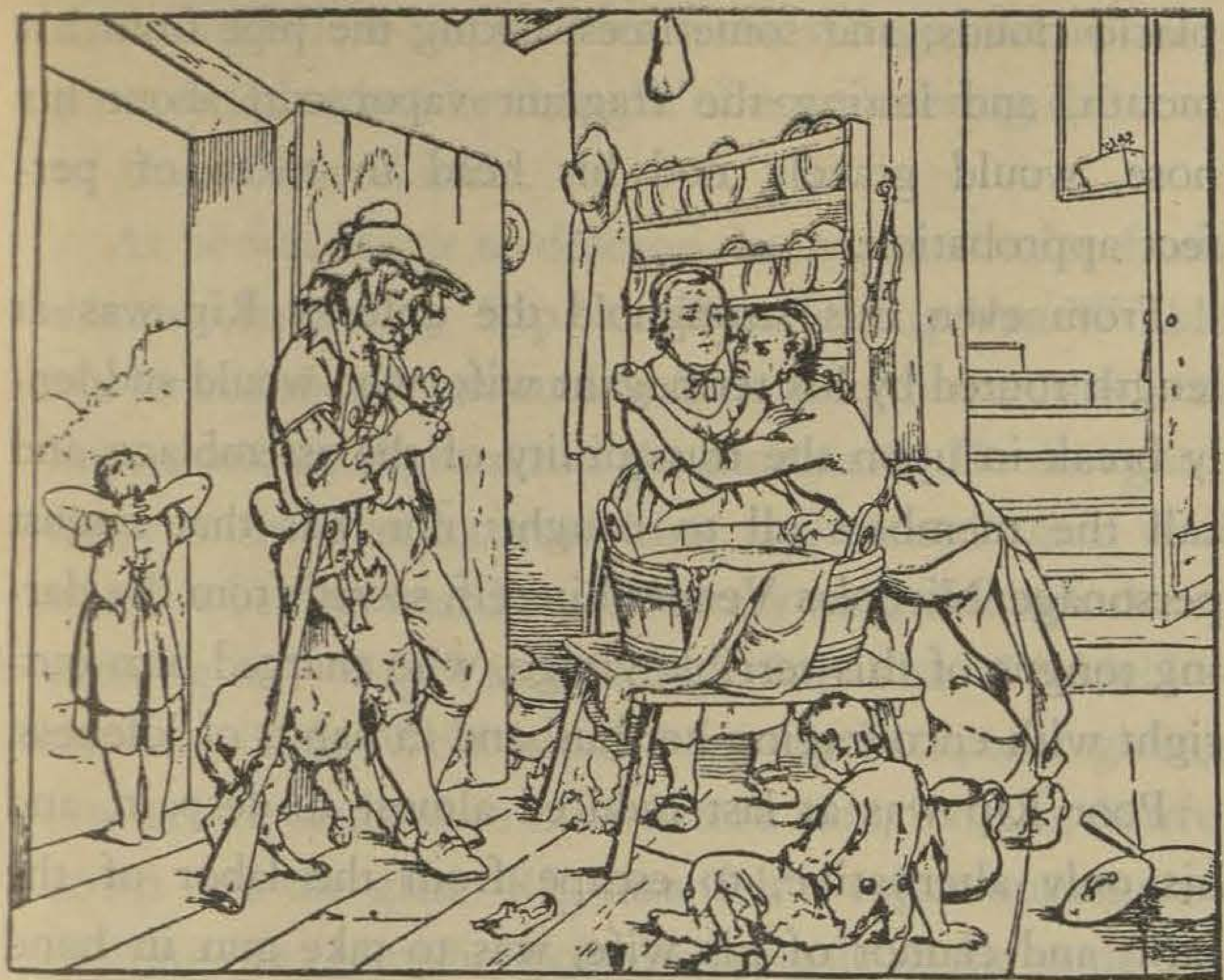
At the foot of these fairy mountains, the voyager may have descried the light smoke curling up from a village, whose shingle-roofs gleam among the trees, just where the blue tints of the upland melt away into the fresh green of the nearer landscape. It is a little village, of great antiquity, having been founded by some of the Dutch colonists, in the early times of the province, just about the beginning of the government of the good Peter Stuyvesant (may he rest in peace!) and there were some of the houses of the original settlers standing within a few years, built of small yellow bricks brought from Holland, having latticed windows and gabled fronts, surmounted with weather-cocks.

In that same village, and in one of these very houses (which, to tell the precise truth, was sadly time-worn and weather-beaten), there lived many years since, while the country was yet a province of Great Britain, a simple good-natured fellow, of the name of Rip Van Winkle. He was a descendant of the Van Winkles who figured so gallantly in the chivalrous days of Peter Stuyvesant, and accompanied him to the siege of Fort Christina. He inherited, however, but little of the martial character of his ancestors. I have observed that he was a simple good-natured man; he was, moreover, a kind neighbor, and an obedient hen-pecked husband. Indeed, to the latter circumstance might be owing that meekness of spirit which gained him such universal popularity; for those men are most apt to be obsequious and conciliating abroad, who are under the discipline of shrews at home. Their tempers, doubtless, are rendered pliant and malleable in the fiery furnace of domestic tribulation; and a curtain lecture is worth all the sermons in the world for teaching the virtues of patience and long-suffering. A termagant wife may, therefore, in some respects, be considered a tolerable blessing; and if so, Rip Van Winkle was thrice blessed.

Certain it is, that he was a great favorite among all the good wives of the village, who, as usual, with the amiable sex, took his part in all family squabbles; and never failed, whenever they talked those matters over in their evening gossipings, to lay all the blame on Dame

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28 **Waterloo Medal,** struck off to commemorate the defeat of Napoleon on June 18, 1815. It was given to all British soldiers engaged in that action and bore the likeness of the Prince Regent (later King George IV) • 28 **Queen Anne's Farthing,** a copper coin minted in the latter part of the reign of Anne (1702-1714) • 65 **Fort Christina.** See note, p. 547



"... continually dinning in his ears about his idleness...."

Van Winkle. The children of the village, too, would shout with joy whenever he approached. He assisted at their sports, made their playthings, taught them to fly kites and shoot marbles, and told them long stories of ghosts, witches, and Indians. Whenever he went dodging about the village, he was surrounded by a troop of them, hanging on his skirts, clambering on his back, and playing a thousand tricks on him with impunity; and not a dog would bark at him throughout the neighborhood.

The great error in Rip's composition was an insuperable aversion to all kinds of profitable labor. It could not be from the want of assiduity or perseverance; for he would sit on a wet rock, with a rod as long and heavy as a Tartar's lance, and fish all day without a murmur, even though he should not be encouraged by a single nibble. He would carry a fowling-piece on his shoulder for hours together, trudging through woods and swamps, and up hill and down dale, to shoot a few squirrels or wild pigeons. He would never refuse to assist a neighbor even in the roughest toil, and was a foremost man at all country frolics for husking Indian corn, or building stone-fences; the women of the village, too, used to employ him to run their errands, and to do such little odd jobs as their less obliging husbands would not do for them. In a word Rip was ready to attend to anybody's business but his own; but as to doing family duty, and keeping his farm in order, he found it impossible.

In fact, he declared it was of no use to work on his farm; it was the most pestilent little piece of ground in the whole country; every thing about it went wrong, and would go wrong, in spite of him. His fences were continually falling to pieces; his cow would either go astray, or get among the cabbages; weeds were sure to grow quicker in his fields than anywhere else; the rain always made a point of setting in just as he had some out-door work to do; so that though his patrimonial estate had dwindled away under his management, acre by acre, until there was little more left than a mere patch of Indian corn and potatoes, yet it was the worst conditioned farm in the neighborhood.

His children, too, were as ragged and wild as if they belonged to nobody. His son Rip, an urchin begotten in his own likeness, promised to inherit the habits, with the old clothes of his father. He was generally seen trooping like a colt at his mother's heels, equipped in a pair of his father's cast-off galligaskins, which he had much ado to hold up with one hand, as a fine lady does her train in bad weather.

Rip Van Winkle, however, was one of those happy mortals, of foolish, well-oiled dispositions, who take the world easy, eat white bread or brown, whichever can be got with least thought and trouble, and would rather starve on a penny than work for a pound. If left to himself, he would have whistled life away in perfect contentment; but his wife kept continually dinning in his ears about his idleness, his carelessness, and the ruin he was bringing on his family. Morning, noon, and night, her tongue was incessantly going, and every thing he said or did was sure to produce a torrent of household eloquence. Rip had but one way of replying to all lectures of the kind, and that, by frequent use, had grown into a habit. He shrugged his shoulders, shook his head, cast up his eyes, but said nothing. This, however, always provoked a fresh volley from his wife; so that he was fain to draw off his forces, and take to the outside of the house—the only side which, in truth, belongs to a hen-pecked husband.

Rip's sole domestic adherent was his dog Wolf, who was as much hen-pecked as his master; for Dame Van Winkle regarded them as companions in idleness, and even looked upon Wolf with an evil eye, as the cause of his master's going so often astray. True it is, in all points of spirit befitting an honorable dog, he was as

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46 galligaskins, loose, wide trousers

courageous an animal as ever scoured the woods—but what courage can withstand the ever-during and all-besetting terrors of a woman's tongue? The moment Wolf entered the house his crest fell, his tail drooped to the ground, or curled between his legs, he sneaked about with a gallows air, casting many a sidelong glance at Dame Van Winkle, and at the least flourish of a broomstick or ladle, he would fly to the door with yelping precipitation.

Times grew worse and worse with Rip Van Winkle as years of matrimony rolled on; a tart temper never mellows with age, and a sharp tongue is the only edged tool that grows keener with constant use. For a long time he used to console himself, when driven from home, by frequenting a kind of perpetual club of the sages, philosophers, and other idle personages of the village; which held its sessions on a bench before a small inn, designated by a rubicund portrait of His Majesty George the Third. Here they used to sit in the shade through a long lazy summer's day, talking listlessly over village gossip, or telling endless sleepy stories about nothing. But it would have been worth any statesman's money to have heard the profound discussions that sometimes took place, when by chance an old newspaper fell into their hands from some passing traveller. How solemnly they would listen to the contents, as drawled out by Derrick Van Bummel, the schoolmaster, a dapper learned little man, who was not to be daunted by the most gigantic word in the dictionary; and how sagely they would deliberate upon public events some months after they had taken place.

The opinions of this junto were completely controlled by Nicholas Vedder, a patriarch of the village, and landlord of the inn, at the door of which he took his seat from morning till night, just moving sufficiently to avoid the sun and keep in the shade of a large tree; so that the neighbors could tell the hour by his movements as accurately as by a sun-dial. It is true he was rarely heard to speak, but smoked his pipe incessantly. His adherents, however (for every great man has his adherents), perfectly understood him, and knew how to gather his opinions. When any thing that was read or related displeased him, he was observed to smoke his pipe vehemently, and to send forth short, frequent and angry puffs; but when pleased, he would inhale the smoke slowly and tranquilly, and emit it in light and placid clouds; and sometimes, taking the pipe from his mouth, and letting the fragrant vapor curl about his nose, would gravely nod his head in token of perfect approbation.

From even this stronghold the unlucky Rip was at length routed by his termagant wife, who would suddenly break in upon the tranquillity of the assemblage and call the members all to naught; nor was that august personage, Nicholas Vedder himself, sacred from the daring tongue of this terrible virago, who charged him outright with encouraging her husband in habits of idleness.

Poor Rip was at last reduced almost to despair; and his only alternative, to escape from the labor of the farm and clamor of his wife, was to take gun in hand and stroll away into the woods. Here he would sometimes seat himself at the foot of a tree, and share the contents of his wallet with Wolf, with whom he sympathized as a fellow-sufferer in persecution. "Poor Wolf," he would say, "thy mistress leads thee a dog's life of it; but never mind, my lad, whilst I live thou shalt never want a friend to stand by thee!" Wolf would wag his tail, look wistfully in his master's face, and if dogs can feel pity I verily believe he reciprocated the sentiment with all his heart.

In a long ramble of the kind on a fine autumnal day, Rip had unconsciously scrambled to one of the highest parts of the Kaatskill mountains. He was after his favorite sport of squirrel shooting, and the still solitudes had echoed and re-echoed with the reports of his gun. Panting and fatigued, he threw himself, late in the afternoon, on a green knoll, covered with mountain herbage, that crowned the brow of a precipice. From an opening between the trees he could overlook all the lower country for many a mile of rich woodland. He saw at a distance the lordly Hudson, far, far below him, moving on its silent but majestic course, with the reflection of a purple cloud, or the sail of a lagging bark, here and there sleeping on its glassy bosom, and at last losing itself in the blue highlands.

On the other side he looked down into a deep mountain glen, wild, lonely, and shagged, the bottom filled with fragments from the impending cliffs, and scarcely lighted by the reflected rays of the setting sun. For some time Rip lay musing on this scene; evening was gradually advancing; the mountains began to throw their long blue shadows over the valleys; he saw that it would be

dark long before he could reach the village, and he heaved a heavy sigh when he thought of encountering the terrors of Dame Van Winkle.

As he was about to descend, he heard a voice from a distance, hallooing, "Rip Van Winkle! Rip Van Winkle!" He looked round, but could see nothing but a crow winging its solitary flight across the mountain. He thought his fancy must have deceived him, and turned again to descend, when he heard the same cry ring through the still evening air; "Rip Van Winkle! Rip Van Winkle!"—at the same time Wolf bristled up his back, and giving a low growl, skulked to his master's side, looking fearfully down into the glen. Rip now felt a vague apprehension stealing over him; he looked anxiously in the same direction, and perceived a strange figure slowly toiling up the rocks, and bending under the weight of something he carried on his back. He was surprised to see any human being in this lonely and unfrequented place, but supposing it to be some one of the neighborhood in need of his assistance, he hastened down to yield it.

On nearer approach he was still more surprised at the singularity of the stranger's appearance. He was a short square-built old fellow, with thick bushy hair, and a grizzled beard. His dress was of the antique Dutch fashion—a cloth jerkin strapped round the waist—several pair of breeches, the outer one of ample volume, decorated with rows of buttons down the sides, and bunches at the knees. He bore on his shoulder a stout keg, that seemed full of liquor, and made signs for Rip to approach and assist him with the load. Though rather shy and distrustful of this new acquaintance, Rip complied with his usual alacrity; and mutually relieving one another, they clambered up a narrow gully, apparently the dry bed of a mountain torrent. As they ascended, Rip every now and then heard long rolling peals, like distant thunder, that seemed to issue out of a deep ravine, or rather cleft, between lofty rocks toward which their rugged path conducted. He paused for an instant, but supposing it to be the muttering of one of those transient thunder-showers which often take place in mountain heights, he proceeded. Passing through the ravine, they came to a hollow, like a small amphitheatre, surrounded by perpendicular precipices, over the brinks of which impending trees shot their branches, so that you only caught glimpses of the azure sky and the bright evening-cloud. During the whole time Rip and his companion had labored on in silence; for



"... talking listlessly ... telling endless sleepy stories."

though the former marvelled greatly what could be the object of carrying a keg of liquor up this wild mountain, yet there was something strange and incomprehensible about the unknown, that inspired awe and checked familiarity.

On entering the amphitheatre, new objects of wonder presented themselves. On a level spot in the centre was a company of odd-looking personages playing at nine-pins. They were dressed in a quaint outlandish fashion; some wore short doublets, others jerkins, with long knives in their belts, and most of them had enormous breeches, of similar style with that of the guide's. Their visages, too, were peculiar: one had a large beard, broad face, and small piggish eyes: the face of another seemed to consist entirely of nose, and was surmounted by a white sugar-loaf hat, set off with a little red cock's tail. They all had beards, of various shapes and colors. There was one who seemed to be the commander. He was a stout old gentleman, with a weather-beaten countenance; he wore a laced doublet, broad belt and hanger, high crowned hat and feather, red stockings, and high-heeled shoes, with roses in them. The whole group reminded Rip of the figures in an old Flemish painting, in the parlor of Dominie Van Schaick, the village parson, and which had been brought over from Holland at the time of the settlement.

What seemed particularly odd to Rip was, that though these folks were evidently amusing themselves, yet they

59 beard. 1819: head. The 1848 text is probably an error • 67 roses, rosettes

maintained the gravest faces, the most mysterious silence, and were, withal, the most melancholy party of pleasure he had ever witnessed. Nothing interrupted the stillness of the scene but the noise of the balls, which, whenever they were rolled, echoed along the mountains like rumbling peals of thunder.

As Rip and his companion approached them, they suddenly desisted from their play, and stared at him with such fixed statue-like gaze, and such strange, uncouth, lack-lustre countenances, that his heart turned within him, and his knees smote together. His companion now emptied the contents of the keg into large flagons, and made signs to him to wait upon the company. He obeyed with fear and trembling; they quaffed the liquor in profound silence, and then returned to their game.

By degrees Rip's awe and apprehension subsided. He even ventured, when no eye was fixed upon him, to taste the beverage, which he found had much of the flavor of excellent Hollands. He was naturally a thirsty soul, and was soon tempted to repeat the draught. One taste provoked another; and he reiterated his visits to the flagon so often that at length his senses were overpowered, his eyes swam in his head, his head gradually declined, and he fell into a deep sleep.

On waking, he found himself on the green knoll whence he had first seen the old man of the glen. He rubbed his eyes—it was a bright sunny morning. The birds were hopping and twittering among the bushes, and the eagle was wheeling aloft, and breasting the pure mountain breeze. "Surely," thought Rip, "I have not slept here all night." He recalled the occurrences before he fell asleep. The strange man with a keg of liquor—the mountain ravine—the wild retreat among the rocks—the wobegone party at nine-pins—the flagon—"Oh! that flagon! that wicked flagon!" thought Rip—"what excuse shall I make to Dame Van Winkle!"

He looked round for his gun, but in place of the clean well-oiled fowling-piece, he found an old firelock lying by him, the barrel incrusted with rust, the lock falling off, and the stock worm-eaten. He now suspected that the grave roysters of the mountain had put a trick upon him, and, having dosed him with liquor had robbed him of his gun. Wolf, too, had disappeared, but he might have strayed away after a squirrel or partridge. He whistled after him and shouted his name, but all in vain; the echoes repeated his whistle and shout, but no dog was to be seen.

He determined to revisit the scene of the last evening's gambol, and if he met with any of the party, to demand his dog and gun. As he rose to walk, he found himself stiff in the joints, and wanting in his usual activity. "These mountain beds do not agree with me," thought Rip, "and if this frolic should lay me up with a fit of the rheumatism, I shall have a blessed time with Dame Van Winkle." With some difficulty he got down into the glen: he found the gully up which he and his companion had ascended the preceding evening; but to his astonishment a mountain stream was now foaming down it, leaping from rock to rock, and filling the glen with babbling murmurs. He, however, made shift to scramble up its sides, working his toilsome way through thickets of birch, sassafras, and witch-hazel, and sometimes tripped up or entangled by the wild grapevines that twisted their coils or tendrils from tree to tree, and spread a kind of network in his path.

At length he reached to where the ravine had opened through the cliffs to the amphitheatre; but no traces of such opening remained. The rocks presented a high impenetrable wall over which the torrent came tumbling in a sheet of feathery foam, and fell into a broad deep basin, black from the shadows of the surrounding forest. Here, then, poor Rip was brought to a stand. He again called and whistled after his dog; he was only answered by the cawing of a flock of idle crows, sporting high in air about a dry tree that overhung a sunny precipice; and who, secure in their elevation, seemed to look down and scoff at the poor man's perplexities. What was to be done? the morning was passing away, and Rip felt famished for want of his breakfast. He grieved to give up his dog and gun; he dreaded to meet his wife; but it would not do to starve among the mountains. He shook his head, shouldered the rusty firelock, and, with a heart full of trouble and anxiety, turned his steps homeward.

As he approached the village he met a number of people, but none whom he knew, which somewhat surprised him, for he had thought himself acquainted with every one in the country round. Their dress, too, was of a different fashion from that to which he was accustomed. They all stared at him with equal marks of surprise, and whenever they cast their eyes upon him, invariably stroked their chins. The constant recurrence of this ges-

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19 Hollands, Dutch gin • **41 roysters,** revellers, roisterers

ture induced Rip, involuntarily, to do the same, when, to his astonishment, he found his beard had grown a foot long!

He had now entered the skirts of the village. A troop of strange children ran at his heels, hooting after him, and pointing at his gray beard. The dogs, too, not one of which he recognized for an old acquaintance, barked at him as he passed. The very village was altered; it was larger and more populous. There were rows of houses which he had never seen before, and those which had been his familiar haunts had disappeared. Strange names were over the doors—strange faces at the windows—every thing was strange. His mind now misgave him; he began to doubt whether both he and the world around him were not bewitched. Surely this was his native village, which he had left but the day before. There stood the Kaatskill mountains—there ran the silvery Hudson at a distance—there was every hill and dale precisely as it had always been—Rip was sorely perplexed—"That flagon last night," thought he, "has addled my poor head sadly."

It was with some difficulty that he found the way to his own house, which he approached with silent awe, expecting every moment to hear the shrill voice of Dame Van Winkle. He found the house gone to decay—the roof fallen in, the windows shattered, and the doors off the hinges. A half-starved dog that looked like Wolf was skulking about it. Rip called him by name, but the cur snarled, showed his teeth, and passed on. This was an unkind cut indeed—"My very dog," sighed poor Rip, "has forgotten me!"

He entered the house, which, to tell the truth, Dame Van Winkle had always kept in neat order. It was empty, forlorn, and apparently abandoned. This desolateness overcame all his connubial fears—he called loudly for his wife and children—the lonely chambers rang for a moment with his voice, and then all again was silence.

He now hurried forth, and hastened to his old resort, the village inn—but it too was gone. A large rickety wooden building stood in its place, with great gaping windows, some of them broken and mended with old hats and petticoats, and over the door was painted, "the Union Hotel, by Jonathan Doolittle." Instead of the great tree that used to shelter the quiet little Dutch inn of yore, there was now reared a tall naked pole, with something on the top that looked like a red night-cap, and from it was fluttering a flag, on which was a singular assemblage of stars and stripes—all this was strange and incomprehensible. He recognized on the sign, however, the ruby face of King George, under which he had smoked so many a peaceful pipe; but even this was singularly metamorphosed. The red coat was changed for one of blue and buff, a sword was held in the hand instead of a sceptre, the head was decorated with a cocked hat, and underneath was painted in large characters, GENERAL WASHINGTON.

There was, as usual, a crowd of folk about the door, but none that Rip recollected. The very character of the people seemed changed. There was a busy, bustling, disputatious tone about it, instead of the accustomed phlegm and drowsy tranquillity. He looked in vain for the sage Nicholas Vedder, with his broad face, double chin, and fair long pipe, uttering clouds of tobacco-smoke instead of idle speeches; or Van Bummel, the schoolmaster, doling forth the contents of an ancient newspaper. In place of these, a lean, bilious-looking fellow, with his pockets full of handbills, was haranguing vehemently about rights of citizens—elections—members of congress—liberty—Bunker's Hill—heroes of seventy-six—and other words, which were a perfect Babylonish jargon to the bewildered Van Winkle.

The appearance of Rip, with his long grizzled beard, his rusty fowling-piece, his uncouth dress, and an army of women and children at his heels, soon attracted the attention of the tavern politicians. They crowded round him, eyeing him from head to foot with great curiosity. The orator bustled up to him, and, drawing him partly aside, inquired "on which side he voted?" Rip stared in vacant stupidity. Another short but busy little fellow pulled him by the arm, and, rising on tiptoe, inquired in his ear, "Whether he was Federal or Democrat?" Rip was equally at a loss to comprehend the question; when a knowing, self-important old gentleman, in a sharp cocked hat, made his way through the crowd, putting them to the right and left with his elbows as he passed, and planting himself before Van Winkle, with one arm akimbo, the other resting on his cane, his keen eyes and sharp hat penetrating, as it were, into his very soul, demanded in an austere tone, "what brought him to the election with a

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46 red night-cap, the "liberty cap." See Bryant's "The Antiquity of Freedom," p. 477 • **70 Babylonish jargon,** unintelligible speech, apparently an allusion to the Tower of Babel, Genesis 11:1-9 • **81 Federal or Democrat?** i.e., a Federalist or a supporter of Jefferson

gun on his shoulder, and a mob at his heels, and whether he meant to breed a riot in the village?"—"Alas! gentlemen," cried Rip, somewhat dismayed, "I am a poor quiet man, a native of the place, and a loyal subject of the king, God bless him!"

Here a general shout burst from the by-standers—"A tory! a tory! a spy! a refugee! hustle him! away with him!" It was with great difficulty that the self-important man in the cocked hat restored order; and, having assumed a tenfold austerity of brow, demanded again of the unknown culprit, what he came there for, and whom he was seeking? The poor man humbly assured him that he meant no harm, but merely came there in search of some of his neighbors, who used to keep about the tavern.

"Well—who are they?—name them."

Rip bethought himself a moment, and inquired, "Where's Nicholas Vedder?"

There was a silence for a little while, when an old man replied, in a thin piping voice, "Nicholas Vedder! why, he is dead and gone these eighteen years! There was a wooden tombstone in the church-yard that used to tell all about him, but that's rotten and gone too."

"Where's Brom Dutcher?"

"Oh, he went off to the army in the beginning of the war; some say he was killed at the storming of Stony Point—others say he was drowned in a squall at the foot of Anthony's Nose. I don't know—he never came back again."

"Where's Van Bummel, the schoolmaster?"

"He went off to the wars too, was a great militia general, and is now in congress."

Rip's heart died away at hearing of these sad changes in his home and friends, and finding himself thus alone in the world. Every answer puzzled him, too, by treating of such enormous lapses of time, and of matters which he could not understand: war—congress—Stony Point;—he had no courage to ask after any more friends, but cried out in despair, "Does nobody here know Rip Van Winkle?"

"Oh, Rip Van Winkle!" exclaimed two or three, "Oh, to be sure! that's Rip Van Winkle yonder, leaning against the tree."

Rip looked, and beheld a precise counterpart of himself, as he went up the mountain: apparently as lazy, and certainly as ragged. The poor fellow was now completely confounded. He doubted his own identity, and whether he was himself or another man. In the midst of his bewilderment, the man in the cocked hat demanded who he was, and what was his name?

"God knows," exclaimed he, at his wit's end; "I'm not myself—I'm somebody else—that's me yonder—no—that's somebody else got into my shoes—I was myself last night, but I fell asleep on the mountain, and they've changed my gun, and every thing's changed, and I'm changed, and I can't tell what's my name, or who I am."

The by-standers began now to look at each other, nod, wink significantly, and tap their fingers against their foreheads. There was a whisper, also, about securing the gun, and keeping the old fellow from doing mischief, at the very suggestion of which the self-important man in the cocked hat retired with some precipitation. At this critical moment a fresh comely woman pressed through the throng to get a peep at the gray-bearded man. She had a chubby child in her arms, which, frightened at his looks, began to cry. "Hush, Rip," cried she, "hush, you little fool; the old man won't hurt you." The name of the child, the air of the mother, the tone of her voice, all awakened a train of recollections in his mind. "What is your name, my good woman?" asked he.

"Judith Gardenier."

"And your father's name?"

"Ah, poor man, Rip Van Winkle was his name, but it's twenty years since he went away from home with his gun, and never has been heard of since—his dog came home without him; but whether he shot himself, or was carried away by the Indians, nobody can tell. I was then but a little girl."

Rip had but one more question to ask; but he put it with a faltering voice:

"Where's your mother?"

"Oh, she too had died but a short time since; she broke a blood-vessel in a fit of passion at a New-England peddler."

There was a drop of comfort, at least, in this intelligence. The honest man could contain himself no longer. He caught his daughter and her child in his arms. "I am your father!" cried he—"Young Rip Van Winkle

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26 Stony Point, a rocky headland on the west bank of the Hudson a few miles below West Point • 28 Anthony's Nose. See note, p. 548

once—old Rip Van Winkle now!—Does nobody know poor Rip Van Winkle?"

All stood amazed, until an old woman, tottering out from among the crowd, put her hand to her brow, and peering under it in his face for a moment, exclaimed, "Sure enough! it is Rip Van Winkle—it is himself!—Welcome home again, old neighbor—Why, where have you been these twenty long years?"

Rip's story was soon told, for the whole twenty years had been to him but as one night. The neighbors stared when they heard it; some were seen to wink at each other, and put their tongues in their cheeks: and the self-important man in the cocked hat, who, when the alarm was over, had returned to the field, screwed down the corners of his mouth, and shook his head—upon which there was a general shaking of the head throughout the assemblage.

It was determined, however, to take the opinion of old Peter Vanderdonk, who was seen slowly advancing up the road. He was a descendant of the historian of that name, who wrote one of the earliest accounts of the province. Peter was the most ancient inhabitant of the village, and well versed in all the wonderful events and traditions of the neighborhood. He recollected Rip at once, and corroborated his story in the most satisfactory manner. He assured the company that it was a fact, handed down from his ancestor the historian, that the Kaatskill mountains had always been haunted by strange beings. That it was affirmed that the great Hendrick Hudson, the first discoverer of the river and country, kept a kind of vigil there every twenty years, with his crew of the Half-moon; being permitted in this way to revisit the scenes of his enterprise, and keep a guardian eye upon the river, and the great city called by his name. That his father had once seen them in their old Dutch dresses playing at nine-pins in a hollow of the mountain; and that he himself had heard, one summer afternoon, the sound of their balls, like distant peals of thunder.

To make a long story short, the company broke up, and returned to the more important concerns of the election. Rip's daughter took him home to live with her; she had a snug, well-furnished house, and a stout cheery farmer for a husband, whom Rip recollected for one of the urchins that used to climb upon his back. As to Rip's son and heir, who was the ditto of himself, seen leaning against the tree, he was employed to work on the farm; but evinced an hereditary disposition to attend to any thing else but his business.

Rip now resumed his old walks and habits; he soon found many of his former cronies, though all rather the worse for the wear and tear of time; and preferred making friends among the rising generation, with whom he soon grew into great favor.

Having nothing to do at home, and being arrived at that happy age when a man can be idle with impunity, he took his place once more on the bench at the inn door, and was reverenced as one of the patriarchs of the village, and a chronicle of the old times "before the war." It was some time before he could get into the regular track of gossip, or could be made to comprehend the strange events that had taken place during his torpor. How that there had been a revolutionary war—that the country had thrown off the yoke of old England—and that, instead of being a subject of his Majesty George the Third, he was now a free citizen of the United States. Rip, in fact, was no politician; the changes of states and empires made but little impression on him; but there was one species of despotism under which he had long groaned, and that was—petticoat government. Happily that was at an end; he had got his neck out of the yoke of matrimony, and could go in and out whenever he pleased, without dreading the tyranny of Dame Van Winkle. Whenever her name was mentioned, however, he shook his head, shrugged his shoulders, and cast up his eyes; which might pass either for an expression of resignation to his fate, or joy at his deliverance.

He used to tell his story to every stranger that arrived at Mr. Doolittle's hotel. He was observed, at first, to vary on some points every time he told it, which was, doubtless, owing to his having so recently awaked. It at last settled down precisely to the tale I have related, and not a man, woman, or child in the neighborhood, but knew it by heart. Some always pretended to doubt the reality of it, and insisted that Rip had been out of his head, and that this was one point on which he always remained flighty. The old Dutch inhabitants, however, almost universally gave it full credit. Even to this day

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20 **the historian,** Adriaen Van der Donck (1620-1655?), author of a description of New Netherland, in Dutch, published at Amsterdam in 1655 • 34 **great city.** Hudson, on the east bank of the river, across from the Catskills, was a thriving shipping center in Irving's day

they never hear a thunderstorm of a summer afternoon about the Kaatskill, but they say Hendrick Hudson and his crew are at their game of nine-pins; and it is a common wish of all henpecked husbands in the neighborhood, when life hangs heavy on their hands, that they might have a quieting draught out of Rip Van Winkle's flagon.

NOTE

The foregoing Tale, one would suspect, had been suggested to Mr. Knickerbocker by a little German superstition about the Emperor Frederick *der Rothbart,* and the Kypphauser mountain: the subjoined note, however, which he had appended to the tale, shows that it is an absolute fact, narrated with his usual fidelity:

"The story of Rip Van Winkle may seem incredible to many, but nevertheless I give it my full belief, for I know the vicinity of our old Dutch settlements to have been very subject to marvellous events and appearances. Indeed, I have heard many stranger stories than this, in the villages along the Hudson; all of which were too well authenticated to admit of a doubt. I have even talked with Rip Van Winkle myself, who, when last I saw him, was a very venerable old man, and so perfectly rational and consistent on every other point, that I think no conscientious person could refuse to take this into the bargain; nay, I have seen a certificate on the subject taken before a country justice and signed with a cross, in the justice's own handwriting. The story, therefore, is beyond the possibility of doubt.

D.K."

POSTSCRIPT

The following are travelling notes from a memorandum-book of Mr. Knickerbocker:

The Kaatsberg, or Catskill Mountains, have always been a region full of fable. The Indians considered them the abode of spirits, who influenced the weather, spreading sunshine or clouds over the landscape, and sending good or bad hunting seasons. They were ruled by an old squaw spirit, said to be their mother. She dwelt on the highest peak of the Catskills, and had charge of the doors of day and night to open and shut them at the proper hour. She hung up the new moons in the skies, and cut up the old ones into stars. In times of drought, if properly propitiated, she would spin light summer clouds out of cobwebs and morning dew, and send them off from the crest of the mountain, flake after flake, like flakes of carded cotton, to float in the air; until, dissolved by the heat of the sun, they would fall in gentle showers, causing the grass to spring, the fruits to ripen, and the corn to grow an inch an hour. If displeased, however, she would brew up clouds black as ink, sitting in the midst of them like a bottle-bellied spider in the midst of its web; and when these clouds broke, wo betide the valleys!

In old times, say the Indian traditions, there was a kind of Manitou or Spirit, who kept about the wildest recesses of the Catskill Mountains, and took a mischievous pleasure in wreaking all kinds of evils and vexations upon the red men. Sometimes he would assume the form of a bear, a panther, or a deer, lead the bewildered hunter a weary chase through tangled forests and among ragged rocks; and then spring off with a loud ho! ho! leaving him aghast on the brink of a bettling precipice or raging torrent.

The favorite abode of this Manitou is still shown. It is a great rock or cliff on the loneliest part of the mountains, and, from the flowering vines which clamber about it, and the wild flowers which abound in its neighborhood, is known by the name of the Garden Rock. Near the foot of it is a small lake, the haunt of the solitary bittern, with water-snakes basking in the sun on the leaves of the pond-lilies which lie on the surface. This place was held in great awe by the Indians, insomuch that the boldest hunter would not pursue his game within its precincts. Once upon a time, however, a hunter who had lost his way, penetrated to the garden rock, where he beheld a number of gourds placed in the crotches of trees. One of these he seized and made off with it, but in the hurry of his retreat he let it fall among the rocks, when a great stream gushed forth, which washed him away and swept him down precipices, where he was dashed to pieces, and the stream made its way to the Hudson, and continues to flow to the present day; being the identical stream known by the name of the Kaaterskill.

1818·1819

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10 der Rothbart, the Redbeard: Frederick I (better known as Frederick Barbarossa), emperor of the Holy Roman Empire, 1152-1190. He sleeps, according to peasant tradition, in a mountain in central Germany • **Postscript,** added after 1819

From · The Sketch Book

The Legend of Sleepy Hollow

Found Among the Papers of the Late Diedrich Knickerbocker

A pleasing land of drowsy head it was,
Of dreams that wave before the half-shut eye;
And of gay castles in the clouds that pass,
For ever flushing round a summer sky.
CASTLE OF INDOLENCE

In the bosom of one of those spacious coves which indent the eastern shore of the Hudson, at that broad expansion of the river denominated by the ancient Dutch navigators the Tappan Zee, and where they always prudently shortened sail, and implored the protection of St. Nicholas when they crossed, there lies a small market-town or rural port, which by some is called Greensburgh, but which is more generally and properly known by the name of Tarry Town. This name was given, we are told, in former days, by the good housewives of the adjacent country, from the inveterate propensity of their husbands to linger about the village tavern on market days. Be that as it may, I do not vouch for the fact, but merely advert to it, for the sake of being precise and authentic. Not far from this village, perhaps about two miles, there is a little valley, or rather lap of land, among high hills, which is one of the quietest places in the whole world. A small brook glides through it, with just murmur enough to lull one to repose; and the occasional whistle of a quail, or tapping of a woodpecker, is almost the only sound that ever breaks in upon the uniform tranquillity.

I recollect that, when a stripling, my first exploit in squirrel-shooting was in a grove of tall walnut-trees that shades one side of the valley. I had wandered into it at noon time, when all nature is peculiarly quiet, and was startled by the roar of my own gun, as it broke the Sabbath stillness around, and was prolonged and reverberated by the angry echoes. If ever I should wish for a retreat, whither I might steal from the world and its distractions, and dream quietly away the remnant of a troubled life, I know of none more promising than this little valley.

From the listless repose of the place, and the peculiar character of its inhabitants, who are descendants from the original Dutch settlers, this sequestered glen has long been known by the name of SLEEPY HOLLOW, and its rustic lads are called the Sleepy Hollow Boys throughout all the neighboring country. A drowsy, dreamy influence seems to hang over the land, and to pervade the very atmosphere. Some say that the place was bewitched by a high German doctor, during the early days of the settlement; others, that an old Indian chief, the prophet or wizard of his tribe, held his powwows there before the country was discovered by Master Hendrick Hudson. Certain it is, the place still continues under the sway of some witching power, that holds a spell over the minds of the good people, causing them to walk in a continual reverie. They are given to all kinds of marvellous beliefs; are subject to trances and visions; and frequently see strange sights, and hear music and voices in the air. The whole neighborhood abounds with local tales, haunted spots, and twilight superstitions; stars shoot and meteors glare oftener across the valley than in any other part of the country, and the nightmare, with her whole nine fold, seems to make it the favorite scene of her gambols.

The dominant spirit, however, that haunts this enchanted region, and seems to be commander-in-chief of all the powers of the air, is the apparition of a figure on horseback without a head. It is said by some to be the ghost of a Hessian trooper, whose head had been carried away by a cannon-ball, in some nameless battle during the revolutionary war; and who is ever and anon seen by the country folk, hurrying along in the gloom of night, as if on the wings of the wind. His haunts are not confined to the valley, but extend at times to the adjacent roads, and especially to the vicinity of a church

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Castle of Indolence (1748), an English poem in imitation of Spenser, by James Thomson (1700-1748). The lines appear in Bk. I • 9 **Tarry Town,** one of the first Dutch settlements on the Hudson. It was Irving's home after 1835, and he was buried in the cemetery at Sleepy Hollow • 16 **lap,** surface or bosom (archaic and poetic) • 42 **high German,** southern or highland German • 45 **Hendrick Hudson** (d. 1611?) entered the river bearing his name in 1609 • 56 **nine fold,** an allusion to a line in King Lear, Act III, Scene iv. In folk belief the nightmare was a demon; nine fold refers to her offspring (from foals) or familiars. See note, pp. 146 and 148

at no great distance. Indeed, certain of the most authentic historians of those parts, who have been careful in collecting and collating the floating facts concerning this spectre, allege that the body of the trooper, having been buried in the church-yard, the ghost rides forth to the scene of battle in nightly quest of his head; and that the rushing speed with which he sometimes passes along the Hollow, like a midnight blast, is owing to his being belated, and in a hurry to get back to the church-yard before daybreak.

Such is the general purport of this legendary superstition, which has furnished materials for many a wild story in that region of shadows; and the spectre is known, at all the country firesides, by the name of the Headless Horseman of Sleepy Hollow.

It is remarkable that the visionary propensity I have mentioned is not confined to the native inhabitants of the valley, but is unconsciously imbibed by every one who resides there for a time. However wide awake they may have been before they entered that sleepy region, they are sure, in a little time, to inhale the witching influence of the air, and begin to grow imaginative—to dream dreams, and see apparitions.

I mention this peaceful spot with all possible laud; for it is in such little retired Dutch valleys, found here and there embosomed in the great State of New-York, that population, manners, and customs, remain fixed; while the great torrent of migration and improvement, which is making such incessant changes in other parts of this restless country, sweeps by them unobserved. They are like those little nooks of still water which border a rapid stream; where we may see the straw and bubble riding quietly at anchor, or slowly revolving in their mimic harbor, undisturbed by the rush of the passing current. Though many years have elapsed since I trod the drowsy shades of Sleepy Hollow, yet I question whether I should not still find the same trees and the same families vegetating in its sheltered bosom.

In this by-place of nature, there abode, in a remote period of American history, that is to say, some thirty years since, a worthy wight of the name of Ichabod Crane; who sojourned, or, as he expressed it, "tarried," in Sleepy Hollow, for the purpose of instructing the children of the vicinity. He was a native of Connecticut; a State which supplies the Union with pioneers for the mind as well as for the forest, and sends forth yearly its legions of frontier woodsmen and country schoolmasters. The cognomen of Crane was not inapplicable to his person. He was tall, but exceedingly lank, with narrow shoulders, long arms and legs, hands that dangled a mile out of his sleeves, feet that might have served for shovels, and his whole frame most loosely hung together. His head was small, and flat at top, with huge ears, large green glassy eyes, and a long snipe nose, so that it looked like a weather-cock, perched upon his spindle neck, to tell which way the wind blew. To see him striding along the profile of a hill on a windy day, with his clothes bagging and fluttering about him, one might have mistaken him for the genius of famine descending upon the earth, or some scarecrow eloped from a cornfield.

His school-house was a low building of one large room, rudely constructed of logs; the windows partly glazed, and partly patched with leaves of old copy-books. It was most ingeniously secured at vacant hours, by a withe twisted in the handle of the door, and stakes set against the window shutters; so that, though a thief might get in with perfect ease, he would find some embarrassment in getting out; an idea most probably borrowed by the architect, Yost Van Houten, from the mystery of an eel-pot. The school-house stood in a rather lonely but pleasant situation, just at the foot of a woody hill, with a brook running close by, and a formidable birch tree growing at one end of it. From hence the low murmur of his pupils' voices, conning over their lessons, might be heard in a drowsy summer's day, like the hum of a bee-hive; interrupted now and then by the authoritative voice of the master, in the tone of menace or command; or, peradventure, by the appalling sound of the birch, as he urged some tardy loiterer along the flowery path of knowledge. Truth to say, he was a conscientious man, and ever bore in mind the golden maxim, "Spare the rod and spoil the child."—Ichabod Crane's scholars certainly were not spoiled.

I would not have it imagined, however, that he was one of those cruel potentates of the school, who joy in the smart of their subjects; on the contrary, he administered justice with discrimination rather than severity; taking the burthen off the backs of the weak, and

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10 before daybreak. See the actions of the ghost of Hamlet's father, in *Hamlet*, Act I • **59 genius,** guiding spirit • **82 "Spare . . . child."** See Proverbs 13-24: "He that spareth his rod hateth his son." In the form used here the maxim first appeared in Part II (1664) of *Hudibras*, by Samuel Butler (1612-1680), an English satirical poet

laying it on those of the strong. Your mere puny stripling, that winced at the least flourish of the rod, was passed by with indulgence; but the claims of justice were satisfied by inflicting a double portion on some little, tough, wrong-headed, broad-skirted Dutch urchin, who sulked and swelled and grew dogged and sullen beneath the birch. All this he called "doing his duty by their parents;" and he never inflicted a chastisement without following it by the assurance, so consolatory to the smarting urchin, that "he would remember it, and thank him for it the longest day he had to live."

When school hours were over, he was even the companion and playmate of the larger boys; and on holiday afternoons would convoy some of the smaller ones home, who happened to have pretty sisters, or good housewives for mothers, noted for the comforts of the cupboard. Indeed it behooved him to keep on good terms with his pupils. The revenue arising from his school was small, and would have been scarcely sufficient to furnish him with daily bread, for he was a huge feeder, and though lank, had the dilating powers of an anaconda; but to help out his maintenance, he was, according to country custom in those parts, boarded and lodged at the houses of the farmers, whose children he instructed. With these he lived successively a week at a time; thus going the rounds of the neighborhood, with all his worldly effects tied up in a cotton handkerchief.

That all this might not be too onerous on the purses of his rustic patrons, who are apt to consider the costs of schooling a grievous burden, and schoolmasters as mere drones, he had various ways of rendering himself both useful and agreeable. He assisted the farmers occasionally in the lighter labors of their farms; helped to make hay; mended the fences; took the horses to water; drove the cows from pasture; and cut wood for the winter fire. He laid aside, too, all the dominant dignity and absolute sway with which he lorded it in his little empire, the school, and became wonderfully gentle and ingratiating. He found favor in the eyes of the mothers, by petting the children, particularly the youngest; and like the lion bold, which whilom so magnanimously the lamb did hold, he would sit with a child on one knee, and rock a cradle with his foot for whole hours together.

In addition to his other vocations, he was the singing-master of the neighborhood, and picked up many bright shillings by instructing the young folks in psalmody. It was a matter of no little vanity to him, on Sundays, to take his station in front of the church gallery, with a band of chosen singers; where, in his own mind, he completely carried away the palm from the parson. Certain it is, his voice resounded far above all the rest of the congregation; and there are peculiar quavers still to be heard in that church, and which may even be heard half a mile off, quite to the opposite side of the mill-pond, on a still Sunday morning, which are said to be legitimately descended from the nose of Ichabod Crane. Thus, by divers little make-shifts in that ingenious way which is commonly denominated "by hook and by crook," the worthy pedagogue got on tolerably enough, and was thought, by all who understood nothing of the labor of headwork, to have a wonderfully easy life of it.

The schoolmaster is generally a man of some importance in the female circle of a rural neighborhood; being considered a kind of idle gentlemanlike personage, of vastly superior taste and accomplishments to the rough country swains, and, indeed, inferior in learning only to the parson. His appearance, therefore, is apt to occasion some little stir at the tea-table of a farmhouse, and the addition of a supernumerary dish of cakes or sweetmeats, or, peradventure, the parade of a silver tea-pot. Our man of letters, therefore, was peculiarly happy in the smiles of all the country damsels. How he would figure among them in the church-yard, between services on Sundays! gathering grapes for them from the wild vines that overrun the surrounding trees; reciting for their amusement all the epitaphs on the tombstones; or sauntering, with a whole bevy of them, along the banks of the adjacent mill-pond; while the more bashful country bumpkins hung sheepishly back, envying his superior elegance and address.

From his half itinerant life, also, he was a kind of travelling gazette, carrying the whole budget of local gossip from house to house; so that his appearance was always greeted with satisfaction. He was, moreover, esteemed by the women as a man of great erudition, for he had read several books quite through, and was a perfect master of Cotton Mather's history of New-England

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40 the lion bold . . . , a couplet which appears in the 1747 edition of *The New England Primer* • **58 "by . . . crook,"** a phrase from "Colyn Cloute" (1523), by the English poet, John Skelton (1460?-1529) • **87 Cotton Mather's history,** a reference either to the *Memorable Providences* (1689) or to *Wonders of the Invisible World* (1693). See p. 145

Witchcraft, in which, by the way, he most firmly and potently believed.

He was, in fact, an odd mixture of small shrewdness and simple credulity. His appetite for the marvellous, and his powers of digesting it, were equally extraordinary; and both had been increased by his residence in this spell-bound region. No tale was too gross or monstrous for his capacious swallow. It was often his delight, after his school was dismissed in the afternoon, to stretch himself on the rich bed of clover, bordering the little brook that whimpered by his school-house, and there con over old Mather's direful tales, until the gathering dusk of the evening made the printed page a mere mist before his eyes. Then, as he wended his way, by swamp and stream and awful woodland, to the farmhouse where he happened to be quartered, every sound of nature, at that witching hour, fluttered his excited imagination: the moan of the whip-poor-will from the hill-side; the boding cry of the tree-toad, that harbinger of storm; the dreary hooting of the screech-owl, or the sudden rustling in the thicket of birds frightened from their roost. The fire-flies, too, which sparkled most vividly in the darkest places, now and then startled him, as one of uncommon brightness would stream across his path; and if, by chance, a huge blockhead of a beetle came winging his blundering flight against him, the poor varlet was ready to give up the ghost, with the idea that he was struck with a witch's token. His only resource on such occasions, either to drown thought, or drive away evil spirits, was to sing psalm tunes;—and the good people of Sleepy Hollow, as they sat by their doors of an evening, were often filled with awe, at hearing his nasal melody, "in linked sweetness long drawn out," floating from the distant hill, or along the dusky road.

Another of his sources of fearful pleasure was, to pass long winter evenings with the old Dutch wives, as they sat spinning by the fire, with a row of apples roasting and spluttering along the hearth, and listen to their marvellous tales of ghosts and goblins, and haunted fields, and haunted brooks, and haunted bridges, and haunted houses, and particularly of the headless horseman, or galloping Hessian of the Hollow, as they sometimes called him. He would delight them equally by his anecdotes of witchcraft, and of the direful omens and portentous sights and sounds in the air, which prevailed in the earlier times of Connecticut; and would frighten them wofully with speculations upon comets and shooting stars; and with the alarming fact that the world did absolutely turn round, and that they were half the time topsy-turvy!

But if there was a pleasure in all this, while snugly cuddling in the chimney corner of a chamber that was all of a ruddy glow from the crackling wood fire, and where, of course, no spectre dared to show his face, it was dearly purchased by the terrors of his subsequent walk homewards. What fearful shapes and shadows beset his path amidst the dim and ghastly glare of a snowy night!—With what wistful look did he eye every trembling ray of light streaming across the waste fields from some distant window!—How often was he appalled by some shrub covered with snow, which, like a sheeted spectre, beset his very path!—How often did he shrink with curdling awe at the sound of his own steps on the frosty crust beneath his feet; and dread to look over his shoulder, lest he should behold some uncouth being tramping close behind him!—and how often was he thrown into complete dismay by some rushing blast, howling among the trees, in the idea that it was the Galloping Hessian on one of his nightly scourings!

All these, however, were mere terrors of the night, phantoms of the mind that walk in darkness; and though he had seen many spectres in his time, and been more than once beset by Satan in divers shapes, in his lonely perambulations, yet daylight put an end to all these evils; and he would have passed a pleasant life of it, in despite of the devil and all his works, if his path had not been crossed by a being that causes more perplexity to mortal man than ghosts, goblins, and the whole race of witches put together, and that was—a woman.

Among the musical disciples who assembled, one evening in each week, to receive his instructions in psalmody, was Katrina Van Tassel, the daughter and only child of a substantial Dutch farmer. She was a blooming lass of fresh eighteen; plump as a partridge; ripe and melting and rosy cheeked as one of her father's peaches, and universally famed, not merely for her beauty, but her vast expectations. She was withal a little of a coquette, as

18 **whip-poor-will.** "The whip-poor-will is a bird which is only heard at night. It receives its name from its note, which is thought to resemble those words." (Irving's note, added after 1820) • 32 **"in linked . . . out,"** a line from "L'Allegro" by John Milton (1608-1674)

might be perceived even in her dress, which was a mixture of ancient and modern fashions, as most suited to set off her charms. She wore the ornaments of pure yellow gold, which her great-great-grandmother had brought over from Saardam; the tempting stomacher of the olden time; and withal a provokingly short petticoat, to display the prettiest foot and ankle in the country round.

Ichabod Crane had a soft and foolish heart towards the sex; and it is not to be wondered at, that so tempting a morsel soon found favor in his eyes; more especially after he had visited her in her paternal mansion. Old Baltus Van Tassel was a perfect picture of a thriving, contented, liberal-hearted farmer. He seldom, it is true, sent either his eyes or his thoughts beyond the boundaries of his own farm; but within those every thing was snug, happy, and well-conditioned. He was satisfied with his wealth, but not proud of it; and piqued himself upon the hearty abundance, rather than the style in which he lived. His stronghold was situated on the banks of the Hudson, in one of those green, sheltered, fertile nooks, in which the Dutch farmers are so fond of nestling. A great elm-tree spread its broad branches over it; at the foot of which bubbled up a spring of the softest and sweetest water, in a little well, formed of a barrel; and then stole sparkling away through the grass, to a neighboring brook, that bubbled along among alders and dwarf willows. Hard by the farmhouse was a vast barn, that might have served for a church; every window and crevice of which seemed bursting forth with the treasures of the farm; the flail was busily resounding within it from morning to night; swallows and martins skimmed twittering about the eaves; and rows of pigeons, some with one eye turned up, as if watching the weather, some with their heads under their wings, or buried in their bosoms, and others swelling, and cooing, and bowing about their dames, were enjoying the sunshine on the roof. Sleek unwieldy porkers were grunting in the repose and abundance of their pens; whence sallied forth, now and then, troops of sucking pigs, as if to snuff the air. A stately squadron of snowy geese were riding in an adjoining pond, convoying whole fleets of ducks; regiments of turkeys were gobbling through the farmyard, and guinea fowls fretting about it, like ill-tempered housewives, with their peevish discontented cry. Before the barn door strutted the gallant cock, that pattern of a husband, a warrior, and a fine gentleman, clapping his burnished wings, and crowing in the pride and gladness of his heart—sometimes tearing up the earth with his feet, and then generously calling his ever-hungry family of wives and children to enjoy the rich morsel which he had discovered.

The pedagogue's mouth watered, as he looked upon this sumptuous promise of luxurious winter fare. In his devouring mind's eye, he pictured to himself every roasting-pig running about with a pudding in his belly, and an apple in his mouth; the pigeons were snugly put to bed in a comfortable pie, and tucked in with a coverlet of crust; the geese were swimming in their own gravy; and the ducks pairing cosily in dishes, like snug married couples, with a decent competency of onion sauce. In the porkers he saw carved out the future sleek side of bacon, and juicy relishing ham; not a turkey but he beheld daintily trussed up, with its gizzard under its wing, and, peradventure, a necklace of savory sausages; and even bright chanticleer himself lay sprawling on his back, in a side-dish, with uplifted claws, as if craving that quarter which his chivalrous spirit disdained to ask while living.

As the enraptured Ichabod fancied all this and as he rolled his great green eyes over the fat meadow-lands, the rich fields of wheat, of rye, of buckwheat, and Indian corn, and the orchards burthened with ruddy fruit, which surrounded the warm tenement of Van Tassel, his heart yearned after the damsel who was to inherit these domains, and his imagination expanded with the idea, how they might be readily turned into cash, and the money invested in immense tracts of wild land, and shingle palaces in the wilderness. Nay, his busy fancy already realized his hopes, and presented to him the blooming Katrina, with a whole family of children, mounted on the top of a wagon loaded with household trumpery, with pots and kettles dangling beneath; and he beheld himself bestriding a pacing mare, with a colt at her heels, setting out for Kentucky, Tennessee, or the Lord knows where.

When he entered the house the conquest of his heart was complete. It was one of those spacious farmhouses, with high-ridged, but lowly-sloping roofs, built in the style handed down from the first Dutch settlers; the low projecting eaves forming a piazza along the front,

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5 Saardam, Zaandam (see p. 542)

capable of being closed up in bad weather. Under this were hung flails, harness, various utensils of husbandry, and nets for fishing in the neighboring river. Benches were built along the sides for summer use; and a great spinning-wheel at one end, and a churn at the other, showed the various uses to which this important porch might be devoted. From this piazza the wondering Ichabod entered the hall, which formed the centre of the mansion and the place of usual residence. Here, rows of resplendent pewter, ranged on a long dresser, dazzled his eyes. In one corner stood a huge bag of wool ready to be spun; in another a quantity of linsey-woolsey just from the loom; ears of Indian corn, and strings of dried apples and peaches, hung in gay festoons along the walls, mingled with the gaud of red peppers; and a door left ajar gave him a peep into the best parlor, where the claw-footed chairs, and dark mahogany tables, shone like mirrors; and irons, with their accompanying shovel and tongs, glistened from their covert of asparagus tops; mock-oranges and conch-shells decorated the mantel-piece; strings of various colored birds' eggs were suspended above it: a great ostrich egg was hung from the centre of the room, and a corner cupboard, knowingly left open, displayed immense treasures of old silver and well-mended china.

From the moment Ichabod laid his eyes upon these regions of delight, the peace of his mind was at an end, and his only study was how to gain the affections of the peerless daughter of Van Tassel. In this enterprise, however, he had more real difficulties than generally fell to the lot of a knight-errant of yore, who seldom had any thing but giants, enchanters, fiery dragons, and such like easily-conquered adversaries, to contend with; and had to make his way merely through gates of iron and brass, and walls of adamant, to the castle keep, where the lady of his heart was confined; all which he achieved as easily as a man would carve his way to the centre of a Christmas pie; and then the lady gave him her hand as a matter of course. Ichabod, on the contrary, had to win his way to the heart of a country coquette, beset with a labyrinth of whims and caprices, which were for ever presenting new difficulties and impediments; and he had to encounter a host of fearful adversaries of real flesh and blood, the numerous rustic admirers, who beset every portal to her heart; keeping a watchful and angry eye upon each other, but ready to fly out in the common cause against any new competitor.

Among these the most formidable was a burly, roaring, roystering blade, of the name of Abraham, or, according to the Dutch abbreviation, Brom Van Brunt, the hero of the country round, which rang with his feats of strength and hardihood. He was broad-shouldered and double-jointed, with short curly black hair, and a bluff, but not unpleasant countenance, having a mingled air of fun and arrogance. From his Herculean frame and great powers of limb, he had received the nickname of BROM BONES, by which he was universally known. He was famed for great knowledge and skill in horsemanship, being as dexterous on horseback as a Tartar. He was foremost at all races and cock-fights; and, with the ascendency which bodily strength acquires in rustic life, was the umpire in all disputes, setting his hat on one side, and giving his decisions with an air and tone admitting of no gainsay or appeal. He was always ready for either a fight or a frolic; but had more mischief than ill-will in his composition; and, with all his overbearing roughness, there was a strong dash of waggish good humor at bottom. He had three or four boon companions, who regarded him as their model, and at the head of whom he scoured the country, attending every scene of feud or merriment for miles round. In cold weather he was distinguished by a fur cap, surmounted with a flaunting fox's tail; and when the folks at a country gathering descried this well-known crest at a distance, whisking about among a squad of hard riders, they always stood by for a squall. Sometimes his crew would be heard dashing along past the farmhouses at midnight, with whoop and halloo, like a troop of Don Cossacks; and the old dames, startled out of their sleep, would listen for a moment till the hurry-scurry had clattered by, and then exclaim, "Ay, there goes Brom Bones and his gang!" The neighbors looked upon him with a mixture of awe, admiration, and good-will; and when any madcap prank, or rustic brawl, occurred in the vicinity, always shook their heads, and warranted Brom Bones was at the bottom of it.

This rantipole hero had for some time singled out the

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18 and irons. 1820: andirons. The 1848 text is probably in error • **20 mock-oranges,** probably syringas • **78 Don Cossacks,** Cossacks of the Don River region of Russia. The Cossacks were originally tribes notable for their strong military (and especially their cavalry) organization; the name is variously interpreted as meaning "adventurers," "freebooters," and "plunderers" • **87 rantipole,** reckless, wild (rare)

blooming Katrina for the object of his uncouth gallantries, and though his amorous toyings were something like the gentle caresses and endearments of a bear, yet it was whispered that she did not altogether discourage his hopes. Certain it is, his advances were signals for rival candidates to retire, who felt no inclination to cross a lion in his amours; insomuch, that when his horse was seen tied to Van Tassel's paling, on a Sunday night, a sure sign that his master was courting, or, as it is termed, "sparking," within all other suitors passed by in despair, and carried the war into other quarters.

Such was the formidable rival with whom Ichabod Crane had to contend, and, considering all things, a stouter man than he would have shrunk from the competition, and a wiser man would have despaired. He had, however, a happy mixture of pliability and perseverance in his nature; he was in form and spirit like a supple-jack—yielding, but tough; though he bent, he never broke; and though he bowed beneath the slightest pressure, yet, the moment it was away—jerk! he was erect, and carried his head as high as ever.

To have taken the field openly against his rival would have been madness; for he was not a man to be thwarted in his amours, any more than that stormy lover, Achilles. Ichabod, therefore, made his advances in a quiet and gently-insinuating manner. Under cover of his character of singing-master, he made frequent visits at the farmhouse; not that he had any thing to apprehend from the meddlesome interference of parents, which is so often a stumbling-block in the path of lovers. Balt Van Tassel was an easy indulgent soul; he loved his daughter better even than his pipe, and, like a reasonable man and an excellent father, let her have her way in every thing. His notable little wife, too, had enough to do to attend to her housekeeping and manage her poultry; for, as she sagely observed, ducks and geese are foolish things, and must be looked after, but girls can take care of themselves. Thus while the busy dame bustled about the house, or plied her spinning-wheel at one end of the piazza, honest Balt would sit smoking his evening pipe at the other, watching the achievements of a little wooden warrior, who, armed with a sword in each hand, was most valiantly fighting the wind on the pinnacle of the barn. In the mean time, Ichabod would carry on his suit with the daughter by the side of the spring under the great elm, or sauntering along in the twilight, that hour so favorable to the lover's eloquence.

I profess not to know how women's hearts are wooed and won. To me they have always been matters of riddle and admiration. Some seem to have but one vulnerable point, or door of access; while others have a thousand avenues, and may be captured in a thousand different ways. It is a great triumph of skill to gain the former, but a still greater proof of generalship to maintain possession of the latter, for the man must battle for his fortress at every door and window. He who wins a thousand common hearts is therefore entitled to some renown; but he who keeps undisputed sway over the heart of a coquette, is indeed a hero. Certain it is, this was not the case with the redoubtable Brom Bones; and from the moment Ichabod Crane made his advances, the interests of the former evidently declined; his horse was no longer seen tied at the palings on Sunday nights, and a deadly feud gradually arose between him and the preceptor of Sleepy Hollow.

Brom, who had a degree of rough chivalry in his nature, would fain have carried matters to open warfare, and have settled their pretensions to the lady, according to the mode of those most concise and simple reasoners, the knights-errant of yore—by single combat; but Ichabod was too conscious of the superior might of his adversary to enter the lists against him: he had overheard a boast of Bones, that he would "double the schoolmaster up, and lay him on a shelf of his own school-house;" and he was too wary to give him an opportunity. There was something extremely provoking in this obstinately pacific system; it left Brom no alternative but to draw upon the funds of rustic waggery in his disposition, and to play off boorish practical jokes upon his rival. Ichabod became the object of whimsical persecution to Bones, and his gang of rough riders. They harried his hitherto peaceful domains; smoked out his singing school, by stopping up the chimney; broke into the school-house at night, in spite of its formidable fastenings of withe and window stakes, and turned every thing topsy-turvy: so that the poor schoolmaster began to think all the witches in the country held their meetings there. But what was still

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17 **supple-jack,** a walking-stick, cut from a climbing vine • 24 **Achilles,** an allusion to his passion for Polyxena, daughter of Priam, the Trojan. Slain while arranging for the marriage, which was expected to bring peace, Achilles or his shade returned after death to demand his promised bride; she was accordingly sacrificed by the Greeks

more annoying, Brom took all opportunities of turning him into ridicule in presence of his mistress, and had a scoundrel dog whom he taught to whine in the most ludicrous manner, and introduced as a rival of Ichabod's to instruct her in psalmody.

In this way matters went on for some time, without producing any material effect on the relative situation of the contending powers. On a fine autumnal afternoon, Ichabod, in pensive mood, sat enthroned on a lofty stool whence he usually watched all the concerns of his little literary realm. In his hand he swayed a ferule, that sceptre of despotic power; the birch of justice reposed on three nails, behind the throne, a constant terror to evil doers; while on the desk before him might be seen sundry contraband articles and prohibited weapons, detected upon the persons of idle urchins; such as half-munched apples, popguns, whirligigs, fly-cages, and whole legions of rampant little paper game-cocks. Apparently there had been some appalling act of justice recently inflicted, for his scholars were all busily intent upon their books, or slyly whispering behind them with one eye kept upon the master; and a kind of buzzing stillness reigned throughout the school-room. It was suddenly interrupted by the appearance of a Negro, in tow-cloth jacket and trowsers, a round-crowned fragment of a hat, like the cap of Mercury, and mounted on the back of a ragged, wild, half-broken colt, which he managed with a rope by way of halter. He came clattering up to the school door with an invitation to Ichabod to attend a merry-making or "quilting frolic," to be held that evening at Mynheer Van Tassel's; and having delivered his message with that air of importance, and effort at fine language, which a Negro is apt to display on petty embassies of the kind, he dashed over the brook, and was seen scampering away up the hollow, full of the importance and hurry of his mission.

All was now bustle and hubbub in the late quiet school-room. The scholars were hurried through their lessons, without stopping at trifles; those who were nimble skipped over half with impunity, and those who were tardy, had a smart application now and then in the rear, to quicken their speed, or help them over a tall word. Books were flung aside without being put away on the shelves, inkstands were overturned, benches thrown down, and the whole school was turned loose an hour before the usual time; bursting forth like a legion of young imps, yelping and racketing about the green, in joy at their early emancipation.

The gallant Ichabod now spent at least an extra half hour at his toilet, brushing and furbishing up his best, and indeed only suit of rusty black, and arranging his looks by a bit of broken looking-glass, that hung up in the school-house. That he might make his appearance before his mistress in the true style of a cavalier, he borrowed a horse from the farmer with whom he was domiciliated, a choleric old Dutchman, of the name of Hans Van Ripper, and, thus gallantly mounted, issued forth, like a night-errant in quest of adventures. But it is meet I should, in the true spirit of romantic story, give some account of the looks and equipments of my hero and his steed. The animal he bestrode was a broken-down plough-horse, that had outlived almost every thing but his viciousness. He was gaunt and shagged, with a ewe neck and a head like a hammer; his rusty mane and tail were tangled and knotted with burrs; one eye had lost its pupil, and was glaring and spectral; but the other had the gleam of a genuine devil in it. Still he must have had fire and mettle in his day, if we may judge from the name he bore of Gunpowder. He had, in fact, been a favorite steed of his master's, the choleric Van Ripper, who was a furious rider, and had infused, very probably, some of his own spirit into the animal; for, old and broken-down as he looked, there was more of the lurking devil in him than in any young filly in the country.

Ichabod was a suitable figure for such a steed. He rode with short stirrups, which brought his knees nearly up to the pommel of the saddle; his sharp elbows stuck out like grasshoppers'; he carried his whip perpendicularly in his hand, like a sceptre, and, as his horse jogged on, the motion of his arms was not unlike the flapping of a pair of wings. A small wool hat rested on the top of his nose, for so his scanty strip of forehead might be called; and the skirts of his black coat fluttered out almost to the horse's tail. Such was the appearance of Ichabod and his steed, as they shambled out of the gate of Hans Van Ripper, and it was altogether such an apparition as is seldom to be met with in broad daylight.

It was, as I have said, a fine autumnal day, the sky was clear and serene, and nature wore that rich and golden

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26 cap of Mercury, the Patasus, or winged hat, symbol of Mercury's speed as messenger of the gods

livery which we always associate with the idea of abundance. The forests had put on their sober brown and yellow, while some trees of the tenderer kind had been nipped by the frosts into brilliant dyes of orange, purple, and scarlet. Streaming files of wild ducks began to make their appearance high in the air; the bark of the squirrel might be heard from the groves of beech and hickory nuts, and the pensive whistle of the quail at intervals from the neighboring stubble-field.

The small birds were taking their farewell banquets. In the fulness of their revelry, they fluttered, chirping and frolicking, from bush to bush, and tree to tree, capricious from the very profusion and variety around them. There was the honest cock-robin, the favorite game of stripling sportsmen, with its loud querulous note; and the twittering blackbirds flying in sable clouds; and the golden-winged woodpecker, with his crimson crest, his broad black gorget, and splendid plumage; and the cedar bird, with its red-tipt wings and yellow-tipt tail, and its little monteiro cap of feathers; and the blue jay, that noisy coxcomb, in his gay light-blue coat and white under-clothes; screaming and chattering, nodding and bobbing and bowing, and pretending to be on good terms with every songster of the grove.

As Ichabod jogged slowly on his way, his eye, ever open to every symptom of culinary abundance, ranged with delight over the treasures of jolly autumn. On all sides he beheld vast store of apples; some hanging in oppressive opulence on the trees; some gathered into baskets and barrels for the market; others heaped up in rich piles for the cider-press. Farther on he beheld great fields of Indian corn, with its golden ears peeping from their leafy coverts, and holding out the promise of cakes and hasty pudding; and the yellow pumpkins lying beneath them, turning up their fair round bellies to the sun, and giving ample prospects of the most luxurious of pies; and anon he passed the fragrant buckwheat fields, breathing the odor of the bee-hive, and as he beheld them, soft anticipation stole over his mind of dainty slapjacks, well buttered, and garnished with honey or treacle, by the delicate little dimpled hand of Katrina Van Tassel.

Thus feeding his mind with many sweet thoughts and "sugar suppositions," he journeyed along the sides of a range of hills which look out upon some of the goodliest scenes of the mighty Hudson. The sun gradually wheeled his broad disk down into the west. The wide bosom of the Tappan Zee lay motionless and glassy, excepting that here and there a gentle undulation waved and prolonged the blue shadow of the distant mountain. A few amber clouds floated in the sky, without a breath of air to move them. The horizon was of a fine golden tint, changing gradually into a pure apple green, and from that into the deep blue of the mid-heaven. A slanting ray lingered on the woody crests of the precipices that overhung some parts of the river, giving greater depth to the dark-gray and purple of their rocky sides. A sloop was loitering in the distance, dropping slowly down with the tide, her sail hanging uselessly against the mast; and as the reflection of the sky gleamed along the still water, it seemed as if the vessel was suspended in the air.

It was toward evening that Ichabod arrived at the castle of the Heer Van Tassel, which he found thronged with the pride and flower of the adjacent country. Old farmers, a spare leathern-faced race, in homespun coats and breeches, blue stockings, huge shoes, and magnificent pewter buckles. Their brisk withered little dames, in close crimped caps, long-waisted short-gowns, homespun petticoats, with scissors and pincushions, and gay calico pockets hanging on the outside. Buxom lasses, almost as antiquated as their mothers, excepting where a straw hat, a fine ribbon or perhaps a white frock, gave symptoms of city innovation. The sons, in short square-skirted coats with rows of stupendous brass buttons, and their hair generally queued in the fashion of the times, especially if they could procure an eel-skin for the purpose, it being esteemed, throughout the country, as a potent nourisher and strengthener of the hair.

Brom Bones, however, was the hero of the scene, having come to the gathering on his favorite steed Daredevil, a creature, like himself, full of mettle and mischief, and which no one but himself could manage. He was, in fact, noted for preferring vicious animals, given to all kinds of tricks, which kept the rider in constant risk of his neck, for he held a tractable well-broken horse as unworthy of a lad of spirit.

Fain would I pause to dwell upon the world of charms that burst upon the enraptured gaze of my hero, as he entered the state parlor of Van Tassel's mansion. Not those of the bevy of buxom lasses, with their luxurious

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20 monteiro cap, a hunting-cap with a flap

display of red and white: but the ample charms of a genuine Dutch country tea-table, in the sumptuous time of autumn. Such heaped-up platters of cakes of various and almost indescribable kinds, known only to experienced Dutch housewives! There was the doughty doughnut, the tenderer oly koek, and the crisp and crumbling cruller; sweet cakes and short cakes, ginger cakes and honey cakes, and the whole family of cakes. And then there were apple pies and peach pies and pumpkin pies; besides slices of ham and smoked beef; and moreover delectable dishes of preserved plums, and peaches, and pears, and quinces; not to mention broiled shad and roasted chickens; together with bowls of milk and cream, all mingled higgledy-piggledy, pretty much as I have enumerated them, with the motherly tea-pot sending up its clouds of vapor from the midst—Heaven bless the mark! I want breath and time to discuss this banquet as it deserves, and am too eager to get on with my story. Happily, Ichabod Crane was not in so great a hurry as his historian, but did ample justice to every dainty.

He was a kind and thankful creature, whose heart dilated in proportion as his skin was filled with good cheer; and whose spirits rose with eating as some men's do with drink. He could not help, too, rolling his large eyes round him as he ate, and chuckling with the possibility that he might one day be lord of all this scene of almost unimaginable luxury and splendor. Then, he thought, how soon he'd turn his back upon the old school-house; snap his fingers in the face of Hans Van Ripper, and every other niggardly patron, and kick any itinerant pedagogue out of doors that should dare to call him comrade!

Old Baltus Van Tassel moved about among his guests with a face dilated with content and good humor, round and jolly as the harvest moon. His hospitable attentions were brief, but expressive, being confined to a shake of the hand, a slap on the shoulder, a loud laugh, and a pressing invitation to "fall to, and help themselves."

And now the sound of the music from the common room or hall, summoned to the dance. The musician was an old grayheaded Negro, who had been the itinerant orchestra of the neighborhood for more than half a century. His instrument was as old and battered as himself. The greater part of the time he scraped on two or three strings, accompanying every movement of the bow with a motion of the head; bowing almost to the ground, and stamping with his foot whenever a fresh couple were to start.

Ichabod prided himself upon his dancing as much as upon his vocal powers. Not a limb, not a fibre about him was idle; and to have seen his loosely hung frame in full motion, and clattering about the room, you would have thought Saint Vitus himself, that blessed patron of the dance, was figuring before you in person. He was the admiration of all the Negroes; who having gathered, of all ages and sizes, from the farm and the neighborhood, stood forming a pyramid of shining black faces at every door and window, gazing with delight at the scene, rolling their white eye-balls, and showing grinning rows of ivory from ear to ear. How could the flogger of urchins be otherwise than animated and joyous? the lady of his heart was his partner in the dance; and smiling graciously in reply to all his amorous oglings; while Brom Bones, sorely smitten with love and jealousy, sat brooding by himself in one corner.

When the dance was at an end, Ichabod was attracted to a knot of the sager folks, who, with old Van Tassel, sat smoking at one end of the piazza, gossiping over former times, and drawing out long stories about the war.

This neighborhood, at the time of which I am speaking, was one of those highly-favored places which abound with chronicle and great men. The British and American line had run near it during the war; it had, therefore, been the scene of marauding, and infested with refugees, cow-boys, and all kinds of border chivalry. Just sufficient time had elapsed to enable each story-teller to dress up his tale with a little becoming fiction, and, in the indistinctness of his recollection, to make himself the hero of every exploit.

There was the story of Doffue Martling, a large blue-bearded Dutchman, who had nearly taken a British frigate with an old iron nine-pounder from a mud breast-work, only that his gun burst at the sixth discharge. And there was an old gentleman who shall be nameless, being too rich a mynheer to be lightly mentioned, who, in the battle of Whiteplains, being an excellent master of

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5 dough-nut . . . oly koek . . . cruller, all of them fried in deep fat, but varying in composition. Oly koek, from the Dutch, is known chiefly in New York • 54 Saint Vitus, according to legend a Christian martyr of the third century, especially venerated in medieval Germany • 76 cow-boys, bands of Tory guerillas who operated near New York City during the Revolution

defence, parried a musket ball with a small sword, insomuch that he absolutely felt it whiz round the blade, and glance off at the hilt: in proof of which, he was ready at any time to show the sword, with the hilt a little bent. There were several more that had been equally great in the field, not one of whom but was persuaded that he had a considerable hand in bringing the war to a happy termination.

But all these were nothing to the tales of ghosts and apparitions that succeeded. The neighborhood is rich in legendary treasures of the kind. Local tales and superstitions thrive best in these sheltered long-settled retreats; but are trampled under foot by the shifting throng that forms the population of most of our country places. Besides, there is no encouragement for ghosts in most of our villages, for they have scarcely had time to finish their first nap, and turn themselves in their graves, before their surviving friends have travelled away from the neighborhood; so that when they turn out at night to walk their rounds, they have no acquaintance left to call upon. This is perhaps the reason why we so seldom hear of ghosts except in our long-established Dutch communities.

The immediate cause, however, of the prevalence of supernatural stories in these parts, was doubtless owing to the vicinity of Sleepy Hollow. There was a contagion in the very air that blew from that haunted region; it breathed forth an atmosphere of dreams and fancies infecting all the land. Several of the Sleepy Hollow people were present at Van Tassel's, and, as usual, were doling out their wild and wonderful legends. Many dismal tales were told about funeral trains, and mourning cries and wailings heard and seen about the great tree where the unfortunate Major André was taken, and which stood in the neighborhood. Some mention was made also of the woman in white, that haunted the dark glen at Raven Rock, and was often heard to shriek on winter nights before a storm, having perished there in the snow. The chief part of the stories, however, turned upon the favorite spectre of Sleepy Hollow, the headless horseman, who had been heard several times of late, patrolling the country; and, it was said, tethered his horse nightly among the graves in the church-yard.

The sequestered situation of this church seems always to have made it a favorite haunt of troubled spirits. It stands on a knoll, surrounded by locust-trees and lofty elms, from among which its decent, whitewashed walls shine modestly forth, like Christian purity beaming through the shades of retirement. A gentle slope descends from it to a silver sheet of water, bordered by high trees, between which, peeps may be caught at the blue hills of the Hudson. To look upon its grass-grown yard, where the sunbeams seem to sleep so quietly, one would think that there at least the dead might rest in peace. On one side of the church extends a wide woody dell, along which raves a large brook among broken rocks and trunks of fallen trees. Over a deep black part of the stream, not far from the church, was formerly thrown a wooden bridge; the road that led to it, and the bridge itself, were thickly shaded by overhanging trees, which cast a gloom about it, even in the daytime; but occasioned a fearful darkness at night. This was one of the favorite haunts of the headless horseman; and the place where he was most frequently encountered. The tale was told of old Brouwer, a most heretical disbeliever in ghosts, how he met the horseman returning from his foray into Sleepy Hollow, and was obliged to get up behind him; how they galloped over bush and brake, over hill and swamp, until they reached the bridge; when the horseman suddenly turned into a skeleton, threw old Brouwer into the brook, and sprang away over the tree-tops with a clap of thunder.

This story was immediately matched by a thrice marvellous adventure of Brom Bones, who made light of the galloping Hessian as an arrant jockey. He affirmed that, on returning one night from the neighboring village of Sing Sing, he had been overtaken by this midnight trooper; that he had offered to race with him for a bowl of punch, and should have won it too, for Daredevil beat the goblin horse all hollow, but, just as they came to the church bridge, the Hessian bolted, and vanished in a flash of fire.

All these tales, told in that drowsy undertone with which men talk in the dark, the countenances of the listeners only now and then receiving a casual gleam from the glare of a pipe, sank deep in the mind of Ichabod. He repaid them in kind with large extracts from his invaluable author, Cotton Mather, and added many marvellous events that had taken place in his native State

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34 Major André (1751-1780), executed at Tappan, across the Hudson a few miles below Tarrytown, following his capture with the plans of West Point and evidence of the treason of Benedict Arnold. A monument now stands near the place of his capture in Tarrytown

of Connecticut, and fearful sights which he had seen in his nightly walks about Sleepy Hollow.

The revel now gradually broke up. The old farmers gathered together their families in their wagons, and were heard for some time rattling along the hollow roads, and over the distant hills. Some of the damsels mounted on pillions behind their favorite swains, and their light-hearted laughter, mingling with the clatter of hoofs, echoed along the silent woodlands, sounding fainter and fainter until they gradually died away—and the late scene of noise and frolic was all silent and deserted. Ichabod only lingered behind, according to the custom of country lovers, to have a tête-à-tête with the heiress; fully convinced that he was now on the high road to success. What passed at this interview I will not pretend to say, for in fact I do not know. Something, however, I fear me, must have gone wrong, for he certainly sallied forth, after no very great interval, with an air quite desolate and chop-fallen.—Oh these women! these women! Could that girl have been playing off any of her coquettish tricks?—Was her encouragement of the poor pedagogue all a mere sham to secure her conquest of his rival?—Heaven only knows, not I!—Let it suffice to say, Ichabod stole forth with the air of one who had been sacking a hen-roost, rather than a fair lady's heart. Without looking to the right or left to notice the scene of rural wealth, on which he had so often gloated, he went straight to the stable, and with several hearty cuffs and kicks, roused his steed most uncourteously from the comfortable quarters in which he was soundly sleeping, dreaming of mountains of corn and oats, and whole valleys of timothy and clover.

It was the very witching time of night that Ichabod, heavy-hearted and crest-fallen, pursued his travel homewards, along the sides of the lofty hills which rise above Tarry Town, and which he had traversed so cheerily in the afternoon. The hour was as dismal as himself. Far below him, the Tappan Zee spread its dusky and indistinct waste of waters, with here and there the tall mast of a sloop, riding quietly at anchor under the land. In the dead hush of midnight, he could even hear the barking of the watch dog from the opposite shore of the Hudson; but it was so vague and faint as only to give an idea of his distance from this faithful companion of man. Now and then, too, the long-drawn crowing of a cock, accidentally awakened, would sound far, far off, from some farmhouse away among the hills—but it was like a dreaming sound in his ear. No signs of life occurred near him, but occasionally the melancholy chirp of a cricket, or perhaps the guttural twang of a bull-frog, from a neighboring marsh, as if sleeping uncomfortably, and turning suddenly in his bed.

All the stories of ghosts and goblins that he had heard in the afternoon, now came crowding upon his recollection. The night grew darker and darker; the stars seemed to sink deeper in the sky, and driving clouds occasionally hid them from his sight. He had never felt so lonely and dismal. He was, moreover, approaching the very place where many of the scenes of the ghost stories had been laid. In the centre of the road stood an enormous tulip-tree, which towered like a giant above all the other trees of the neighborhood, and formed a kind of landmark. Its limbs were gnarled, and fantastic, large enough to form trunks for ordinary trees, twisting down almost to the earth, and rising again into the air. It was connected with the tragical story of the unfortunate André, who had been taken prisoner hard by; and was universally known by the name of Major André's tree. The common people regarded it with a mixture of respect and superstition, partly out of sympathy for the fate of its ill-starred namesake, and partly from the tales of strange sights and doleful lamentations told concerning it.

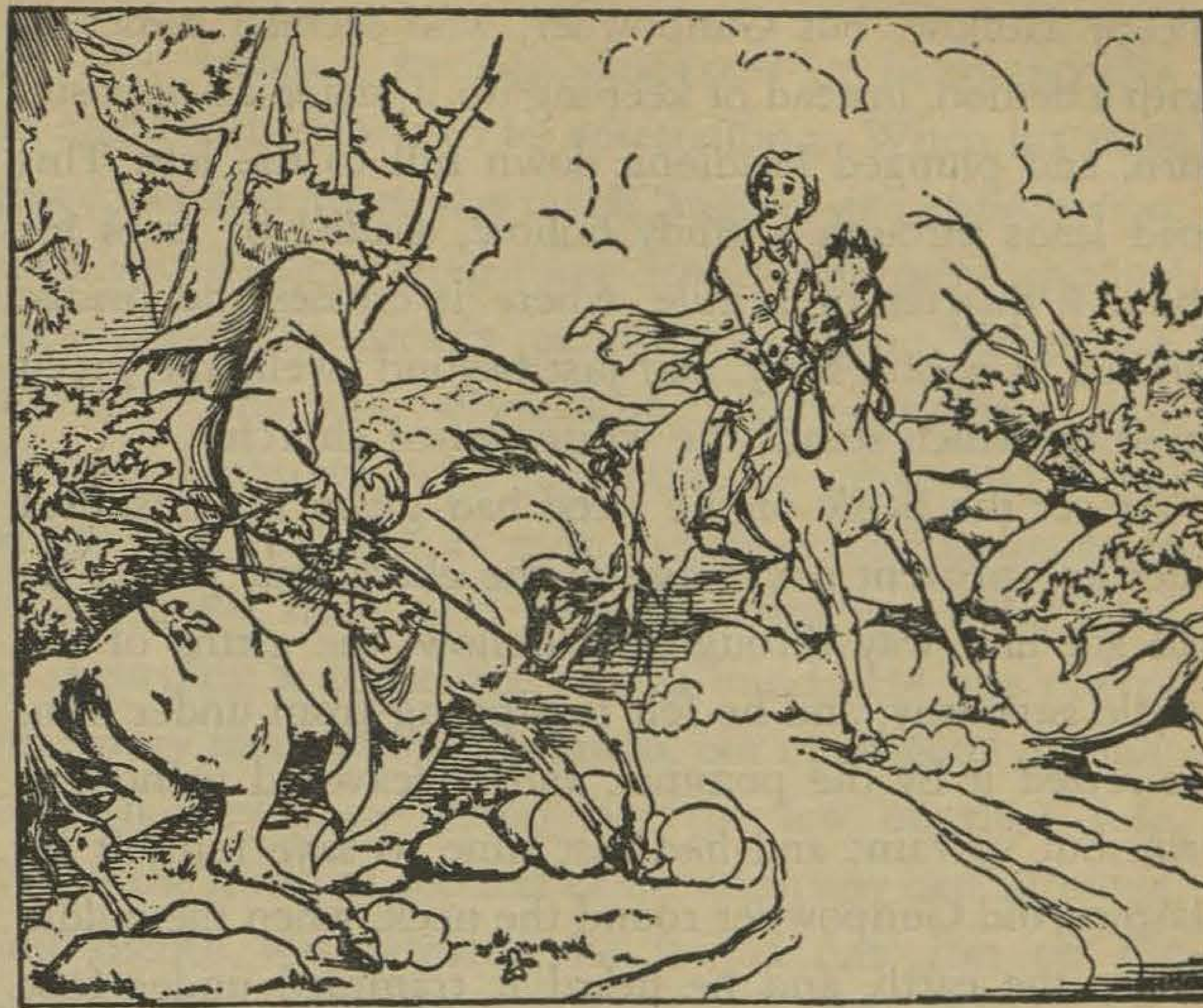
As Ichabod approached this fearful tree, he began to whistle; he thought his whistle was answered—it was but a blast sweeping sharply through the dry branches. As he approached a little nearer, he thought he saw something white, hanging in the midst of the tree—he paused and ceased whistling; but on looking more narrowly, perceived that it was a place where the tree had been scathed by lightning, and the white wood laid bare. Suddenly he heard a groan—his teeth chattered and his knees smote against the saddle: it was but the rubbing of one huge bough upon another, as they were swayed about by the breeze. He passed the tree in safety, but new perils lay before him.

About two hundred yards from the tree a small brook crossed the road, and ran into a marshy and thickly-wooded glen, known by the name of Wiley's swamp. A few rough logs, laid side by side, served for a bridge over this stream. On that side of the road where the brook entered the wood, a group of oaks and chestnuts, matted thick with wild grapevines, threw a cavernous gloom over it. To pass this bridge was the severest trial.

It was at this identical spot that the unfortunate André was captured, and under the covert of those chestnuts and vines were the sturdy yeomen concealed who surprised him. This has ever since been considered a haunted stream, and fearful are the feelings of the schoolboy who has to pass it alone after dark.

As he approached the stream, his heart began to thump; he summoned up, however, all his resolution, gave his horse half a score of kicks in the ribs, and attempted to dash briskly across the bridge; but instead of starting forward, the perverse old animal made a lateral movement, and ran broadside against the fence. Ichabod, whose fears increased with the delay, jerked the reins on the other side, and kicked lustily with the contrary foot: it was all in vain; his steed started, it is true, but it was only to plunge to the opposite side of the road into a thicket of brambles and alder bushes. The schoolmaster now bestowed both whip and heel upon the starveling ribs of old Gunpowder, who dashed forward, snuffling and snorting, but came to a stand just by the bridge, with a suddenness that had nearly sent his rider sprawling over his head. Just at this moment a plashy tramp by the side of the bridge caught the sensitive ear of Ichabod. In the dark shadow of the grove, on the margin of the brook, he beheld something huge, misshapen, black and towering. It stirred not, but seemed gathered up in the gloom, like some gigantic monster ready to spring upon the traveller.

The hair of the affrighted pedagogue rose upon his head with terror. What was to be done? To turn and fly was now too late; and besides, what chance was there of escaping ghost or goblin, if such it was, which could ride upon the wings of the wind? Summoning up, therefore, a show of courage, he demanded in stammering accents—"Who are you?" He received no reply. He repeated his demand in a still more agitated voice. Still there was no answer. Once more he cudgelled the sides of the inflexible Gunpowder, and, shutting his eyes, broke forth with involuntary fervor into a psalm tune. Just then the shadowy object of alarm put itself in motion, and, with a scramble and a bound, stood at once in the middle of the road. Though the night was dark and dismal, yet the form of the unknown might now in some degree be ascertained. He appeared to be a horseman of large dimensions, and mounted on a black horse of powerful frame. He made no offer of molestation or sociability, but kept aloof on one side of the road,



"He beheld something huge, misshapen . . . towering."

jogging along on the blind side of old Gunpowder, who had now got over his fright and waywardness.

Ichabod, who had no relish for this strange midnight companion, and bethought himself of the adventure of Brom Bones with the Galloping Hessian, now quickened his steed, in hopes of leaving him behind. The stranger, however, quickened his horse to an equal pace. Ichabod pulled up, and fell into a walk, thinking to lag behind—the other did the same. His heart began to sink within him; he endeavored to resume his psalm tune, but his parched tongue clove to the roof of his mouth, and he could not utter a stave. There was something in the moody and dogged silence of this pertinacious companion, that was mysterious and appalling. It was soon fearfully accounted for. On mounting a rising ground, which brought the figure of his fellow-traveller in relief against the sky, gigantic in height, and muffled in a cloak, Ichabod was horror-struck, on perceiving that he was headless!—but his horror was still more increased, on observing that the head, which should have rested on his shoulders, was carried before him on the pommel of the saddle: his terror rose to desperation; he rained a shower of kicks and blows upon Gunpowder, hoping, by a sudden movement, to give his companion the slip—but the spectre started full jump with him. Away then they dashed, through thick and thin; stones flying, and sparks flashing at every bound. Ichabod's flimsy garments fluttered in the air, as he stretched his long lank body away over his horse's head, in the eagerness of his flight.

They had now reached the road which turns off to

Sleepy Hollow; but Gunpowder, who seemed possessed with a demon, instead of keeping up it, made an opposite turn, and plunged headlong down hill to the left. This road leads through a sandy hollow, shaded by trees for about a quarter of a mile, where it crosses the bridge famous in goblin story, and just beyond swells the green knoll on which stands the whitewashed church.

As yet the panic of the steed had given his unskilful rider an apparent advantage in the chase; but just as he had got half way through the hollow, the girths of the saddle gave way, and he felt it slipping from under him. He seized it by the pommel, and endeavored to hold it firm, but in vain; and had just time to save himself by clasping old Gunpowder round the neck, when the saddle fell to the earth, and he heard it trampled under foot by his pursuer. For a moment the terror of Hans Van Ripper's wrath passed across his mind—for it was his Sunday saddle; but this was no time for petty fears; the goblin was hard on his haunches; and (unskilful rider that he was!) he had much ado to maintain his seat; sometimes slipping on one side, sometimes on another, and sometimes jolted on the high ridge of his horse's backbone, with a violence that he verily feared would cleave him asunder.

An opening in the trees now cheered him with the hopes that the church bridge was at hand. The wavering reflection of a silver star in the bosom of the brook told him that he was not mistaken. He saw the walls of the church dimly glaring under the trees beyond. He recollected the place where Brom Bones's ghostly competitor had disappeared. "If I can but reach that bridge," thought Ichabod, "I am safe." Just then he heard the black steed panting and blowing close behind him; he even fancied that he felt his hot breath. Another convulsive kick in the ribs, and old Gunpowder sprang upon the bridge; he thundered over the resounding planks; he gained the opposite side; and now Ichabod cast a look behind to see if his pursuer should vanish, according to rule, in a flash of fire and brimstone. Just then he saw the goblin rising in his stirrups, and in the very act of hurling his head at him. Ichabod endeavored to dodge the horrible missile, but too late. It encountered his cranium with a tremendous crash—he was tumbled headlong into the dust, and Gunpowder, the black steed, and the goblin rider, passed by like a whirlwind.

The next morning the old horse was found without his saddle, and with the bridle under his feet, soberly cropping the grass at his master's gate. Ichabod did not make his appearance at breakfast—dinner-hour came, but no Ichabod. The boys assembled at the school-house, and strolled idly about the banks of the brook; but no schoolmaster. Hans Van Ripper now began to feel some uneasiness about the fate of poor Ichabod, and his saddle. An inquiry was set on foot, and after diligent investigation they came upon his traces. In one part of the road leading to the church was found the saddle trampled in the dirt; the tracks of horses' hoofs deeply dented in the road, and evidently at furious speed, were traced to the bridge, beyond which, on the bank of a broad part of the brook, where the water ran deep and black, was found the hat of the unfortunate Ichabod, and close beside it a shattered pumpkin.

The brook was searched, but the body of the schoolmaster was not to be discovered. Hans Van Ripper, as executor of his estate, examined the bundle which contained all his worldly effects. They consisted of two shirts and a half; two stocks for the neck; a pair or two of worsted stockings; an old pair of corduroy small-clothes; a rusty razor; a book of psalm tunes, full of dogs' ears; and a broken pitchpipe. As to the books and furniture of the school-house, they belonged to the community, excepting Cotton Mather's History of Witchcraft, a New England Almanac, and a book of dreams and fortune-telling; in which last was a sheet of foolscap much scribbled and blotted in several fruitless attempts to make a copy of verses in honor of the heiress of Van Tassel. These magic books and the poetic scrawl were forthwith consigned to the flames by Hans Van Ripper; who from that time forward determined to send his children no more to school; observing, that he never knew any good come of this same reading and writing. Whatever money the schoolmaster possessed, and he had received his quarter's pay but a day or two before, he must have had about his person at the time of his disappearance.

The mysterious event caused much speculation at the church on the following Sunday. Knots of gazers and gossips were collected in the churchyard, at the bridge, and at the spot where the hat and pumpkin had been found. The stories of Brouwer, of Bones, and a whole budget of others, were called to mind; and when they had diligently considered them all, and compared them with the symptoms of the present case, they shook their heads, and came to the conclusion that Ichabod had been carried off by the galloping Hessian. As he was a

bachelor, and in nobody's debt, nobody troubled his head any more about him. The school was removed to a different quarter of the hollow, and another pedagogue reigned in his stead.

It is true, an old farmer, who had been down to New-York on a visit several years after, and from whom this account of the ghostly adventure was received, brought home the intelligence that Ichabod Crane was still alive; that he had left the neighborhood, partly through fear of the goblin and Hans Van Ripper, and partly in mortification at having been suddenly dismissed by the heiress; that he had changed his quarters to a distant part of the country; had kept school and studied law at the same time, had been admitted to the bar, turned politician, electioneered, written for the newspapers, and finally had been made a justice of the Ten Pound Court. Brom Bones too, who, shortly after his rival's disappearance, conducted the blooming Katrina in triumph to the altar, was observed to look exceedingly knowing whenever the story of Ichabod was related, and always burst into a hearty laugh at the mention of the pumpkin; which led some to suspect that he knew more about the matter than he chose to tell.

The old country wives, however, who are the best judges of these matters, maintain to this day that Ichabod was spirited away by supernatural means; and it is a favorite story often told about the neighborhood round the winter evening fire. The bridge became more than ever an object of superstitious awe, and that may be the reason why the road has been altered of late years, so as to approach the church by the border of the mill-pond. The school-house being deserted, soon fell to decay, and was reported to be haunted by the ghost of the unfortunate pedagogue; and the plough boy, loitering homeward of a still summer evening, has often fancied his voice at a distance, chanting a melancholy psalm tune among the tranquil solitudes of Sleepy Hollow.

POSTSCRIPT, FOUND IN THE HANDWRITING OF MR. KNICKERBOCKER

The preceding Tale is given, almost in the precise words in which I heard it related at a Corporation meeting of the ancient city of Manhattoes, at which were present many of its sagest and most illustrious burghers. The narrator was a pleasant, shabby, gentlemanly old fellow, in pepper-and-salt clothes, with a sadly humorous face; and one whom I strongly suspected of being poor,—he made such efforts to be entertaining. When his story was concluded, there was much laughter and approbation, particularly from two or three deputy aldermen, who had been asleep the greater part of the time. There was, however, one tall, dry-looking old gentleman, with beetling eyebrows, who maintained a grave and rather severe face throughout: now and then folding his arms, inclining his head, and looking down upon the floor, as if turning a doubt over in his mind. He was one of your wary men, who never laugh, but upon good grounds—when they have reason and the law on their side. When the mirth of the rest of the company had subsided, and silence was restored, he leaned one arm on the elbow of his chair, and sticking the other akimbo, demanded, with a slight, but exceedingly sage motion of the head, and contraction of the brow, what was the moral of the story, and what it went to prove?

The story-teller, who was just putting a glass of wine to his lips, as a refreshment after his toils, paused for a moment, looked at his inquirer with an air of infinite deference, and, lowering the glass slowly to the table, observed, that the story was intended most logically to prove:—

"That there is no situation in life but has its advantages and pleasures—provided we will but take a joke as we find it:

"That, therefore, he that runs races with goblin troopers is likely to have rough riding of it.

"Ergo, for a country schoolmaster to be refused the hand of a Dutch heiress, is a certain step to high preferment, in the state."

The cautious old gentleman knit his brows tenfold closer after this explanation, being sorely puzzled by the ratiocination of the syllogism; while, methought, the one in pepper-and-salt eyed him with something of a triumphant leer. At length he observed, that all this was very well, but still he thought the story a little on the extravagant—there were one or two points on which he had his doubts.

"Faith, sir," replied the story-teller, "as to that matter, I don't believe one-half of it myself."

D. K.

1818-1820

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16 **Ten Pound Court,** in which cases involving not more than ten pounds were tried by a justice



James Fenimore Cooper

1789 · 1851

James Cooper (he became "James Fenimore-Cooper" by a legislative act in 1826 and later dropped the hyphen) was born at Burlington, New Jersey, in 1789. In the previous year his father had laid out the site of Cooperstown at the foot of Otsego Lake, in New York, and in 1790 he settled there with his family. The son was brought up in a community in which the Coopers were by far the most important personages; his future was from the first defined as that of a landowner and estate manager. To prepare for it he had the education of a gentleman, first under a private tutor in Albany, and then in Yale College, which expelled him for too much pleasure-seeking in 1806. His further education consisted of shipping to England as a common sailor in 1806-1807 and three years' service as a midshipman in the United States Navy, from which he resigned shortly after his marriage, in 1811, to Susan Augusta De Lancey, daughter of a wealthy family in Mamaroneck, Westchester County. Both he and his wife had money of their own, and there was more in prospect. They settled down to raising a family and supervising their interests, living for some time at Cooperstown, and later in Westchester. In 1819, when Cooper was thirty, he was a gentleman farmer and a small capitalist, with neither the ambition nor the necessity for authorship.

Panel (l. to r.): Scene from **The Pilot** • James Fenimore Cooper at 30 • from **The Pathfinder** • Otsego Hall • Statue of Indian hunter

Seldom, perhaps, has a novelist developed more casually. The tradition is that, reading aloud to his wife a story of English country life, he remarked that he could do as well himself and set out to make good his boast. The result was *Precaution,* a novel picturing English society and abounding with moral sentiment on marriage. It was published in 1820, and, although not especially successful, it led directly to *The Spy* (1821), which was enormously so. The course of Cooper's life was changed abruptly from that natural to a country gentleman to the uncertain peregrinations of a writer. He discovered that he had both a fertile imagination and a ready pen, and, devoting his mornings to composition, he began to produce a stream of books which, at the time of his death in 1851, consisted of thirty-three novels and numerous volumes of social comment, naval history, and travel.

The relation between his life and his writing is highly complicated. In general, however, three periods are clearly distinguishable. Between 1820 and 1826 he explored the possibilities of the novel of romantic action, in emulation of Sir Walter Scott; living in New York City after 1822, the center of the congenial "Lunch" or Bread and Cheese Club, he sent forth to the world, in rapid succession, *The Pioneers* (1823), *The Pilot* (1824), *Lionel Lincoln* (1825), and *The Last of the Mohicans* (1826). Between 1826 and 1833 he lived in Europe, where, under the tutelage of Lafayette, he became deeply interested in political philosophy, particularly as it appeared in the contrast between American and European institutions. An ardent patriot, he wrote a trilogy in opposition to Scott's glorification of medievalism, but *The Bravo* (1831), *The Heidenmauer* (1832), and *The Headsman* (1833) disappointed the public, in America as well as in Europe, and inaugurated a disillusion in their author which grew steadily with the years. From 1834 until his death Cooper lived half of each year in Cooperstown, spending the other six months in New York City. He had left the United States in the administration of John Quincy Adams; when he returned, the Jacksonian revolution had materially changed the social and political complexion of the nation. Cooper, an aristocrat by birth, by education, and by temperament, did not find the change wholly admirable; indeed, the last seventeen years of his life were spent in an unhappy battle for aristocratic principles which his countrymen found objectionable. Occasionally, as in *The Pathfinder* (1840) and *The Deerslayer* (1841), Cooper returned to his earlier vein, but his more characteristic works were social satires, such as *Home as Found* (1838), and the problem novels, *Satanstoe* (1845), *The Chairbearer* (1845), and *The Redskins* (1846), based upon the opposition of New Yorkers to the continuance of the tenant farm system of the patroons. Sometimes, indeed, he deserted fiction to present his conviction that individual liberty can only be achieved by a constitutional government which protects property as well as human rights; in *The American Democrat* (1838), for example, he argued for an aristocracy of merit not unlike that envisaged by Alexander Hamilton and the Federalists.

Cooper was unpopular in his later years because of his criticism of democracy. The tale of his innumerable libel suits against those critics who unjustly defamed his character is lengthy and inappropriate here, but it should be said that he was usually in the right and won his cases. There is justice in Professor Spiller's claim that Cooper was the "most thoroughly critical mind that early America produced." Few men of his generation realized as he did that democracy, wrongly understood, can be tyrannical; that distinction and quality cannot be achieved by the glorification of mediocrity and numbers.

It is not as a social critic, however, that Cooper has won his fame, and another age than the present may well forget his problem novels. He lives, as his friend Bryant said, as the American Hesiod or Theocritus, a poet of the youth of a nation, a nation which was wresting a continent from nature and the Indians, not always intelligently, not always justly, but with full awareness of the imaginative "lift" of the great open spaces and the epic quality of man's struggle with the wilderness. His claim to fame as the first great American novelist can scarcely be challenged.

James Fenimore Cooper: Representative Selections, ed. R. E. Spiller, Cincinnati, 1936 • R. E. Spiller and P. C. Blackburn, **A Descriptive Bibliography of the Writings of James Fenimore Cooper**, New York, 1934 • T. R. Lounsbury, **James Fenimore Cooper**, American Men of Letters Series, Boston, 1882 • R. E. Spiller, **Fenimore Cooper, Critic of His Times**, New York, 1931 • Marcel Clavel, **Fenimore Cooper, sa vie et son oeuvre**, Aix-en-Provence, 1938

The Pioneers;

or The Sources of the Susquehanna

The Pioneers, Cooper's third published novel and the first of the five Leather-Stocking tales, appeared in two volumes on February 1, 1823, in New York. A London edition appeared in the same month and by 1832 there were translations into French, German, Swedish, Danish, and Spanish. Although it has not been, over the years, the most popular of his writings, **The Pioneers** has the distinction of introducing the two characters of the American wilderness for which Cooper is most famous—Natty Bumppo, or the Leather-Stocking, and Chingachgook, Natty's Mohican friend and companion. The novel, moreover, is among the most autobiographical of Cooper's works, frequently foreshadowing his criticism of the ignorance and irresponsibility of frontier democracy which later became almost an obsession.

The first half of the book moves slowly—it takes Cooper nineteen chapters to cover the first twenty-four hours of his tale—but the reader is rewarded by a faithful representation of the life of a newly settled community in 1793, obviously based upon the author's memories of Cooperstown. The remainder of the book consists of a series of episodes in which the woodcraft and native intelligence of Natty Bumppo are given a central position. The plot will be found a mixture of disguised identity and escape from physical danger, a somewhat weak but wholly characteristic example of Cooper's storytelling. In the following abridgement, Cooper's poetical handling of external nature will be apparent, as well as his typical methods of characterization, successful frequently in the case of his men, almost always conventional in the portrayal of women. A Preface written for a revision made in 1831 acknowledged that the author depended largely upon fact for his setting and Templeton backgrounds, but denied any intention of describing accurately any real characters. Nevertheless, Judge Temple has seemed to most critics a portrait of William Cooper, the novelist's father, and various other characters have been identified with Cooperstown folk.

Natty Bumppo, however, was a creation all Cooper's own, with only a vague resemblance to Daniel Boone, who has been suggested as his prototype. Natty, under various names—the Leather-Stocking, Deerslayer, Hawk-eye, and Pathfinder—appears in and binds together five novels: **The Pioneers** (1823), **The Last of the Mohicans** (1826), **The Prairie** (1827), **The Pathfinder** (1840), and **The Deerslayer** (1841). Cooper did not plan these novels as a whole, however, and they are held together only as parts of a biographical whole which has numerous discrepancies. In point of biographical time **The Deerslayer** should be read first; its action takes place on Otsego Lake between 1740 and 1745. Next comes **The Last of the Mohicans**, which occurs on Lake George in 1757; then **The Pathfinder**, whose scene is Lake Ontario in 1760. After **The Pioneers**, as if Natty were not feeble enough at its conclusion, comes **The Prairie**, in which the nameless hero—his dog Hector, stuffed by an Indian taxidermist, at his side—dies in 1804 amid the scenic splendor of the Pawnee country.

CHAPTER I

Near the centre of the State of New York lies an extensive district of country, whose surface is a succession of hills and dales, or, to speak with greater deference to geographical definitions, of mountains and valleys. It is among these hills that the Delaware takes its rise; and flowing from the limpid lakes and thousand springs of this region, the numerous sources of the Susquehanna meander through the valleys, until, uniting their streams, they form one of the proudest rivers of the United States. The mountains are generally arable to the tops, although instances are not wanting where the sides are jutted with rocks, that aid greatly in giving to the country that romantic and picturesque character which it so eminently possesses. The vales are narrow, rich, and cultivated; with a stream uniformly winding through

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Text: the collected edition of Cooper's novels in thirty-two volumes, New York, 1859-1861. The tags of poetry used by Cooper for chapter heads have been omitted

each. Beautiful and thriving villages are found interspersed along the margins of the small lakes, or situated at those points of the streams which are favorable to manufacturing; and neat and comfortable farms, with every indication of wealth about them, are scattered profusely through the vales, and even to the mountain tops. Roads diverge in every direction, from the even and graceful bottoms of the valleys, to the most rugged and intricate passes of the hills. Academies, and minor edifices of learning, meet the eye of the stranger at every few miles, as he winds his way through this uneven territory; and places for the worship of God abound with that frequency which characterizes a moral and reflecting people, and with that variety of exterior and canonical government which flows from unfettered liberty of conscience. In short, the whole district is hourly exhibiting how much can be done, in even a rugged country, and with a severe climate, under the dominion of mild laws, and where every man feels a direct interest in the prosperity of a commonwealth, of which he knows himself to form a part. The expedients of the pioneers who first broke ground in the settlement of this country are succeeded by the permanent improvements of the yeoman, who intends to leave his remains to moulder under the sod which he tills, or, perhaps, of the son, who, born in the land, piously wishes to linger around the grave of his father. Only forty years have passed since this territory was a wilderness.

Very soon after the establishment of the independence of the States, by the peace of 1783, the enterprise of their citizens was directed to a development of the natural advantages of their widely extended dominions. Before the war of the revolution the inhabited parts of the colony of New York were limited to less than a tenth of its possessions. A narrow belt of country, extending for a short distance on either side of the Hudson, with a similar occupation of fifty miles on the banks of the Mohawk, together with the islands of Nassau and Staten, and a few insulated settlements on chosen land along the margins of streams, composed the country, which was then inhabited by less than two hundred thousand souls. Within the short period we have mentioned, the population has spread itself over five degrees of latitude and seven of longitude, and has swelled to a million and a half inhabitants, who are maintained in abundance, and can look forward to ages before the evil day must arrive when their possessions shall become unequal to their wants.

Our tale begins in 1793, about seven years after the commencement of one of the earliest of those settlements, which have conduced to effect that magical change in the power and condition of the State, to which we have alluded.

It was near the setting of the sun, on a clear, cold day in December, when a sleigh was moving slowly up one of the mountains, in the district we have described. The day had been fine for the season, and but two or three large clouds, whose color seemed brightened by the light reflected from the mass of snow that covered the earth, floated in a sky of the purest blue. The road wound along the brow of a precipice, and on one side was upheld by a foundation of logs, piled one upon the other, while a narrow excavation in the mountain, in the opposite direction, had made a passage of sufficient width for the ordinary travelling of that day. But logs, excavation, and everything that did not reach several feet above the earth, lay alike buried beneath the snow. A single track, barely wide enough to receive the sleigh, denoted the route of the highway, and this was sunk nearly two feet below the surrounding surface. In the vale, which lay at a distance of several hundred feet lower, there was what in the language of the country was called a *clearing,* and all the usual improvements of a new settlement; these even extended up the hill to the point where the road turned short and ran across the level land, which lay on the summit of the mountain; but the summit itself remained in

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14 **canonical,** legal—a somewhat unusual handling of the word • 27 **forty years.** "The book was written in 1823."—Cooper • 44 **a million . . . inhabitants.** "The population of New York is now (1831) quite 2,000,000."—Cooper • 67 **sleigh.** "Sleigh is the word used in every part of the United States to denote a traineau. It is of local use in the west of England, whence it is more probably derived by the Americans. The latter draw a distinction between a sled, or sledge, and a sleigh, the sleigh being shod with metal. Sleighs are also subdivided into two-horse and one-horse sleighs. Of the latter, there are the cutter, with thills so arranged as to permit the horse to travel in the side track; the 'pung' or 'tow-pung,' which is driven with a pole, and the 'gumper,' a rude construction used for temporary purposes, in the new countries.

"Many of the American sleighs are elegant, though the use of this mode of conveyance is much lessend with the melioration of the climate, consequent on the clearing of the forests."—Cooper. Cooper was apparently correct in regarding "sleigh" as an American word, although present-day lexicographers believe its origin to have been Dutch. His remark on climate represents an opinion on a much-debated question of his day

forest. There was a glittering in the atmosphere, as if it were filled with innumerable shining particles; and the noble bay horses that drew the sleigh were covered, in many parts, with a coat of hoar frost. The vapor from their nostrils was seen to issue like smoke; and every object in the view, as well as every arrangement of the travellers, denoted the depth of a winter in the mountains. The harness, which was of a deep dull black, differing from the glossy varnishing of the present day, was ornamented with enormous plates and buckles of brass, that shone like gold in those transient beams of the sun, which found their way obliquely through the tops of the trees. Huge saddles, studded with nails, and fitted with cloth that served as blankets to the shoulders of the cattle, supported four high, square-topped turrets, through which the stout reins led from the mouths of the horses to the hands of the driver, who was a Negro, of apparently twenty years of age. His face, which nature had colored with a glistening black, was now mottled with the cold, and his large shining eyes filled with tears; a tribute to their power that the keen frosts of those regions always extracted from one of his African origin. Still there was a smiling expression of good humor in his happy countenance, that was created by the thoughts of home, and a Christmas fire-side, with its Christmas frolics. The sleigh was one of those large, comfortable, old-fashioned conveyances, which would admit a whole family within its bosom, but which now contained only two passengers besides the driver. The color of its outside was a modest green, and that of its inside a fiery red. The latter was intended to convey the idea of heat in that cold climate. Large buffalo skins, trimmed around the edges with red cloth, cut into festoons, covered the back of the sleigh, and were spread over its bottom, and drawn up around the feet of the travellers—one of whom was a man of middle age, and the other a female, just entering upon womanhood. The former was of a large stature; but the precautions he had taken to guard against the cold left but little of his person exposed to view. A greatcoat, that was abundantly ornamented by a profusion of furs, enveloped the whole of his figure, excepting the head, which was covered with a cap of marten skins, lined with morocco, the sides of which were made to fall, if necessary, and were now drawn close over the ears, and fastened beneath his chin with a black riband. The top of the cap was surmounted with the tail of the animal whose skin had furnished the rest of the materials, which fell back, not ungracefully, a few inches behind the head. From beneath this mask were to be seen part of a fine manly face, and particularly a pair of expressive, large blue eyes, that promised extraordinary intellect, covert humor, and great benevolence. The form of his companion was literally hid beneath the garments she wore. There were furs and silks peeping from under a large camlet cloak, with a thick flannel lining, that, by its cut and size, was evidently intended for a masculine wearer. A huge hood of black silk, that was quilted with down, concealed the whole of her head, except at a small opening in front for breath, through which occasionally sparkled a pair of animated jet-black eyes.

Both the father and daughter (for such was the connection between the two travellers) were too much occupied with their reflections to break a stillness, that received little or no interruption from the easy gliding of the sleigh, by the sound of their voices. The former was thinking of the wife that had held this their only child to her bosom, when, four years before, she had reluctantly consented to relinquish the society of her daughter, in order that the latter might enjoy the advantages of an education which the city of New York could only offer at that period. A few months afterward death had deprived him of the remaining companion of his solitude; but still he had enough of real regard for his child, not to bring her into the comparative wilderness in which he dwelt, until the full period had expired to which he had limited her juvenile labors. The reflections of the daughter were less melancholy, and mingled with a pleased astonishment at the novel scenery she met at every turn in the road.

The mountain on which they were journeying was covered with pines, that rose without a branch some seventy or eighty feet, and which frequently doubled that height by the addition of the tops. Through the innumerable vistas that opened beneath the lofty trees, the eye could penetrate, until it was met by a distant inequality in the ground, or was stopped by a view of the summit of the mountain, which lay on the opposite side of the valley to which they were hastening. The dark trunks of the trees rose from the pure white of the snow, in regularly formed shafts, until, at a great height, their branches shot forth horizontal limbs, that

were covered with the meagre foliage of an evergreen, affording a melancholy contrast to the torpor of nature below. To the travellers, there seemed to be no wind; but these pines waved majestically at their topmost boughs, sending forth a dull, plaintive sound, that was quite in consonance with the rest of the melancholy scene.

The sleigh had glided for some distance along the even surface, and the gaze of the female was bent in inquisitive, and, perhaps, timid glances, into the recesses of the forest, when a loud and continued howling was heard, pealing under the long arches of the woods, like the cry of a numerous pack of hounds. The instant the sound reached the ears of the gentleman, he cried aloud to the black—

"Hold up, Aggy; there is old Hector; I should know his bay among ten thousand! The Leather-stocking has put his hounds into the hills, this clear day, and they have started their game. There is a deer-track a few rods ahead;—and now, Bess, if thou canst muster courage enough to stand fire, I will give thee a saddle for thy Christmas dinner."

The black drew up, with a cheerful grin upon his chilled features, and began thrashing his arms together, in order to restore the circulation to his fingers, while the speaker stood erect, and, throwing aside his outer covering, stepped from the sleigh upon a bank of snow, which sustained his weight without yielding.

In a few moments the speaker succeeded in extricating a double-barrelled fowling-piece from among a multitude of trunks and bandboxes. After throwing aside the thick mittens which had encased his hands, that now appeared in a pair of leather gloves tipped with fur, he examined his priming, and was about to move forward, when the light bounding noise of an animal plunging through the woods was heard, and a fine buck darted into the path, a short distance ahead of him. The appearance of the animal was sudden, and his flight inconceivably rapid; but the traveller appeared to be too keen a sportsman to be disconcerted by either. As it came first into view he raised the fowling-piece to his shoulder, and, with a practised eye and steady hand, drew a trigger. The deer dashed forward undaunted, and apparently unhurt. Without lowering his piece, the traveller turned its muzzle toward his victim, and fired again. Neither discharge, however, seemed to have taken effect.

The whole scene had passed with a rapidity that confused the female, who was unconsciously rejoicing in the escape of the buck, as he rather darted like a meteor, than ran across the road, when a sharp quick sound struck her ear, quite different from the full, round reports of her father's gun, but still sufficiently distinct to be known as the concussion produced by fire-arms. At the same instant that she heard this unexpected report, the buck sprang from the snow to a great height in the air, and directly a second discharge, similar in sound to the first, followed, when the animal came to the earth, falling headlong, and rolling over on the crust with its own velocity. A loud shout was given by the unseen marksman, and a couple of men instantly appeared from behind the trunks of two of the pines, where they had evidently placed themselves in expectation of the passage of the deer.

"Ha! Natty, had I known you were in ambush, I should not have fired," cried the traveller, moving toward the spot where the deer lay—near to which he was followed by the delighted black, with his sleigh; "but the sound of old Hector was too exhilarating to be quiet; though I hardly think I struck him either."

"No—no—Judge," returned the hunter, with an inward chuckle, and with that look of exultation that indicates a consciousness of superior skill; "you burnt your powder only to warm your nose this cold evening. Did ye think to stop a full-grown buck, with Hector and the slut open upon him within sound, with that pop-gun in your hand? There's plenty of pheasants among the swamps; and the snow-birds are flying round your own door, where you may feed them with crumbs, and shoot them at pleasure, any day; but if you're for a buck, or a little bear's meat, Judge, you'll have to take the long rifle, with a greased wadding, or you'll waste more powder than you'll fill stomachs, I'm thinking."

As the speaker concluded, he drew his bare hand across the bottom of his nose, and again opened his enormous mouth with a kind of inward laugh.

"The gun scatters well, Natty, and it has killed a deer before now," said the traveller, smiling good-humoredly. "One barrel was charged with buck-shot; but the other was loaded for birds only. Here are two hurts; one through the neck, and the other directly through the heart. It is by no means certain, Natty, but I gave him one of the two."



The Leather-Stocking's cabin.

"Let who will kill him," said the hunter, rather surlily, "I suppose the creature is to be eaten." So saying, he drew a large knife from a leathern sheath, which was stuck through his girdle or sash, and cut the throat of the animal. "If there are two balls through the deer, I would ask if there wer'n't two rifles fired—besides, who ever saw such a ragged hole from a smooth-bore, as this through the neck?—and you will own yourself, Judge, that the buck fell at the last shot, which was sent from a truer and a younger hand than your'n or mine either; but for my part, although I am a poor man, I can live without the venison, but I don't love to give up my lawful dues in a free country. Though, for the matter of that, might often makes right here, as well as in the old country, for what I can see."

An air of sullen dissatisfaction pervaded the manner of the hunter during the whole of this speech; yet he thought it prudent to utter the close of the sentence in such an undertone, as to leave nothing audible but the grumbling sounds of his voice.

"Nay, Natty," rejoined the traveller, with undisturbed good humor, "it is for the honor that I contend. A few dollars will pay for the venison; but what will requite me for the lost honor of a buck's tail in my cap? Think, Natty, how I should triumph over that quizzing dog, Dick Jones, who has failed seven times already this season, and has only brought in one woodchuck and a few gray squirrels."

"Ah! the game is becoming hard to find, indeed, Judge, with your clearings and betterments," said the old hunter, with a kind of compelled resignation. "The time has been, when I have shot thirteen deer, without counting the fa'ns, standing in the door of my own hut!—and for bear's meat, if one wanted a ham or so, he had only to watch a-nights, and he could shoot one by moonlight, through the cracks of the logs; no fear of his over-sleeping himself neither, for the howling of the wolves was sartin to keep his eyes open. There's old Hector,"—patting with affection a tall hound, of black and yellow spots, with white belly and legs, that just then came in on the scent, accompanied by the slut he had mentioned; "see where the wolves bit his throat, the night I druv them from the venison that was smoking on the chimbly top;—that dog is more to be trusted than many a Christian man; for he never forgets a friend, and loves the hand that gives him bread."

There was a peculiarity in the manner of the hunter that attracted the notice of the young female, who had been a close and interested observer of his appearance and equipments, from the moment he came into view. He was tall, and so meagre as to make him seem above even the six feet that he actually stood in his stockings. On his head, which was thinly covered with lank, sandy hair, he wore a cap made of foxskin, resembling in shape the one we have already described, although much inferior in finish and ornaments. His face was skinny, and thin almost to emaciation; but yet it bore no signs of disease—on the contrary, it had every indication of the most robust and enduring health. The cold and the exposure had, together, given it a color of uniform red. His gray eyes were glancing under a pair of shaggy brows, that overhung them in long hairs of gray mingled with their natural hue; his scraggy neck was bare, and burnt to the same tint with his face; though a small part of a shirt collar, made of the country check, was to be seen above the over-dress he wore. A kind of coat, made of dressed deerskin, with the hair on, was belted close to his lank body, by a girdle of colored worsted. On his feet were deerskin moccasins, ornamented with porcupines' quills, after the manner of the Indians, and his limbs were guarded with long leggings of the same material as the moccasins, which, gartering over the knees of his tarnished buckskin breeches, had obtained for him, among the settlers, the nickname of Leather-stocking. Over his left shoulder was slung a belt of deerskin, from which depended an enormous ox horn, so thinly scraped as to discover the powder it contained. The larger end was fitted ingeniously and securely with a wooden bottom, and the other was stopped tight by a little plug. A leathern pouch hung before him, from

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25 **quizzing**, fun-loving or mocking

which, as he concluded his last speech, he took a small measure, and, filling it accurately with powder, he commenced reloading the rifle, which, as its butt rested on the snow before him, reached nearly to the top of his foxskin cap.

The traveller had been closely examining the wounds during these movements, and now, without heeding the ill-humor of the hunter's manner, he exclaimed:

"I would fain establish a right, Natty, to the honor of this death; and surely if the hit in the neck be mine, it is enough; for the shot in the heart was unnecessary—what we call an act of supererogation, Leather-stocking."

"You may call it by what larned name you please, Judge," said the hunter, throwing his rifle across his left arm, and knocking up a brass lid in the breech, from which he took a small piece of greased leather, and wrapping a ball in it, forced them down by main strength on the powder, where he continued to pound them while speaking. "It's far easier to call names than to shoot a buck on the spring; but the cretur came by his end from a younger hand than either your'n or mine, as I said before."

"What say you, my friend," cried the traveller, turning pleasantly to Natty's companion; "shall we toss up this dollar for the honor, and you keep the silver if you lose; what say you, friend?"

"That I killed the deer," answered the young man with a little haughtiness, as he leaned on another long rifle, similar to that of Natty.

"Here are two to one, indeed," replied the Judge, with a smile; "I am outvoted—over-ruled, as we say on the bench. There is Aggy, he can't vote, being a slave; and Bess is a minor—so I must even make the best of it. But you'll sell me the venison; and the deuce is in it, but I make a good story about its death."

"The meat is none of mine to sell," said Leather-stocking, adopting a little of his companion's hauteur; "for my part I have known animals travel days with shots in the neck, and I'm none of them who'll rob a man of his rightful dues."

"You are tenacious of your rights, this cold evening, Natty," returned the Judge, with unconquerable good nature; "but what say you, young man; will three dollars pay you for the buck?"

"First let us determine the question of right to the satisfaction of us both," said the youth, firmly but respectfully, and with a pronunciation and language vastly superior to his appearance; "with how many shot did you load your gun?"

"With five, sir," said the Judge, a little struck with the other's manner; "are they not enough to slay a buck like this?"

"One would do it; but," moving to the tree from behind which he had appeared, "you know, sir, you fired in this direction—here are four of the bullets in the tree."

The Judge examined the fresh marks in the bark of the pine, and shaking his head, said, with a laugh:

"You are making out the case against yourself, my young advocate—where is the fifth?"

"Here," said the youth, throwing aside the rough overcoat that he wore, and exhibiting a hole in his under garment, through which large drops of blood were oozing.

"Good God!" exclaimed the Judge with horror; "have I been trifling here about an empty distinction, and a fellow-creature suffering from my hands without a murmur? But hasten—quick—get into my sleigh—it is but a mile to the village, where surgical aid can be obtained;—all shall be done at my expense, and thou shalt live with me until thy wound is healed, aye, and forever afterward."

"I thank you for your good intention, but I must decline your offer. I have a friend who would be uneasy were he to hear that I am hurt and away from him. The injury is but slight, and the bullet has missed the bones; but I believe, sir, you will now admit my title to the venison."

"Admit it!" repeated the agitated Judge; "I here give thee a right to shoot deer, or bears, or anything thou pleasest in my woods, forever. Leather-stocking is the only other man that I have granted the same privilege to; and the time is coming when it will be of value. But I buy your deer—here, this bill will pay thee, both for thy shot and my own."

The old hunter gathered his tall person up into an air of pride, during this dialogue, but he waited until the other had done speaking.

"There's them living who say that Nathaniel Bumppo's right to shoot on these hills is of older date than Marmaduke Temple's right to forbid him," he said. "But if there's a law about it at all—though who ever heard of a law that a man shouldn't kill deer where he pleased! —but if there is a law at all, it should be to keep people from the use of smooth-bores. A body never knows

where his lead will fly, when he pulls the trigger of one of them uncertain fire-arms."

Without attending to the soliloquy of Natty, the youth bowed his head silently to the offer of the bank note, and replied:

"Excuse me; I have need of the venison."

"But this will buy you many deer," said the Judge; "take it, I entreat you," and lowering his voice to a whisper, he added—"it is for a hundred dollars."

For an instant only, the youth seemed to hesitate, and then, blushing even through the high color that the cold had given to his cheeks, as if with inward shame at his own weakness, he again declined the offer.

During this scene the female arose, and, regardless of the cold air, she threw back the hood which concealed her features, and now spoke, with great earnestness.

"Surely, surely—young man,—sir—you would not pain my father so much, as to have him think that he leaves a fellow-creature in this wilderness, whom his own hand has injured. I entreat you will go with us, and receive medical aid."

Whether his wound became more painful, or there was something irresistible in the voice and manner of the fair pleader for her father's feelings, we know not; but the distance of the young man's manner was sensibly softened by this appeal, and he stood in apparent doubt, as if reluctant to comply with, and yet unwilling to refuse her request. The Judge, for such being his office, must in future be his title, watched, with no little interest, the display of this singular contention in the feelings of the youth; and advancing, kindly took his hand, and as he pulled him gently toward the sleigh, urged him to enter it.

"There is no human aid nearer than Templeton," he said, "and the hut of Natty is full three miles from this; —come—come, my young friend, go with us, and let the new doctor look to this shoulder of thine. Here is Natty will take the tidings of thy welfare to thy friend; and should'st thou require it, thou shalt return home in the morning."

The young man succeeded in extricating his hand from the warm grasp of the Judge, but he continued to gaze on the face of the female, who, regardless of the cold, was still standing with her fine features exposed, which expressed feelings that eloquently seconded the request of her father. Leather-stocking stood, in the meantime, leaning upon his long rifle, with his head turned a little to one side, as if engaged in sagacious musing; when, having apparently satisfied his doubts, by revolving the subject in his mind, he broke silence.

"It may be best to go, lad, after all; for if the shot hangs under the skin, my hand is getting too old to be cutting into human flesh, as I once used to. Though some thirty years agone, in the old war, when I was out under Sir William, I travelled seventy miles alone in the howling wilderness, with a rifle bullet in my thigh, and then cut it out with my own jack-knife. Old Indian John knows the time well. I met him with a party of the Delawares, on the trail of the Iroquois, who had been down and taken five scalps on the Schoharie. But I made a mark on the redskin that I'll warrant he carried to his grave! I took him on his posteerum, saving the lady's presence, as he got up from the ambushment, and rattled three buckshot into his naked hide, so close, that you might have laid a broad joe upon them all—" here Natty stretched out his long neck, and straightened his body, as he opened his mouth, which exposed a single tusk of yellow bone, while his eyes, his face, even his whole frame seemed to laugh, although no sound was emitted, except a kind of thick hissing, as he inhaled his breath in quavers. "I had lost my bullet mould in crossing the Oneida outlet, and had to make shift with the buckshot; but the rifle was true, and didn't scatter like your two-legged thing there, Judge, which don't do, I find, to hunt in company with."

Natty's apology to the delicacy of the young lady was unnecessary, for, while he was speaking, she was too much employed in helping her father to remove certain articles of baggage to hear him. Unable to resist the kind urgency of the travellers any longer, the youth, though still with an unaccountable reluctance, suffered himself to be persuaded to enter the sleigh. The black, with the aid of his master, threw the buck across the baggage, and entering the vehicle themselves, the Judge invited the hunter to do so likewise.

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55 Sir William, Sir William Johnson (1715-1774), who led an expedition against Crown Point on Lake Champlain in 1755 and the successful attack on Fort Niagara at the mouth of the Niagara River in 1759. His influence with the Mohawk Indians was one of the main reasons for the British success in their long struggle with the French • 65 broad joe, gold coin of Portugal

"No, no," said the old man, shaking his head; "I have work to do at home this Christmas eve—drive on with the boy, and let your doctor look to the shoulder; though if he will only cut out the shot, I have yarbs that will heal the wound quicker than all his foreign 'intments." He turned, and was about to move off, when, suddenly recollecting himself, he again faced the party, and added: "If you see anything of Indian John, about the foot of the lake, you had better take him with you, and let him lend the doctor a hand; for old as he is, he is curious at cuts and bruises, and it's likelier than not he'll be in with brooms to sweep your Christmas ha'arths."

"Stop, stop," cried the youth, catching the arm of the black as he prepared to urge his horses forward; "Natty—you need say nothing of the shot, nor of where I am going—remember, Natty, as you love me."

"Trust old Leather-stocking," returned the hunter, significantly; "he hasn't lived fifty years in the wilderness, and not larnt from the savages how to hold his tongue—trust to me, lad; and remember old Indian John."

"And, Natty," said the youth eagerly, still holding the black by the arm, "I will just get the shot extracted, and bring you up to-night, a quarter of the buck, for the Christmas dinner."

He was interrupted by the hunter, who held up his finger with an expressive gesture for silence. He then moved softly along the margin of the road, keeping his eyes steadfastly fixed on the branches of a pine. When he had obtained such a position as he wished, he stopped, and cocking his rifle, threw one leg far behind him, and, stretching his left arm to its utmost extent along the barrel of his piece, he began slowly to raise its muzzle in a line with the straight trunk of the tree. The eyes of the group in the sleigh naturally preceded the movement of the rifle, and they soon discovered the object of Natty's aim. On a small dead branch of the pine, which, at the distance of seventy feet from the ground, shot out horizontally, immediately beneath the living members of the tree, sat a bird, that in the vulgar language of the country was indiscriminately called a pheasant or a partridge. In size, it was but little smaller than a common barn-yard fowl. The baying of the dogs, and the conversation that had passed near the root of the tree on which it was perched, had alarmed the bird, which was now drawn up near the body of the pine, with a head and neck so erect, as to form nearly a straight line with its legs. As soon as the rifle bore on the victim, Natty drew his trigger, and the partridge fell from its height with a force that buried it in the snow.

"Lie down, you old villain!" exclaimed Leather-stocking, shaking his ramrod at Hector as he bounded toward the foot of the tree, "lie down, I say!" The dog obeyed, and Natty proceeded with great rapidity, though with the nicest accuracy, to reload his piece. When this was ended, he took up his game, and showing it to the party without a head, he cried: "Here is a titbit for an old man's Christmas—never mind the venison, boy, and remember Indian John; his yarbs are better than all the foreign 'intments. Here, Judge," holding up the bird again, "do you think a smooth-bore would pick game off their roost, and not ruffle a feather?" The old man gave another of his remarkable laughs, which partook so largely of exultation, mirth, and irony, and shaking his head, he turned, with his rifle at a trail, and moved into the forest with steps that were between a walk and a trot. At each movement he made, his body lowered several inches, his knees yielding with an inclination inward; but as the sleigh turned at a bend in the road, the youth cast his eyes in quest of his old companion, and he saw that he was already nearly concealed by the trunks of the trees, while his dogs were following quietly in his footsteps, occasionally scenting the deer track, that they seemed to know instinctively was now of no further use to them. Another jerk was given to the sleigh, and Leather-stocking was hid from view.

[CHAPTER II. Here the reader learns that Marmaduke Temple is the descendant of a Quaker who had settled in Pennsylvania toward the end of the seventeenth century and had acquired many thousands of acres of land. For two generations, however, the family fortunes had dwindled; then, in the person of Marmaduke's father, they began again to rise. Marmaduke, sent to a good school, had made the acquaintance of Edward Effingham, the son of a British major who so disliked business affairs that he transferred his estate to his son. Edward thereupon invested it in a silent partnership with Marmaduke in a Philadelphia mercantile house, a transaction kept secret because of Major Effingham's distrust of the Quaker sect, to which Marmaduke nominally belonged. The business proved successful and the two friends prospered—then came the Revolution. Leaving his papers and effects in

Marmaduke's hands, Edward went to England, whence he returned in the uniform of a British officer. Marmaduke sided with the rebels and, although forced to abandon Philadelphia, handled his business affairs wisely, while serving his country in civil capacities. A large part of his funds he used to purchase confiscated Tory estates in New York, including (as is revealed a bit later) those of the Effinghams. He has now turned from commerce to the settlement and development of his land holdings in Otsego County and has become the chief magistrate in that jurisdiction. His only child and heir, Elizabeth, is returning from school to become the mistress of his household.]

CHAPTER III

Some little while elapsed ere Marmaduke Temple was sufficiently recovered from his agitation to scan the person of his new companion. He now observed that he was a youth of some two or three and twenty years of age, and rather above the middle height. Further observation was prevented by the rough overcoat which was belted close to his form by a worsted sash, much like the one worn by the old hunter. The eyes of the Judge, after resting a moment on the figure of the stranger, were raised to a scrutiny of his countenance. There had been a look of care visible in the features of the youth, when he first entered the sleigh, that had not only attracted the notice of Elizabeth, but which she had been much puzzled to interpret. His anxiety seemed the strongest when he was enjoining his old companion to secrecy; and even when he had decided, and was rather passively suffering himself to be conveyed to the village, the expression of his eyes by no means indicated any great degree of self-satisfaction at the step. But the lines of an uncommonly prepossessing countenance were gradually becoming composed; and he now sat silent, and apparently musing. The Judge gazed at him for some time with earnestness, and then smiling, as if at his own forgetfulness, he said:

"I believe, my young friend, that terror has driven you from my recollection; your face is very familiar, and yet, for the honor of a score of bucks' tails in my cap, I could not tell your name."

"I came into the country but three weeks since," returned the youth coldly, "and I understand you have been absent twice that time."

"It will be five to-morrow. Yet your face is one that I have seen; though it would not be strange, such has been my affright, should I see thee in thy winding-sheet walking by my bedside to-night. What say'st thou, Bess? Am I compos mentis or not?—Fit to charge a grand jury, or, what is just now of more pressing necessity, able to do the honors of a Christmas-eve in the hall of Templeton?"

"More able to do either, my dear father," said a playful voice from under the ample inclosures of the hood, "than to kill deer with a smooth-bore." A short pause followed, and the same voice, but in a different accent, continued: "We shall have good reasons for our thanksgiving to-night, on more accounts than one."

The horses soon reached a point where they seemed to know by instinct that the journey was nearly ended, and bearing on the bits as they tossed their heads, they rapidly drew the sleigh over the level land which lay on the top of the mountain, and soon came to the point where the road descended, suddenly but circuitously, into the valley.

The Judge was roused from his reflections, when he saw the four columns of smoke which floated above his own chimneys. As house, village, and valley burst on his sight, he exclaimed cheerfully to his daughter:

"See, Bess, there is thy resting-place for life!—And thine, too, young man, if thou wilt consent to dwell with us."

The eyes of his auditors involuntarily met; and if the color that gathered over the face of Elizabeth was contradicted by the cold expression of her eye, the ambiguous smile that again played about the lips of the stranger seemed equally to deny the probability of his consenting to form one of this family group. The scene was one, however, which might easily warm a heart less given to philanthropy than that of Marmaduke Temple.

The side of the mountain on which our travellers were journeying, though not absolutely perpendicular, was so steep as to render great care necessary in descending the rude and narrow path, which, in that early day, wound along the precipices. The Negro reined in his impatient steeds, and time was given Elizabeth to dwell on a scene which was so rapidly altering under the hands

36 compos mentis, of sound mind

of man, that it only resembled, in its outlines, the picture she had so often studied with delight in childhood. Immediately beneath them lay a seeming plain, glittering without inequality, and buried in mountains. The latter were precipitous, especially on the side of the plain, and chiefly in forest. Here and there the hills fell away in long, low points, and broke the sameness of the outline, or setting to the long and wide field of snow, which, without house, tree, fence, or any other fixture, resembled so much spotless cloud settled to the earth. A few dark and moving spots were, however, visible on the even surface, which the eye of Elizabeth knew to be so many sleighs going their several ways, to or from the village. On the western border of the plain, the mountains, though equally high, were less precipitous, and, as they receded, opened into irregular valleys and glens, or were formed into terraces and hollows that admitted of cultivation. Although the evergreens still held dominion over many of the hills that rose on this side of the valley, yet the undulating outlines of the distant mountains, covered with forests of beech and maple, gave a relief to the eye, and the promise of a kinder soil. Occasionally spots of white were discoverable amidst the forests of the opposite hills, which announced, by the smoke that curled over the tops of the trees, the habitations of man, and the commencement of agriculture. These spots were sometimes, by the aid of united labor, enlarged into what were called settlements, but more frequently were small and insulated; though so rapid were the changes, and so persevering the labors of those who had cast their fortunes on the success of the enterprise, that it was not difficult for the imagination of Elizabeth to conceive they were enlarging under her eye, while she was gazing, in mute wonder, at the alterations that a few short years had made in the aspect of the country. The points on the western side of this remarkable plain, on which no plant had taken root, were both larger and more numerous than those on its eastern, and one in particular thrust itself forward in such a manner as to form beautifully curved bays of snow on either side. On its extreme end an oak stretched forward, as if to overshadow, with its branches, a spot which its roots were forbidden to enter. It had released itself from the thraldom that a growth of centuries had imposed on the branches of the surrounding forest trees, and threw its gnarled and fantastic arms abroad, in the wildness of liberty. A dark spot of a few acres in extent at the southern extremity of this beautiful flat, and immediately under the feet of our travellers, alone showed by its rippling surface, and the vapors which exhaled from it, that what at first might seem a plain was one of the mountain lakes, locked in the frosts of winter. A narrow current rushed impetuously from its bosom at the open place we have mentioned, and was to be traced, for miles, as it wound its way toward the south through the real valley, by its borders of hemlock and pine, and by the vapor which arose from its warmer surface into the chill atmosphere of the hills. The banks of this lovely basin, at its outlet, or southern end, were steep but not high; and in that direction the land continued, far as the eye could reach, a narrow but graceful valley, along which the settlers had scattered their humble habitation, with a profusion that bespoke the quality of the soil, and the comparative facilities of intercourse.

Immediately on the bank of the lake and at its foot, stood the village of Templeton. It consisted of some fifty buildings, including those of every description, chiefly built of wood, and which, in their architecture, bore no great marks of taste, but which also, by the unfinished appearance of most of the dwellings, indicated the hasty manner of their construction. To the eye, they presented a variety of colors. A few were white in both front and rear, but more bore that expensive color on their fronts only, while their economical but ambitious owners had covered the remaining sides of the edifices with a dingy red. One or two were slowly assuming the russet of age; while the uncovered beams that were to be seen through the broken windows of their second stories, showed that either the taste or the vanity of their proprietors had led them to undertake a task which they were unable to accomplish. The whole were grouped in a manner that aped the streets of a city, and were evidently so arranged by the directions of one who looked to the wants of posterity rather than to the convenience of the present incumbents. Some three or four of the better sort of buildings, in addition to the uniformity of their color, were fitted with green blinds, which, at that season at least, were rather strangely contrasted to the chill aspect of the lake, the mountains, the forests, and the wide fields of snow. Before the doors of these pretending dwellings were placed a few saplings, either without branches, or possessing only the feeble shoots of one or two summers'

growth, that looked not unlike tall grenadiers on post near the threshold of princes. In truth, the occupants of these favored habitations were the nobles of Templeton, as Marmaduke was its king. They were the dwellings of two young men who were cunning in the law; an equal number of that class who chaffered to the wants of the community under the title of storekeepers; and a disciple of Æsculapius, who, for a novelty, brought more subjects into the world than he sent out of it. In the midst of this incongruous group of dwellings, rose the mansion of the Judge, towering above all its neighbors. It stood in the centre of an inclosure of several acres, which were covered with fruit trees. Some of the latter had been left by the Indians, and began already to assume the moss and inclination of age, therein forming a very marked contrast to the infant plantations that peered over most of the picketed fences of the village. In addition to this show of cultivation, were two rows of young Lombardy poplars, a tree but lately introduced into America, formally lining either side of a pathway, which led from a gate that opened on the principal street to the front door of the building. The house itself had been built entirely under the superintendence of a certain Mr. Richard Jones, whom we have already mentioned, and who from his cleverness in small matters, and an entire willingness to exert his talents, added to the circumstance of their being sisters' children, ordinarily superintended all the minor concerns of Marmaduke Temple. Richard was fond of saying, that this child of his invention consisted of nothing more nor less than what should form the groundwork of every clergyman's discourse; viz., a firstly, and a lastly. He had commenced his labors, in the first year of their residence, by erecting a tall, gaunt edifice of wood, with its gable toward the highway. In this shelter, for it was little more, the family resided three years. By the end of that period, Richard had completed his design. He had availed himself, in this heavy undertaking, of the experience of a certain wandering eastern mechanic, who, by exhibiting a few soiled plates of English architecture, and talking learnedly of friezes, entablatures, and particularly of the composite order, had obtained a very undue influence over Richard's taste, in everything that pertained to that branch of the fine arts. Not that Mr. Jones did not affect to consider Hiram Doolittle a perfect empiric in his profession, being in the constant habit of listening to his treatises on architecture with a kind of indulgent smile; yet, either from an inability to oppose them by anything plausible from his own stores of learning, or from secret admiration, Richard generally submitted to the arguments of his coadjutor. Together, they had not only erected a dwelling for Marmaduke, but they had given a fashion to the architecture of the whole county. The composite order, Mr. Doolittle would contend, was an order composed of many others, and was intended to be the most useful of all, for it admitted into its construction such alterations as convenience or circumstances might require. To this proposition Richard usually assented; and when rival geniuses, who monopolize not only all the reputation, but most of the money of a neighborhood, are of a mind, it is not uncommon to see them lead the fashion, even in graver matters. In the present instance, as we have already hinted, the castle, as Judge Templeton's dwelling was termed in common parlance, came to be the model, in some one or other of its numerous excellences, for every aspiring edifice within twenty miles of it.

The house itself, or the "lastly," was of stone; large, square, and far from uncomfortable. These were four requisites on which Marmaduke had insisted with a little more than his ordinary pertinacity. But everything else was peaceably assigned to Richard and his associate. These worthies found the material a little too solid for the tools of their workmen, which, in general, were employed on a substance no harder than the white pine of the adjacent mountains, a wood so proverbially soft, that it is commonly chosen by the hunters for pillows. But for this awkward dilemma, it is probable that the ambitious tastes of our two architects would have left us much more to do in the way of description. Driven from the faces of the house by the obduracy of the material, they took refuge in the porch and on the roof. The former, it was decided, should be severely classical, and the latter a rare specimen of the merits of the composite order.

A roof, Richard contended, was a part of the edifice that the ancients always endeavored to conceal, it being an excrescence in architecture that was only to be tolerated on account of its usefulness. Besides, as he wittily added, a chief merit in a dwelling was to present a front, on whichever side it might happen to be seen; for as it

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8 Æsculapius, god of medicine in classical mythology

was exposed to all eyes in all weathers, there should be no weak flank for envy or unneighborly criticism to assail. It was therefore decided that the roof should be flat, and with four faces. To this arrangement, Marmaduke objected the heavy snows that lay for months, frequently covering the earth to a depth of three or four feet. Happily, the facilities of the composite order presented themselves to effect a compromise, and the rafters were lengthened, so as to give a descent that should carry off the frozen element. But unluckily, some mistake was made in the admeasurement of these material parts of the fabric; and as one of the greatest recommendations of Hiram was his ability to work by the "square rule," no opportunity was found of discovering the effect until the massive timbers were raised, on the four walls of the building. Then, indeed, it was soon seen that, in defiance of all rule, the roof was by far the most conspicuous part of the whole edifice. Richard and his associate consoled themselves with the belief, that the covering would aid in concealing this unnatural elevation; but every shingle that was laid only multiplied objects to look at. Richard essayed to remedy the evil with paint, and four different colors were laid on by his own hands. The first was a sky-blue, in the vain expectation that the eye might be cheated into the belief it was the heavens themselves that hung so imposingly over Marmaduke's dwelling; the second was what he called a "cloud-color," being nothing more nor less than an imitation of smoke; the third was what Richard termed an invisible green, an experiment that did not succeed against a background of sky. Abandoning the attempt to conceal, our architects drew upon their invention for means to ornament the offensive shingles. After much deliberation and two or three essays by moonlight, Richard ended the affair by boldly covering the whole beneath a color that he christened "sunshine," a cheap way, as he assured his cousin, the Judge, of always keeping fair weather over his head. The platform, as well as the eaves of the house, were surmounted by gaudily painted railings, and the genius of Hiram was exerted in the fabrication of divers urns and mouldings, that were scattered profusely around this part of their labors. Richard had originally a cunning expedient, by which the chimneys were intended to be so low, and so situated, as to resemble ornaments on the balustrades; but comfort required that the chimneys should rise with the roof, in order that the smoke might be carried off, and they thus became four extremely conspicuous objects in the view.

As this roof was much the most important architectural undertaking in which Mr. Jones was ever engaged, his failure produced a correspondent degree of mortification. At first, he whispered among his acquaintances, that it proceeded from ignorance of the square rule on the part of Hiram; but as his eye became gradually accustomed to the object, he grew better satisfied with his labors, and instead of apologizing for the defects, he commenced praising the beauties of the mansion-house. He soon found hearers; and, as wealth and comfort are at all times attractive, it was, as has been said, made a model for imitation on a small scale. In less than two years from its erection, he had the pleasure of standing on the elevated platform, and of looking down on three humble imitators of its beauty. Thus it is ever with fashion, which even renders the faults of the great, subjects of admiration.

Marmaduke bore this deformity in his dwelling with great good nature, and soon contrived, by his own improvements, to give an air of respectability and comfort to his place of residence. Still there was much of incongruity, even immediately about the mansion-house. Although poplars had been brought from Europe to ornament the grounds, and willows and other trees were gradually springing up nigh the dwelling, yet many a pile of snow betrayed the presence of the stump of a pine; and even in one or two instances, unsightly remnants of trees that had been partly destroyed by fire were seen rearing their black, glistening columns twenty or thirty feet above the pure white of the snow. These, which in the language of the country are termed stubs, abounded in the open fields adjacent to the village, and were accompanied by the ruin of a pine or a hemlock that had been stripped of its bark, and which waved in melancholy grandeur its naked limbs to the blast, a skeleton of its former glory. But these and many other unpleasant additions to the view were unseen by the delighted Elizabeth, who, as the horses moved down the side of the mountain, saw only in gross the cluster of houses that lay like a map at her feet; the fifty smokes that were curling from the valley to the clouds; the frozen lake as it lay imbedded in mountains of evergreen, with the long shadows of the pines on its white surface, lengthening in the setting sun; the dark riband of water that gushed from the outlet, and was winding its way toward the dis-

tant Chesapeake—the altered, though still remembered, scenes of her childhood.

Five years had wrought greater changes than a century would produce in countries where time and labor have given permanency to the works of man. To the young hunter and the Judge the scene had less novelty; though none ever emerge from the dark forests of that mountain, and witness the glorious scenery of that beauteous valley, as it bursts unexpectedly upon them, without a feeling of delight. The former cast one admiring glance from north to south, and sank his face again beneath the folds of his coat; while the latter contemplated, with philanthropic pleasure, the prospect of affluence and comfort that was expanding around him; the result of his own enterprise, and much of it the fruits of his own industry. . . .

[CHAPTER IV. On the way down the mountain the party is met by a four-horse lumber-sleigh containing four men: Richard Jones, small and red-faced; Monsieur Le Quoi, tall and sharp-featured, with projecting eyes, light blue and glassy; Major Fritz Hartmann, solid, short, and square; and Mr. Grant, a meek-looking, long-visaged clergyman. They welcome the Judge and his daughter in their various dialects. Richard attempts to turn around on the narrow road, and a bad accident is averted only by the quick action of the young hunter in seizing the bridles of the lead team; the welcoming party, however, is tossed out into the snow and the sleigh overturned. The Judge throws out the deer and his baggage, leaving Richard and the Negro to bring them when they have righted the larger sleigh; he takes the others in and drives on. Richard worms out of Agamemnon the details of the shooting of the deer.

CHAPTER V. At the base of the mountain Richard and Agamemnon catch up with the smaller sleigh, and all arrive at the mansion-house as the sun goes down. There they are greeted by the major-domo, Benjamin Penguillan (nicknamed Ben Pump), a Cornishman who until 1783 had served in the British navy, by the housekeeper, Remarkable Pettibone, and by several lesser servants and the family dogs. The interior, as inexpertly furnished as the house itself is constructed, is described in detail. After some conversation, by which Richard is restrained from attempting to practice his amateur knowledge of surgery upon the young hunter, the village physician arrives.

CHAPTER VI. Dr. Elnathan Todd, largely self-educated, makes elaborate preparations to remove the bullet, although he has never previously attempted such an operation. He is aided by numerous suggestions from the bystanders. At length his patient informs him that the ball is only skin deep at the back of the shoulder, and no probe will be necessary. The incision is made; the young hunter jerks his arm; and the bullet falls out. At that moment Indian John appears in the doorway.]

CHAPTER VII

Before the Europeans, or, to use a more significant term, the Christians, dispossessed the original owners of the soil, all that section of country, which contains the New England States, and those of the Middle, which lie east of the mountains, was occupied by two great nations of Indians, from whom had descended numberless tribes. But, as the original distinctions between these nations were marked by a difference in language, as well as by repeated and bloody wars, they never were known to amalgamate, until after the power and inroads of the whites had reduced some of the tribes to a state of dependence, that rendered not only their political, but, considering the wants and habits of a savage, their animal existence also, extremely precarious.

These two great divisions consisted, on the one side, of the Five, or as they were afterward called, the Six Nations, and their allies; and, on the other, of the Lenni Lenape, or Delawares, with the numerous and powerful tribes that owned that nation as their Grandfather. The former were generally called, by the Anglo-Americans, Iroquois, or the Six Nations, and sometimes Mingoes. Their appellation, among their rivals, seems generally to

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21 two . . . Indians, the Iroquois and the Delawares, as Cooper explains shortly. This simple division is not accepted by present-day ethnologists, although Cooper was right in believing the Six Nations formed a distinct culture group. His knowledge of the Indians has been shown to have been second-hand—the Indian had already passed from the Cooperstown frontier when he was a boy—and to have been largely derived from an **Account of the History, Manners, and Customs of the Indian Nations** by J. G. E. Heckewelder (1743-1823). This account first appeared in the **Transactions of the Historical and Literary Committee of the American Philosophical Society**, I (1819). Most important, perhaps, is Cooper's acceptance of Heckewelder's glorification of the vanishing Delawares

have been the Mengwe, or Maqua. They consisted of the tribes, or, as their allies were fond of asserting, in order to raise their consequence, of the several nations of the Mohawks, the Oneidas, the Onondagas, Cayugas, and Senecas; who ranked, in the confederation, in the order in which they are named. The Tuscaroras were admitted to this union, near a century after its formation, and thus completed the number to six.

Of the Lenni Lenape, or as they were called by the whites, from the circumstance of their holding their great council-fire on the banks of that river, the Delaware nation, the principal tribes, besides that which bore the generic name, were, the Mahicanni, Mohicans, or Mohegans, and the Nanticokes, or Nentigoes. Of these, the latter held the country along the waters of the Chesapeake and the sea-shore; while the Mohegans occupied the district between the Hudson and the ocean, including much of New England. Of course, these two tribes were the first who were dispossessed of their lands by the Europeans.

The wars of a portion of the latter are celebrated among us, as the wars of King Philip; but the peaceful policy of William Penn, or Miquon, as he was termed by the natives, effected its object with less difficulty, though not with less certainty. As the natives gradually disappeared from the country of the Mohegans, some scattering families sought a refuge around the council-fire of the mother tribe, or the Delawares.

This people had been induced to suffer themselves to be called *women,* by their old enemies, the Mingoes, or Iroquois, after the latter, having in vain tried the effects of hostility, had recourse to artifice, in order to prevail over their rivals. According to this declaration, the Delawares were to cultivate the arts of peace, and to intrust their defence entirely to the *men,* or warlike tribes of the Six Nations.

This state of things continued until the war of the revolution, when the Lenni Lenape formally asserted their independence, and fearlessly declared that they were again men. But in a government so peculiarly republican as the Indian polity, it was not at all times an easy task to restrain its members within the rules of the nation. Several fierce and renowned warriors of the Mohegans, finding the conflict with the whites to be in vain, sought a refuge with their Grandfather, and brought with them the feelings and principles that had so long distinguished them in their own tribe. These chieftains kept alive, in some measure, the martial spirit of the Delawares; and would, at times, lead small parties against their ancient enemies, or such other foes as incurred their resentment.

Among these warriors was one race particularly famous for their prowess, and for those qualities that render an Indian hero celebrated. But war, time, disease, and want, had conspired to thin their number; and the sole representative of this once renowned family now stood in the hall of Marmaduke Temple. He had for a long time been an associate of the white men, particularly in their wars; and having been, at a season when his services were of importance, much noticed and flattered, he had turned Christian, and was baptized by the name of John. He had suffered severely in his family during the recent war, having had every soul to whom he was allied cut off by an inroad of the enemy; and when the last, lingering remnant of his nation extinguished their fires, among the hills of the Delaware, he alone had remained, with a determination of laying his bones in that country, where his fathers had so long lived and governed.

It was only, however, within a few months, that he had appeared among the mountains that surrounded Templeton. To the hut of the old hunter he seemed peculiarly welcome; and, as the habits of the "Leather-stocking" were so nearly assimilated to those of the savages, the conjunction of their interests excited no surprise. They resided in the same cabin, ate of the same food, and were chiefly occupied in the same pursuits.

We have already mentioned the baptismal name of this ancient chief; but in his conversation with Natty, held in the language of the Delawares, he was heard uniformly to call himself Chingachgook, which, interpreted, means the "Great Snake." This name he had acquired in youth, by his skill and prowess in war; but when his brows began to wrinkle with time, and he stood alone, the last of his family and his particular tribe, the few Delawares, who yet continued about the head-waters of their river, gave him the mournful appellation of Mohegan.

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22 wars . . . Philip, in 1675-1678 • 55 the sole representative. Chingachgook, or Indian John, is a much nobler figure in the other novels of the Leather-Stocking series than he is here. In The Last of the Mohicans (1826) Cooper provided him with a son, Uncas, who is perhaps the most idealized Indian in fiction

Perhaps there was something of deep feeling excited in the bosom of this inhabitant of the forest by the sound of a name that recalled the idea of his nation in ruins, for he seldom used it himself—never indeed, excepting on the most solemn occasions; but the settlers had united, according to the Christian custom, his baptismal with his national name, and to them he was generally known as John Mohegan, or, more familiarly, as Indian John.

From his long association with the white men, the habits of Mohegan were a mixture of the civilized and savage states, though there was certainly a strong preponderance in favor of the latter. In common with all his people, who dwelt within the influence of the Anglo-Americans, he had acquired new wants, and his dress was a mixture of his native and European fashions. Notwithstanding the intense cold without, his head was uncovered; but a profusion of long, black, coarse hair concealed his forehead, his crown, and even hung about his cheeks, so as to convey the idea, to one who knew his present and former conditions, that he encouraged its abundance, as a willing veil, to hide the shame of a noble soul, mourning for glory once known. His forehead, when it could be seen, appeared lofty, broad, and noble. His nose was high, and of the kind called Roman, with nostrils that expanded, in his seventieth year, with the freedom that had distinguished them in youth. His mouth was large, but compressed, and possessing a great share of expression and character; and, when opened, it discovered a perfect set of short, strong, and regular teeth. His chin was full, though not prominent; and his face bore the infallible mark of his people, in its square, high cheek-bones. The eyes were not large, but their black orbs glittered in the rays of the candles, as he gazed intently down the hall, like two balls of fire.

The instant that Mohegan observed himself to be noticed by the group around the young stranger, he dropped the blanket, which covered the upper part of his frame, from his shoulders, suffering it to fall over his leggings of untanned deer-skin, where it was retained by a belt of bark that confined it to his waist.

As he walked slowly down the long hall, the dignified and deliberate tread of the Indian surprised the spectators. His shoulders, and body to his waist, were entirely bare, with the exception of a silver medallion of Washington, that was suspended from his neck by a thong of buckskin, and rested on his high chest, amidst many scars. His shoulders were rather broad and full; but the arms, though straight and graceful, wanted the muscular appearance that labor gives to a race of men. The medallion was the only ornament he wore, although enormous slits in the rim of either ear, which suffered the cartilages to fall two inches below the members, had evidently been used for the purposes of decoration in other days. In his hand he held a small basket of the ash-wood slips, colored in divers fantastical conceits, with red and black paints mingled with the white of the wood.

As this child of the forest approached them, the whole party stood aside and allowed him to confront the object of his visit. He did not speak, however, but stood fixing his glowing eyes on the shoulder of the young hunter, and then turning them intently on the countenance of the Judge. The latter was a good deal astonished at this unusual departure from the ordinarily subdued and quiet manner of the Indian; but he extended his hand, and said—

"Thou art welcome, John. This youth entertains a high opinion of thy skill, it seems, for he prefers thee to dress his wound even to our good friend, Dr. Todd."

Mohegan now spoke, in tolerable English, but in a low, monotonous, guttural tone:—

"The children of Miquon do not love the sight of blood; and yet the Young Eagle has been struck by the hand that should do no evil!"

"Mohegan! old John!" exclaimed the Judge, "thinkest thou that my hand has ever drawn human blood willingly? For shame! for shame, old John! thy religion should have taught thee better."

"The evil spirit sometimes lives in the best heart," returned John, "but my brother speaks the truth; his hand has never taken life, when awake; no! not even when the children of the great English Father were making the waters red with the blood of his people."

"Surely John," said Mr. Grant, with much earnestness, "you remember the divine command of our Saviour, 'Judge not, lest ye be judged.' What motive could Judge Temple have for injuring a youth like this? one to whom he is unknown, and from whom he can receive neither injury nor favor!"

John listened respectfully to the divine, and when he had concluded, he stretched out his arm, and said with energy—

"He is innocent—my brother has not done this."

Marmaduke received the offered hand of the other with a smile, that showed, however he might be astonished at his suspicion, he had ceased to resent it; while the wounded youth stood, gazing from his red friend to his host, with interest powerfully delineated in his countenance. No sooner was this act of pacification exchanged, than John proceeded to discharge the duty on which he had come. Dr. Todd was far from manifesting any displeasure at this invasion of his rights, but made way for the new leech, with an air that expressed a willingness to gratify the humors of his patient, now that the all-important part of the business was so successfully performed, and nothing remained to be done but what any child might effect. Indeed, he whispered as much to Monsieur Le Quoi, when he said—

"It was fortunate that the ball was extracted before this Indian came in; but any old woman can dress the wound. The young man, I hear, lives with John and Natty Bumppo, and it's always best to humor a patient, when it can be done discreetly—I say, discreetly, Monsieur."

"Certainement," returned the Frenchman; "you seem ver happy, mister Todd, in your pratique. I tink the elder lady might ver well finish vat you so skeelfully begin."

But Richard had, at the bottom, a great deal of veneration for the knowledge of Mohegan, especially in external wounds; and retaining all his desire for a participation in glory, he advanced nigh the Indian, and said—

"Sago, sago, Mohegan! sago, my good fellow! I am glad you have come; give me a regular physician, like Dr. Todd, to cut into flesh, and a native to heal the wound. Do you remember, John, the time when I and you set the bone of Natty Bumppo's little finger after he broke it by falling from the rock, when he was trying to get the partridge that fell on the cliffs? I never could tell yet, whether it was I or Natty who killed that bird: he fired first, and the bird stooped, and then it was rising again as I pulled trigger. I should have claimed it, for a certainty, but Natty said the hole was too big for shot, and he fired a single ball from his rifle; but the piece I carried then didn't scatter, and I have known it to bore a hole through a board, when I've been shooting at a mark, very much like rifle bullets. Shall I help you, John? You know I have a knack at these things."

Mohegan heard this disquisition quite patiently, and when Richard concluded, he held out the basket which contained his specifics, indicating, by a gesture, that he might hold it. Mr. Jones was quite satisfied with this commission; and, ever after, in speaking of the event, was used to say, that "Doctor Todd and I cut out the bullet, and I and Indian John dressed the wound."

The patient was much more deserving of that epithet, while under the hands of Mohegan, than while suffering under the practice of the physician. Indeed, the Indian gave him but little opportunity for the exercise of a forbearing temper, as he had come prepared for the occasion. His dressings were soon applied, and consisted only of some pounded bark, moistened with a fluid that he had expressed from some of the simples of the woods.

Among the native tribes of the forest, there were always two kinds of leeches to be met with. The one placed its whole dependence on the exercise of a supernatural power, and was held in greater veneration than their practice could at all justify; but the other was really endowed with great skill in the ordinary complaints of the human body, and was more particularly, as Natty had intimated, "curous in cuts and bruises."

While John and Richard were placing the dressings on the wound, Elnathan was acutely eyeing the contents of Mohegan's basket, which Mr. Jones, in his physical ardor, had transferred to the Doctor, in order to hold, himself, one end of the bandages. Here he was soon enabled to detect sundry fragments of wood and bark, of which he, quite coolly, took possession, very possibly without any intention of speaking at all upon the subject; but when he beheld the full blue eye of Marmaduke watching his movements, he whispered to the Judge—

"It is not to be denied, Judge Temple, but what the savages are knowing in small matters of physic. They hand these things down in their traditions. Now in cancers and hydrophoby, they are quite ingenious. I will just take this bark home and analyze it; for, though it can't be worth sixpence to the young man's shoulder, it may be good for the toothache, or rheumatism, or some of them complaints. A man should never be above learning, even if it be from an Indian."

It was fortunate for Dr. Todd that his principles were

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29 Sago, or sego, explained in Cooper's Preface of 1831 as "the ordinary term of salutation used by the Indians of this region." Otsego, he said, acquired its name from having been a meeting place for the tribes of that neighborhood

so liberal, as, coupled with his practice, they were the means by which he acquired all his knowledge, and by which he was gradually qualifying himself for the duties of his profession. The process to which he subjected the specific, differed, however, greatly from the ordinary rules of chemistry; for, instead, of separating, he afterward united the component parts of Mohegan's remedy, and thus was able to discover the tree whence the Indian had taken it.

Some ten years after this event, when civilization and its refinements had crept, or rather rushed, into the settlements among these wild hills, an affair of honor occurred, and Elnathan was seen to apply a salve to the wound received by one of the parties, which had the flavor that was peculiar to the tree, or root, that Mohegan had used. Ten years later still, when England and the United States were again engaged in war, and the hordes of the western parts of the State of New York were rushing to the field, Elnathan, presuming on the reputation obtained by these two operations, followed in the rear of a brigade of militia as its surgeon.

When Mohegan had applied the bark, he freely relinquished to Richard the needle and thread that were used in sewing the bandages, for these were implements of which the native but little understood the use; and, stepping back with decent gravity, awaited the completion of the business by the other.

"Reach me the scissors," said Mr. Jones, when he had finished, and finished for the second time, after tying the linen in every shape and form that it could be placed; "reach me the scissors, for here is a thread that must be cut off, or it might get under the dressings, and inflame the wound. See, John, I have put the lint I scraped between two layers of the linen; for though the bark is certainly best for the flesh, yet the lint will serve to keep the cold air from the wound. If any lint will do it good, it is this lint; I scraped it myself, and I will not turn my back at scraping lint to any man on the Patent. I ought to know how, if anybody ought, for my grandfather was a doctor, and my father had a natural turn that way."

"Here, Squire, is the scissors," said Remarkable, producing from beneath her petticoat of green moreen a pair of dull looking shears; "well, upon my say-so, you *have* sewed on the rags as well as a woman."

"As well as a woman!" echoed Richard, with indignation; "what do women know of such matters? and you are proof of the truth of what I say. Who ever saw such a pair of shears used about a wound? Dr. Todd, I will thank you for the scissors from the case. Now, young man, I think you'll do. The shot has been very neatly taken out, although perhaps, seeing I had a hand in it, I ought not to say so; and the wound is admirably dressed. You will soon be well again; though the jerk you gave my leaders must have a tendency to inflame the shoulder, yet you will do, you will do. You were rather flurried, I suppose, and not used to horses; but I forgive the accident for the motive:—no doubt you had the best of motives;—yes, now you will do."

"Then, gentlemen," said the wounded stranger, rising, and resuming his clothes, "it will be unnecessary for me to trespass longer on your time and patience. There remains but one thing more to be settled, and that is, our respective rights to the deer, Judge Temple."

"I acknowledge it to be thine," said Marmaduke; "and much more deeply am I indebted to thee than for this piece of venison. But in the morning thou wilt call here, and we can adjust this, as well as more important matters. Elizabeth,"—for the young lady, being apprised that the wound was dressed, had re-entered the hall,—"thou wilt order a repast for this youth before we proceed to the church; and Aggy will have a sleigh prepared, to convey him to his friend."

"But, sir, I cannot go without a part of the deer," returned the youth, seemingly struggling with his own feelings; "I have already told you that I needed the venison for myself."

"Oh! we will not be particular," exclaimed Richard; "the Judge will pay you in the morning for the whole deer; and Remarkable, give the lad all the animal excepting the saddle; so, on the whole, I think you may consider yourself as a very lucky young man;—you have been shot without being disabled; have had the wound dressed in the best possible manner here in the woods, as well as it would have been done in the Philadelphia hospital, if not better; have sold your deer at a high price, and yet can keep most of the carcase, with the skin in the bargain. 'Markey, tell Tom to give him the skin, too, and in the morning bring the skin to me, and I will give you half a dollar for it, or at least three and sixpence. I want just such a skin to cover the pillion that I am making for cousin Bess."

"I thank you, sir, for your liberality, and, I trust, am

also thankful for my escape," returned the stranger; "but you reserve the very part of the animal that I wished for my own use. I must have the saddle myself."

"Must!" echoed Richard; "must is harder to be swallowed than the horns of the buck."

"Yes, must," repeated the youth: when, turning his head proudly around him, as if to see who would dare to controvert his rights, he met the astonished gaze of Elizabeth, and proceeded more mildly—"that is, if a man is allowed the possession of that which his hand hath killed, and the law will protect him in the enjoyment of his own."

"The law will do so," said Judge Temple, with an air of mortification mingled with surprise. "Benjamin, see that the whole deer is placed in the sleigh; and have this youth conveyed to the hut of Leather-stocking. But, young man, thou hast a name, and I shall see you again, in order to compensate thee for the wrong I have done thee?"

"I am called Edwards," returned the hunter; "Oliver Edwards. I am easily to be seen, sir, for I live nigh by, and am not afraid to show my face, having never injured any man."

"It is we who have injured you, sir," said Elizabeth; "and the knowledge that you decline our assistance would give my father great pain. He would gladly see you in the morning."

The young hunter gazed at the fair speaker until his earnest look brought the blood to her temples; when, recollecting himself, he bent his head, dropping his eyes to the carpet, and replied—

"In the morning, then, will I return, and see Judge Temple; and I will accept his offer of the sleigh, in token of amity."

"Amity!" repeated Marmaduke; "there was no malice in the act that injured thee, young man; there should be none in the feelings which it may engender."

"Forgive our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us," observed Mr. Grant, "is the language used by our Divine Master himself, and it should be the golden rule of us, his humble followers."

The stranger stood a moment, lost in thought, and then glancing his dark eyes rather wildly around the hall, he bowed low to the divine, and moved from the apartment, with an air that would not admit of detention.

"'Tis strange that one so young should harbor such feelings of resentment," said Marmaduke, when the door closed behind the stranger; "but while the pain is recent, and the sense of the injury so fresh, he must feel more strongly than in cooler moments. I doubt not we shall see him in the morning more tractable."

Elizabeth, to whom this speech was addressed, did not reply, but moved slowly up the hall, by herself, fixing her eyes on the little figure of the English ingrained carpet that covered the floor; while, on the other hand, Richard gave a loud crack with his whip, as the stranger disappeared, and cried—

"Well, 'duke, you are your own master, but I would have tried law for the saddle, before I would have given it to the fellow. Do you not own the mountains as well as the valleys? are not the woods your own? what right has this chap, or the Leather-stocking, to shoot in your woods, without your permission? Now, I have known a farmer in Pennsylvania order a sportsman off his farm with as little ceremony as I would order Benjamin to put a log in the stove. By the by, Benjamin, see how the thermometer stands. Now, if a man has a right to do this on a farm of a hundred acres, what power must a landlord have who owns sixty thousand—aye, for the matter of that, including the late purchases, a hundred thousand? There is Mohegan, to be sure, he may have some right, being a native; but it's little the poor fellow can do now with his rifle. How is this managed in France, Monsieur Le Quoi? Do you let everybody run over your land in that country, helter-skelter, as they do here, shooting the game, so that a gentleman has but little or no chance with his gun?"

"Bah! diable, no, Meester Deeck," replied the Frenchman; "we give, in France, no liberty, except to the ladi."

"Yes, yes, to the women, I know," said Richard, "that is your Salic law. I read, sir, all kinds of books; of France, as well as England; of Greece, as well as Rome. But if I were in 'duke's place, I would stick up advertisements

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81 **Salic law,** the ancient code of the Frankish monarchs which had as one provision that women could not inherit land. Richard's use of the term is completely inappropriate • 83 **advertisements.** Richard's suggestion is of interest because in 1837 Cooper became bitterly unpopular with his fellow townsmen over just such a notice forbidding trespass on Three Mile Point, a property long used as a park by Cooperstown people. The incident, which had far-reaching effects on Cooper's life and thinking, was used as the basis for **Home as Found** (1838)

to-morrow morning, forbidding all persons to shoot, or trespass in any manner, on my woods. I could write such an advertisement myself, in an hour, as would put a stop to the thing at once."

"Richart," said Major Hartmann, very coolly knocking the ashes from his pipe into the spitting-box by his side, "now when; I have livet seventy-five years on ter Mohawk, and in ter woots.—You hat petter mettle as mit ter deyvel, as mit ter hunters. Tey live mit ter gun, and a rifle is petter as ter law."

"A'nt Marmaduke a Judge?" said Richard, indignantly. "Where is the use of being a judge, or having a Judge, if there is no law? Damn the fellow! I have a great mind to sue him in the morning myself, before Squire Doolittle, for meddling with my leaders. I am not afraid of his rifle. I can shoot too. I have hit a dollar many a time at fifty rods."

"Thou hast missed more dollars than ever thou hast hit, Dickon," exclaimed the cheerful voice of the Judge. —"But we will now take our evening's repast, which, I perceive by Remarkable's physiognomy, is ready. Monsieur Le Quoi, Miss Temple has a hand at your service. Will you lead the way, my child?"

"Ah! ma chère Mam'selle, comme je suis enchanté!" said the Frenchman. "Il ne manque que les dames de faire un paradis de Templeton."

Mr. Grant and Mohegan continued in the hall, while the remainder of the party withdrew to an eating parlor, if we except Benjamin, who civilly remained, to close the rear after the clergyman, and to open the front door for the exit of the Indian.

"John," said the divine, when the figure of Judge Temple disappeared, the last of the group, "to-morrow is the festival of the nativity of our blessed Redeemer, when the church has appointed prayers and thanksgiving to be offered up by her children, and when all are invited to partake of the mystical elements. As you have taken up the cross,and become a follower of good and an eschewer of evil, I trust I shall see you before the altar, with a contrite heart and a meek spirit."

"John will come," said the Indian, betraying no surprise; though he did not understand all the terms used by the other.

"Yes," continued Mr. Grant, laying his hand gently on the tawny shoulder of the aged chief, "but it is not enough to be there in the body; you must come in the spirit and in truth. The Redeemer died for all, for the poor Indian as well as for the white man. Heaven knows no difference in color; nor must earth witness a separation of the church. It is good and profitable, John, to freshen the understanding, and support the wavering, by the observance of our holy festivals; but all form is but stench in the nostrils of the Holy One, unless it be accompanied by a devout and humble spirit."

The Indian stepped back a little, and, raising his body to its utmost powers of erection, he stretched his right arm on high, and dropped his forefinger downward, as if pointing from the heavens, then striking his other hand on his naked breast, he said, with energy—

"The eye of the Great Spirit can see from the clouds;— the bosom of Mohegan is bare!"

"It is well, John, and I hope you will receive profit and consolation from the performance of this duty. The Great Spirit overlooks none of his children; and the man of the woods is as much an object of his care as he who dwells in a palace. I wish you a good-night, and pray God to bless you."

The Indian bent his head, and they separated—the one to seek his hut, and the other to join the party at the supper-table. While Benjamin was opening the door for the passage of the chief, he cried, in a tone that was meant to be encouraging—

"The parson says the word that is true, John. If so be that they took count of the color of the skin in heaven, why they might refuse to muster on their books a Christian-born, like myself, just for the matter of a little tan, from cruising in warm latitudes; though, for the matter of that, this damned norwester is enough to whiten the skin of a blackamore. Let the reef out of your blanket, man, or your red hide will hardly weather the night, without a touch from the frost."

[CHAPTER VIII. The story now halts for further exposition. Monsieur Le Quoi is revealed to be a refugee from the French Revolution who has become a prosperous storekeeper in the Judge's "Patent," as the grant of land in Otsego County is known locally. Major Hartmann is identified as the descendant of a German immigrant who

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24 Ah! . . . Templeton. Ah! my dear young lady, how pleased I am. Only ladies are lacking to make Templeton a paradise

had settled early in the century on the Mohawk River; he visits his friend the Judge four times a year, staying precisely a week each time. Mr. Grant, it appears, has just arrived as a missionary of the Protestant Episcopal Church; his first public service is scheduled for this very evening, Christmas Eve. It will be held in the great room of the Academy, a structure built by Richard Jones, Hiram Doolittle, and the local Freemasons at a time when Templeton had ambitions for an institution of higher learning. The Academy, now a common country school, is used for unusual trials at law, balls, and other meetings, including church services. When no itinerant preacher appears of a Sunday, Richard Jones is accustomed to read one of Laurence Sterne's sermons.

CHAPTER IX. The Judge and his friends have dinner, and their food is described at mouth-watering length. Conversation turns upon the mysterious young stranger who has been living with Natty Bumppo for nearly three weeks. Elizabeth shows that he has interested her; Richard inclines to be critical of him and of his ancestry. Dinner over, the party prepare to leave for the church service.

CHAPTER X. The Judge, Elizabeth, Mr. Grant, and Major Hartmann walk through the streets, Elizabeth looking out for familiar houses and persons. At the "Bold Dragoon," a tavern on one of the principal corners, they encounter Captain and Mrs. Hollister, the proprietors. When they have entered the Academy, Richard Jones and Monsieur Le Quoi appear and discuss with Hiram Doolittle, who comes on the scene for the first time, the church which is being built opposite the Academy. Richard is trying, none too successfully, to make New St. Paul's, as the church is called, Episcopalian. The Judge has decreed that when it is completed the people shall decide for themselves what denomination it shall be.

CHAPTER XI. The interior of the Academy, the seating of the congregation, and Mr. Grant's service and sermon are described.

CHAPTER XII. The service over, Elizabeth is introduced to Louisa Grant, the clergyman's daughter; the two girls take an immediate fancy to each other. After the Temples go, Chingachgook, Natty Bumppo, Oliver Edwards, and the Grants remain. The Indian and Natty express themselves on religion, and Oliver reveals that he has been baptized an Episcopalian and has never attended worship in any other church. Mr. Grant is moved to invite him and his friends to the Grant home; Chingachgook and Oliver accept. There, Oliver reveals a strong antipathy to Judge Temple, which the clergyman deprecates, attributing it to Oliver's Delaware blood, of which he has spoken proudly. After an hour's conversation, Oliver and the Indian leave.]

CHAPTER XIII

On one of the corners, where the two principal streets of Templeton intersected each other, stood, as we have already mentioned, the inn called the "Bold Dragoon." In the original plan, it was ordained that the village should stretch along the little stream that rushed down the valley; and the street which led from the lake to the academy was intended to be its western boundary. But convenience frequently frustrates the best regulated plans. The house of Mr., or as, in consequence of commanding the militia of that vicinity, he was called, Captain Hollister, had, at an early day, been erected directly facing the main street, and ostensibly interposed a barrier to its further progress. Horsemen, and subsequently teamsters, however, availed themselves of an opening, at the end of the building, to shorten their passage westward, until, in time, the regular highway was laid out along this course, and houses were gradually built on either side, so as effectually to prevent any subsequent correction of the evil.

Two material consequences followed this change in the regular plans of Marmaduke. The main street, after running about half its length, was suddenly reduced to precisely that difference in its width; and the "Bold Dragoon" became, next to the Mansion-house, by far the most conspicuous edifice in the place.

This conspicuousness, aided by the characters of the host and hostess, gave the tavern an advantage over all its future competitors, that no circumstances could conquer. An effort was, however, made to do so; and at the corner diagonally opposite, stood a new building that was intended, by its occupants, to look down all opposition. It was a house of wood, ornamented in the prevailing style of architecture, and about the roof and balustrades was one of the three imitators of the Mansion-house. The upper windows were filled with rough boards secured by nails, to keep out the cold air—for the edifice was far from finished, although glass was to be seen in the lower apartments, and the light of the

powerful fires within denoted that it was already inhabited. The exterior was painted white on the front, and on the end which was exposed to the street; but in the rear, and on the side which was intended to join the neighboring house, it was coarsely smeared with Spanish brown. Before the door stood two lofty posts, connected at the top by a beam, from which was suspended an enormous sign, ornamented around its edges with certain curious carvings in pine boards, and on its faces loaded with masonic emblems. Over these mysterious figures was written, in large letters, "The Templeton Coffee-House, and Travellers' Hotel," and beneath them, "By Habakkuk Foote and Joshua Knapp." This was a fearful rival to the "Bold Dragoon," as our readers will the more readily perceive, when we add that the same sonorous names were to be seen over the door of a newly erected store in the village, a hatter's shop, and the gates of a tan-yard. But, either because too much was attempted to be executed well, or that the "Bold Dragoon" had established a reputation which could not be easily shaken, not only Judge Temple and his friends, but most of the villagers also, who were not in debt to the powerful firm we have named, frequented the inn of Captain Hollister, on all occasions where such a house was necessary.

On the present evening the limping veteran and his consort were hardly housed after their return from the academy, when the sounds of stamping feet at their threshold announced the approach of visitors, who were probably assembling with a view to compare opinions on the subject of the ceremonies they had witnessed.

The public, or as it was called, the "bar-room," of the "Bold Dragoon," was a spacious apartment, lined on three sides with benches, and on the fourth by fireplaces. Of the latter there were two of such size as to occupy, with their enormous jambs, the whole of that side of the apartment where they were placed, excepting room enough for a door or two, and a little apartment in one corner, which was protected by miniature palisadoes, and profusely garnished with bottles and glasses. In the entrance to this sanctuary, Mrs. Hollister was seated, with great gravity in her air, while her husband occupied himself with stirring the fires, moving the logs with a large stake burnt to a point at one end.

"There, Sargeant, dear," said the landlady, after she thought the veteran had got the logs arranged in the most judicious manner, "give over poking, for it's no good ye'll be doing, now that they burn so convaniently. There's the glasses on the table there, and the mug that the Doctor was taking his cider and ginger in, before the fire here—just put them in the bar, will ye? for we'll be having the Jooge, and the Major, and Mr. Jones down the night, without reckoning Benjamin Poomp, and the lawyers: so ye'll be fixing the room tidy; and put both flip irons in the coals; and tell Jude, the lazy black baste, that if she's no be claneing up the kitchen I'll turn her out of the house, and she may live wid the jontlemen that kape the 'Coffee-house,' good luck to 'em. Och! Sargeant, sure it's a great privilege to go to a mateing where a body can sit asy, widout joomping up and down so often, as this Mr. Grant is doing that same."

"It's a privilege at all times, Mrs. Hollister, whether we stand or be seated; or, as good Mr. Whitefield used to do after he had made a wearisome day's march, get on our knees and pray, like Moses of old, with a flanker to the right and left, to lift his hands to heaven," returned her husband, who composedly performed what she had directed to be done. "It was a very pretty fight, Betty, that the Israelites had on that day with the Amalekites. It seems that they fou't on a plain, for Moses is mentioned as having gone on to the heights to overlook the battle, and wrestle in prayer; and if I should judge, with my little larning, the Israelites depended mainly on their horse, for it is written that Joshua cut up the enemy with the edge of the sword; from which I infer, not only that they were horse, but well disciplyn'd troops. Indeed, it says as much as that they were chosen men; quite likely volunteers, for raw dragoons seldom strike with the *edge* of their swords, particularly if the weapon be anyway crooked."

"Pshaw! why do ye bother yourself wid taxts, man, about so small a matter," interrupted the landlady; "sure, it was the Lord who was with 'em; for he always sided wid the Jews, before they fell away; and it's but little matter what kind of men Joshua commanded, so that

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6 **Spanish brown**, a reddish brown • 63 **Mr. Whitefield**, George Whitefield (1714-1770), English evangelist. Mrs. Hollister's loyalties are divided among her Methodism (in which her present husband evidently shares), the memory of the first Captain (whose likeness, astride a dragon, is the sign of the "Bold Dragoon"), and the present Mr. Hollister • 69 **Israelites . . . Amalekites.** See Exodus 17

he was doing the right bidding. Aven them cursed millaishy, the Lord forgive me for swearing, that was the death of him, wid their cowardice, would have carried the day in old times. There's no rason to be thinking that the soldiers were used to the drill."

"I must say, Mrs. Hollister, that I have not often seen raw troops fight better than the left flank of the militia, at the time you mention. They rallied handsomely, and that without beat of drum, which is no easy thing to do under fire, and were very steady till he fell. But the Scriptures contain no unnecessary words; and I will maintain that horse, who know how to strike with the *edge* of the sword, must be well disciplyn'd. Many a good sarmon has been preached about smaller matters than that one word! If the text was not meant to be particular, why wasn't it written with the sword, and not with the edge? Now, a backhanded stroke, on the edge, takes long practice. Goodness! what an argument would Mr. Whitefield make of that word edge! As to the Captain, if he had only called up the guard of dragoons when he rallied the foot, they would have shown the inimy what the edge of a sword was; for, although there was no commissioned officer with them, yet I think I may say," the veteran continued, stiffening his cravat about the throat, and raising himself up, with the air of a drill-sergeant, "they were led by a man who know'd how to bring them on, in spite of the ravine."

"Is it lade on ye would," cried the landlady, "when ye know yourself, Mr. Hollister, that the baste he rode was but little able to joomp from one rock to another, and the animal was as spry as a squirrel? Och! but it's useless to talk, for he's gone this many a year. I would that he had lived to see the true light; but there's mercy for a brave sowl, that died in the saddle, fighting for liberty. It is a poor tombstone they have given him, anyway, and many a good one that died like himself; but the sign is very like, and I will be kapeing it up, while the blacksmith can make a hook for it to swing on, for all the 'coffee-houses' betwane this and Albany."

There is no saying where this desultory conversation would have led the worthy couple, had not the men who were stamping the snow off their feet, on the little platform before the door, suddenly ceased their occupation, and entered the bar-room.

For ten or fifteen minutes, the different individuals, who intended either to bestow or receive edification, before the fires of the "Bold Dragoon," on that evening, were collecting, until the benches were nearly filled with men of different occupations. Dr. Todd and a slovenly looking, shabby-genteel young man, who took tobacco profusely, wore a coat of imported cloth, cut with something like a fashionable air, frequently exhibited a large French silver watch, with a chain of woven hair and a silver key, and who, altogether, seemed as much above the artisans around him as he was himself inferior to the real gentleman, occupied a high-back wooden settee, in the most comfortable corner in the apartment.

Sundry brown mugs, containing cider or beer, were placed between the heavy andirons, and little groups were formed among the guests, as subjects arose, or the liquor was passed from one to the other. No man was seen to drink by himself, nor in any instance was more than one vessel considered necessary for the same beverage; but the glass, or the mug, was passed from hand to hand, until a chasm in the line, or a regard to the rights of ownership, would regularly restore the dregs of the potation to him who defrayed the cost.

Toasts were uniformly drunk; and, occasionally, some one, who conceived himself peculiarly endowed by nature to shine in the way of wit, would attempt some such sentiment as "hoping that he" who treated, "might make a better man than his father;" or, "live till all his friends wished him dead;" while the more humble pot-companion contented himself by saying, with a most imposing gravity in his air, "come, here's luck," or by expressing some other equally comprehensive desire. In every instance, the veteran landlord was requested to imitate the custom of the cupbearers to kings, and taste the liquor he presented, by the invitation of "after you is manners," with which request he ordinarily complied, by wetting his lips, first expressing the wish of "here's hoping," leaving it to the imagination of the hearers to fill the vacuum by whatever good each thought most desirable. During these movements, the landlady was busily occupied with mixing the various compounds required by her customers, with her own hands, and occasionally exchanging greetings and inquiries concerning the conditions of their respective families, with such of the villagers as approached the bar.

At length the common thirst being in some measure assuaged, conversation of a more general nature became the order of the hour. The physician, and his companion,

who was one of the two lawyers of the village, being considered the best qualified to maintain a public discourse with credit, were the principal speakers, though a remark was hazarded, now and then, by Mr. Doolittle, who was thought to be their inferior only in the enviable point of education. A general silence was produced on all but the two speakers by the following observation from the practitioner of the law:—

"So, Dr. Todd, I understand that you have been performing an important operation, this evening, by cutting a charge of buckshot from the shoulder of the son of Leather-stocking?"

"Yes, sir," returned the other, elevating his little head with an air of importance. "I had a small job up at the Judge's in that way; it was, however, but a trifle to what it might have been, had it gone through the body. The shoulder is not a very vital part; and I think the young man will soon be well. But I did not know that the patient was a son of Leather-stocking: it is news to me to hear that Natty had a wife."

"It is by no means a necessary consequence," returned the other, winking, with a shrewd look around the bar-room; "there is such a thing, I suppose you know, in law, as a 'filius nullius.'"

"Spake it out, man," exclaimed the landlady; "spake it out in king's English; what for should ye be talking Indian in a room full of Christian folks, though it is about a poor hunter, who is but a little better in his ways than the wild savages themselves? Och! it's to be hoped that the missionaries will, in his own time, make a convarsion of the poor divils; and then it will matter little of what color is the skin, or wedder there be wool or hair on the head."

"Oh, it is Latin, not Indian, Miss Hollister," returned the lawyer, repeating his winks and shrewd looks; "and Dr. Todd understands Latin, or how would he read the labels on his gallipots and drawers? No, no, Miss Hollister, the Doctor understands me; don't you, Doctor?"

"Hem,—why I guess I am not far out of the way," returned Elnathan, endeavoring to imitate the expression of the other's countenance by looking jocular. "Latin is a queer language, gentlemen; now I rather guess there is no one in the room except Squire Lippet, who can believe that 'Far. Av.' means oatmeal, in English."

The lawyer in his turn was a good deal embarrassed by this display of learning; for, although he actually had taken his first degree at one of the eastern universities, he was somewhat puzzled with the terms used by his companion. It was dangerous, however, to appear to be outdone in learning in a public bar-room, and before so many of his clients; he therefore put the best face on the matter, and laughed knowingly, as if there were a good joke concealed under it, that was understood only by the physician and himself. All this was attentively observed by the listeners, who exchanged looks of approbation; and the expressions of "tonguey man," and "I guess Squire Lippet knows, if anybody doos," were heard in different parts of the room, as vouchers for the admiration of his auditors. Thus encouraged, the lawyer rose from his chair, and turning his back to the fire, and facing the company, he continued—

"The son of Natty, or the son of nobody, I hope the young man is not going to let the matter drop. This is a country of laws; and I should like to see it fairly tried, whether a man who owns, or says he owns, a hundred thousand acres of land, has any more right to shoot a body than another. What do you think of it, Dr. Todd?"

"Oh! sir, I am of opinion that the gentleman will soon be well, as I said before; the wound isn't in a vital part; and as the ball was extracted so soon, and the shoulder was what I call well attended to, I do not think there is as much danger as there might have been."

"I say, Squire Doolittle," continued the attorney, raising his voice, "you are a magistrate, and know what is law, and what is not law. I ask you, sir, if shooting a man is a thing that is to be settled so very easily? Suppose, sir, that the young man had a wife and family; and suppose that he was a mechanic like yourself, sir; and suppose that his family depended on him for bread; and suppose that the ball, instead of merely going through the flesh, had broken the shoulder-blade, and crippled him forever; I ask you all, gentlemen, supposing this to be the case, whether a jury wouldn't give what I call handsome damages?"

As the close of this suppositious case was addressed to the company generally, Hiram did not, at first, consider himself called on for a reply; but finding the eyes of the listeners bent on him in expectation, he remembered his character for judicial discrimination, and spoke,

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24 filius nullius, son of nobody

observing a due degree of deliberation and dignity.

"Why, if a man should shoot another," he said, "and if he should do it on purpose, and if the law took notice on't, and if a jury should find him guilty, it would be likely to turn out a state-prison matter."

"It would so, sir," returned the attorney. "The law, gentlemen, is no respecter of persons in a free country. It is one of the great blessings that has been handed down to us from our ancestors, that all men are equal in the eye of the law as they are by nater. Though some may get property, no one knows how, yet they are not privileged to transgress the laws any more than the poorest citizen in the state. This is my notion, gentlemen; and I think that if a man had a mind to bring this matter up, something might be made out of it that would help pay for the salve—ha! Doctor?"

"Why, sir," returned the physician, who appeared a little uneasy at the turn the conversation was taking, "I have the promise of Judge Temple before men—not but what I would take his word as soon as his note of hand—but it was before men. Let me see—there was Mounshier Ler Quow, and Squire Jones, and Major Hartmann, and Miss Pettibone, and one or two of the blacks by, when he said that his pocket would amply reward me for what I did."

"Was the promise made before or after the service was performed?" asked the attorney.

"It might have been both," returned the discreet physician; "though I'm certain he said so before I undertook the dressing."

"But it seems that he said his pocket should reward you, Doctor," observed Hiram. "Now I don't know that the law will hold a man to such a promise; he might give you his pocket with sixpence in't, and tell you to take your pay out on't."

"That would not be a reward in the eye of the law," interrupted the attorney—"not what is called a 'quid pro quo;' nor is the pocket to be considered as an agent, but as part of a man's own person, that is, in this particular. I am of opinion that an action would lie on that promise, and I will undertake to bear him out, free of costs, if he don't recover."

To this proposition the physician made no reply; but he was observed to cast his eyes around him, as if to enumerate the witnesses, in order to substantiate this promise also, at a future day, should it prove necessary. A subject so momentous as that of suing Judge Temple was not very palatable to the present company in so public a place; and a short silence ensued, that was only interrupted by the opening of the door, and the entrance of Natty himself.

The old hunter carried in his hand his never-failing companion, the rifle; and although all of the company were uncovered excepting the lawyer, who wore his hat on one side, with a certain dam'me air, Natty moved to the front of one of the fires, without in the least altering any part of his dress or appearance. Several questions were addressed to him, on the subject of the game he had killed, which he answered readily, and with some little interest; and the landlord, between whom and Natty there existed much cordiality, on account of their both having been soldiers in youth, offered him a glass of a liquid, which, if we might judge from its reception, was no unwelcome guest. When the forester had got his potation also, he quietly took his seat on the end of one of the logs that lay nigh the fires, and the slight interruption produced by his entrance seemed to be forgotten.

"The testimony of the blacks could not be taken, sir," continued the lawyer, "for they are all the property of Mr. Jones, who owns their time. But there is a way by which Judge Temple, or any other man, might be made to pay for shooting another, and for the cure in the bargain.—There is a way, I say, and that without going into the 'court of errors,' too."

"And a mighty big error ye would make of it, Mister Todd," cried the landlady, "should ye be putting the matter into the law at all, with Joodge Temple, who has a purse as long as one of them pines on the hill, and who is an asy man to dale wid, if yees but mind the humor of him. He's a good man is Joodge Temple, and a kind one, and one who will be no the likelier to do the pratty thing, becase ye would wish to tarrify him wid the law. I know of but one objection to the same, which is an over carelessness about his sowl. It's neither a Methodie, nor a Papish, nor Prasbetyrian, that he is, but just nothing at all; and it's hard to think that he, 'who will not fight the good fight, under the banners of a rig'lar church, in this world, will be mustered among the chosen in heaven,' as my husband, the captain there, as ye call him, says—though there is but one captain that I know, who desarves the name. I hopes, Lather-stocking, ye'll no be foolish, and putting the boy up to try

the law in the matter; for 'twill be an evil day to ye both, when ye first turn the skin of so paceable an animal as a sheep into a bone of contention. The lad is wilcome to his drink for nothing, until his shoulther will bear the rifle ag'in."

"Well, that's gin'rous," was heard from several mouths at once, for this was a company in which a liberal offer was not thrown away; while the hunter, instead of expressing any of that indignation which he might be supposed to feel, at hearing the hurt of his young companion alluded to, opened his mouth, with the silent laugh for which he was so remarkable, and after he had indulged his humor, made this reply:—

"I know'd the Judge would do nothing with his smooth-bore when he got out of his sleigh. I never saw but one smooth-bore that would carry at all, and that was a French-ducking-piece, upon the big lakes: it had a barrel half as long ag'in as my rifle, and would throw fine shot into a goose, at 100 yards; but it made dreadful work with the game, and you wanted a boat to carry it about in. When I went with Sir William ag'in the French, at Fort Niagara, all the rangers used the rifle, and a dreadful weapon it is, in the hands of one who knows how to charge it, and keep a steady aim. The Captain knows, for he says he was a soldier in Shirley's; and though they were nothing but baggonet-men, he must know how we cut up the French and Iroquois in the skrimmages in that war. Chingachgook, which means 'Big Sarpent' in English, old John Mohegan, who lives up at the hut with me, was a great warrior then, and was out with us; he can tell all about it, too; though he was overhand for the tomahawk, never firing more than once or twice, before he was running in for the scalps. Ah! times is dreadfully altered since then. Why, Doctor, there was nothing but a footpath, or at the most a track for pack-horses, along the Mohawk, from the Jarman Flats up to the forts. Now, they say, they talk of running one of them wide roads with gates on it along the river; first making a road, and then fencing it up! I hunted one season back of the Kaatskills, nigh-hand to the settlements, and the dogs often lost the scent, when they came to them highways, there was so much travel on them; though I can't say that the brutes was of a very good breed. Old Hector will wind a deer in the fall of the year, across the broadest place in the Otsego, and that is a mile and a half, for I paced it myself on the ice, when the tract was first surveyed, under the Indian grant."

"It sames to me, Natty, but a sorry compliment, to call your comrad after the evil one," said the landlady; "and it's no much like a snake that old John is looking now. Nimrod would be a more besameing name for the lad, and a more Christian, too, seeing that it comes from the Bible. The sargeant read me the chapter about him, the night before my christening, and a mighty asement it was, to listen to anything from the book."

"Old John and Chingachgook were very different men to look on," returned the hunter, shaking his head at his melancholy recollections.—"In the 'fifty-eighth war' he was in the middle of manhood, and taller than now by three inches. If you had seen him, as I did, the morning we beat Dieskau, from behind our log walls, you would have called him as comely a red-skin as ye ever set eyes on. He was naked all to his breech-cloth and leggins; and you never seed a creater so handsomely painted. One side of his face was red, and the other black. His head was shaved clean, all to a few hairs on the crown, where he wore a tuft of eagle's feathers, as bright as if they had come from a peacock's tail. He had colored his sides so that they looked like an atomy, ribs and all; for Chingachgook had a great taste in such things, so that, what with his bold, fiery countenance, his knife, and his tomahawk, I have never seen a fiercer warrior on the ground. He played his part, too, like a man; for I saw him next day, with thirteen scalps on his pole. And I will say this for the 'Big Snake,' that he always dealt fair, and never scalped any that he didn't kill with his own hands."

"Well, well," cried the landlady; "fighting is fighting, anyway, and there is different fashions in the thing;

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22 **Fort Niagara,** captured by a large force of British and Indians, under the command of Sir William Johnson, on July 7, 1759 • 25 **Shirley's,** William Shirley (1694-1771), royal governor of Massachusetts from 1741 until 1757, and commander of the British forces in America from Braddock's death in 1755 until he was superseded in the following year. He led an unsuccessful expedition against Fort Niagara in 1755 • 37 **Jarman Flats,** German Flatts, a settlement on the present site of Herkimer, New York, made by Germans from the Palatinate in 1725 • 52 **Nimrod.** See Genesis 10:8-9 • 59 **fifty-eighth war,** the French and Indian War • 62 **Dieskau,** Ludwig August Dieskau (1701-1767), German baron and general who served under the French in Canada. He was taken prisoner by Johnson and his men near Fort Edward on the upper Hudson on September 8, 1755

though I can't say that I relish mangling a body after the breath is out of it; neither do I think it can be uphild by doctrine. I hope, sargeant, ye niver was helping in sich evil worrek."

"It was my duty to keep my ranks, and to stand or fall by the baggonet or lead," returned the veteran. "I was then in the fort, and seldom leaving my place, saw but little of the savages, who kept on the flanks or in front, skrimmaging. I remember, howsomever, to have heard mention made of the 'Great Snake,' as he was called, for he was a chief of renown; but little did I ever expect to see him enlisted in the cause of Christianity, and civilized like old John."

"Oh! he was Christianized by the Moravians, who were always over intimate with the Delawares," said Leather-stocking. "It's my opinion that, had they been left to themselves, there would be no such doings now, about the head waters of the two rivers, and that these hills mought have been kept as good hunting-ground by their right owner, who is not too old to carry a rifle, and whose sight is as true as a fish-hawk hovering——"

He was interrupted by more stamping at the door, and presently the party from the Mansion-house entered, followed by the Indian himself.

CHAPTER XIV

Some little commotion was produced by the appearance of the new guests, during which the lawyer slunk from the room. Most of the men approached Marmaduke, and shook his offered hand, hoping "that the Judge was well;" while Major Hartmann, having laid aside his hat and wig, and substituted for the latter a warm, peaked woollen night-cap, took his seat very quietly on one end of the settee, which was relinquished by its former occupants. His tobacco-box was next produced, and a clean pipe was handed him by the landlord. When he had succeeded in raising a smoke, the Major gave a long whiff, and turning his head toward the bar, he said—

"Petty, pring in ter toddy."

In the mean time the Judge had exchanged his salutations with most of the company, and taken a place by the side of the Major, and Richard had bustled himself into the most comfortable seat in the room. Mr. Le Quoi was the last seated, nor did he venture to place his chair finally until by frequent removals he had ascertained that he could not possibly intercept a ray of heat from any individual present. Mohegan found a place on an end of one of the benches, and somewhat approximated to the bar. When these movements had subsided, the Judge remarked pleasantly—

"Well, Betty, I find you retain your popularity through all weathers, against all rivals, and among all religions. How liked you the sermon?"

"Is it the sarmon?" exclaimed the landlady. "I can't say but it was rasonable; but the prayers is mighty unasy. It's no small a matter for a body in their fifty-nint' year, to be moving so much in church. Mr. Grant sames a godly man, anyway, and his garrel is a hoomble one, and a devout.—Here, John, is a mug of cider, laced with whiskey. An Indian will drink cider, though he niver be athirst."

"I must say," observed Hiram, with due deliberation, "that it was a tonguey thing; and I rather guess that it gave considerable satisfaction. There was one part, though, which might have been left out, or something else put in; but then I s'pose that, as it was a written discourse, it is not so easily altered as where a minister preaches without notes."

"Ay! there's the rub, Joodge," cried the landlady. "How can a man stand up and be praching his word, when all that he is saying is written down, and he is as much tied to it as iver a thaving dragoon was to the pickets?"

"Well, well," cried Marmaduke, waving his hand for silence, "there is enough said; as Mr. Grant told us, there are different sentiments on such subjects, and in my opinion he spoke most sensibly.—So, Jotham, I am told you have sold your betterments to a new settler, and have moved into the village, and opened a school. Was it cash or dicker?"

The man who was thus addressed occupied a seat immediately behind Marmaduke; and one who was ignorant of the extent of the Judge's observation, might have thought he would have escaped notice. He was of a thin, shapeless figure, with a discontented expression of countenance, and with something extremely shiftless in his whole air. Thus spoken to, after turning and twisting a little, by way of preparation, he made a reply.

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14 Moravians, or United Brethren, a German Protestant sect active after 1734 in Indian missions. Heckewelder, from whom Cooper derived much of his Indian lore, was a Moravian missionary

"Why, part cash, and part dicker. I sold out to a Pumfret-man who was so'thin forehanded. He was to give me ten dollars an acre for the clearin', and one dollar an acre over the first cost on the woodland; and we agreed to leave the buildin's to men. So I tuck Asa Montagu, and he tuck Absalom Bement, and they two tuck old Squire Napthali Green. And so they had a meetin', and made out a vardict of eighty dollars for the buildin's. There was twelve acres of clearin', at ten dollars, and eighty-eight at one, and the whull came to two hundred and eighty-six dollars and a half, after paying the men."

"Hum," said Marmaduke: "what did you give for the place?"

"Why, besides what's comin' to the Judge, I gi'n my brother Tim a hundred dollars for his bargain; but then there's a new house on't, that cost me sixty more, and I paid Moses a hundred dollars, for choppin', and loggin', and sowin'; so that the whull stood me in about two hundred and sixty dollars. But then I had a great crop off on't, and as I got twenty-six dollars and a half more than it cost, I conclude I made a pretty good trade on't."

"Yes, but you forgot that the crop was yours without the trade, and you have turned yourself out of doors for twenty-six dollars."

"Oh! the Judge is clean out," said the man, with a look of sagacious calculation; "he turned out a span of horses, that is wuth a hundred and fifty dollars of any man's money, with a bran new wagon; fifty dollars in cash; and a good note for eighty more; and a side-saddle that was valued at seven and a half—so there was jist twelve shillings betwixt us. I wanted him to turn out a set of harness, and take the cow and the sap troughs. He wouldn't—but I saw through it; he thought I should have to buy the tacklin' afore I could use the wagon and horses; but I know'd a thing or two myself; I should like to know of what use is the tacklin' to him! I offered him to trade back ag'in, for one hundred and fifty-five. But my woman said she wanted a churn, so I tuck a churn for the change."

"And what do you mean to do with your time this winter? you must remember that time is money."

"Why, as the master is gone down country, to see his mother, who, they say, is going to make a die on't, I agreed to take the school in hand till he comes back. If times doesn't get worse in the spring, I've some notion of going into trade, or maybe I may move off to the Genesee; they say they are carryin' on a great stroke of business that-a-way. If the wust comes to the wust, I can but work at my trade, for I was brought up in a shoe manufactory."

It would seem that Marmaduke did not think his society of sufficient value to attempt inducing him to remain where he was; for he addressed no further discourse to the man, but turned his attention to other subjects. After a short pause, Hiram ventured a question:

"What news does the Judge bring us from the Legislature? it's not likely that Congress has done much this session: or maybe the French haven't fit any more battles lately?"

"The French, since they have beheaded their king, have done nothing but fight," returned the Judge. "The character of the nation seems changed. I knew many French gentlemen, during our war, and they all appeared to me to be men of great humanity and goodness of heart; but these Jacobins are as bloodthirsty as bull-dogs."

"There was one Roshambow wid us, down at Yorrektown," cried the landlady; "a mighty pratty man he was, too; and their horse was the very same. It was there that the sargeant got the hurt in the leg, from the English batteries, bad luck to 'em."

"Ah! mon pauvre Roi!" murmured Monsieur Le Quoi.

"The Legislature have been passing laws," continued Marmaduke, "that the country much required. Among others, there is an act prohibiting the drawing of seines, at any other than proper seasons, in certain of our streams and small lakes; and another, to prohibit the killing of deer in the teeming months. These are laws that were loudly called for, by judicious men; nor do I despair of getting an act to make the unlawful felling of timber a criminal offence."

The hunter listened to this detail with breathless attention, and when the Judge had ended, he laughed in open derision.

"You may make your laws, Judge," he cried, "but who

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48 Genesee, a river which runs across New York State from south to north, almost on a line with the present city of Rochester • 67 Roshambow, Jean Baptiste Donatien de Vimeur, Count Rochambeau (1725-1807), commander of the French forces in the action ended by the surrender of Cornwallis at Yorktown, 1781

will you find to watch the mountains through the long summer days, or the lakes at night? Game is game, and he who finds may kill; that has been the law in these mountains for forty years, to my sartain knowledge; and I think one old law is worth two new ones. None but a green-one would wish to kill a doe with a fa'n by its side, unless his moccasins were getting old, or his leggins ragged, for the flesh is lean and coarse. But a rifle rings among the rocks along the shore, sometimes, as if fifty pieces were fired at once:—it would be hard to tell where the man stood who pulled the trigger."

"Armed with the dignity of the law, Mr. Bumppo," returned the Judge, gravely, "a vigilant magistrate can prevent much of the evil that has hitherto prevailed, and which is already rendering the game scarce. I hope to live to see the day when a man's rights in his game shall be as much respected as his title to his farm."

"Your titles and your farms are all new together," cried Natty; "but laws should be equal, and not more for one than another. I shot a deer, last Wednesday was a fortnight, and it floundered through the snow-banks till it got over a brush fence; I catch'd the lock of my rifle in the twigs in following, and was kept back, until finally the creater got off. Now I want to know who is to pay me for that deer; and a fine buck it was. If there hadn't been a fence I should have gotten another shot into it; and I never draw'd upon anything that hadn't wings three times running, in my born days.—No, no, Judge, it's the farmers that makes the game scarce, and not the hunters."

"Ter teer is not so plenty as in ter old war, Pumppo," said the Major, who had been an attentive listener, amidst clouds of smoke; "put ter lant is not mate as for ter teer to live on, put for Christians."

"Why, Major, I believe you're a friend to justice and the right, though you go so often to the grand house; but it's a hard case to a man to have his honest calling for a livelihood stopped by laws, and that too when, if right was done, he mought hunt or fish on any day in the week, or on the best flat in the Patent, if he was so minded."

"I unstertant you, Letter-stockint," returned the Major, fixing his black eyes, with a look of peculiar meaning, on the hunter; "put you didn't use to be so prutent, as to look ahet mit so much care."

"Maybe there wasn't so much occasion," said the hunter, a little sulkily; when he sank into a silence from which he was not roused for some time.

"The Judge was saying so'thin about the French," Hiram observed, when the pause in the conversation had continued a decent time.

"Yes, sir," returned Marmaduke, "the Jacobins of France seem rushing from one act of licentiousness to another. They continue those murders which are dignified by the name of executions. You have heard that they have added the death of their Queen to the long list of their crimes."

"Les monstres!" again murmured Monsieur Le Quoi, turning himself suddenly in his chair, with a convulsive start.

"The province of La Vendée is laid waste by the troops of the republic, and hundreds of its inhabitants, who are royalists in their sentiments, are shot at a time. La Vendée is a district in the southwest of France that continues yet much attached to the family of the Bourbons; doubtless Monsieur Le Quoi is acquainted with it, and can describe it more faithfully."

"Non, non, non, mon cher ami," returned the Frenchman, in a suppressed voice, but speaking rapidly, and gesticulating with his right hand, as if for mercy, while with his left he concealed his eyes.

"There have been many battles fought lately," continued Marmaduke, "and the infuriated republicans are too often victorious. I cannot say, however, that I am sorry they have captured Toulon from the English, for it is a place to which they have a just right."

"Ah—ha!" exclaimed Monsieur Le Quoi, springing on his feet, and flourishing both arms with great animation; "ces Anglais!"

The Frenchman continued to move about the room with great alacrity for a few minutes, repeating his exclamations to himself; when, overcome by the contradictory nature of his emotions, he suddenly burst out of the house, and was seen wading through the snow toward his little shop, waving his arms on high, as if to pluck down honor from the moon. His departure excited but little surprise, for the villagers were used to his manner; but Major Hartmann laughed outright, for the first time during his visit, as he lifted the mug, and observed—

"Ter Frenchman is mat—put he is goot as for notting to trink; he is trunk mit joy."

"The French are good soldiers," said Captain Hollister; "they stood us in hand a good turn, down at Yorktown; nor do I think, although I am an ignorant man about the great movements of the army, that his Excellency would have been able to march against Cornwallis, without their reinforcements."

"Ye spake the trut', sargeant," interrupted his wife, "and I would iver have ye be doing the same. It's varry pratty men is the French; and jist when I stopt the cart, the time when ye was pushing on in front it was, to kape the rig'lers in, a rigiment of the jontlemen marched by, and so I dealt them out to their liking. Was it pay I got? sure did I, in good solid crowns: the divil a bit of continental could they muster among them all, for love nor money. Och! the Lord forgive me for swearing and spakeing of such vanities: but this I will say for the French, that they paid in good silver; and one glass would go a great way wid 'em, for they gin'rally handed it back wid a drop in the cup; and that's a brisk trade, Joodge, where the pay is good, and the men not over partic'lar."

"A thriving trade, Mrs. Hollister," said Marmaduke. "But what has become of Richard? he jumped up as soon as seated, and has been absent so long that I am fearful he has frozen."

"No fear of that, cousin 'duke," cried the gentleman himself; "business will sometimes keep a man warm the coldest night that ever snapt in the mountains. Betty, your husband told me, as we came out of church, that your hogs were getting mangy, so I have been out to take a look at them, and found it true. I stepped across, Doctor, and got your boy to weigh me out a pound of salts, and have been mixing it with their swill. I'll bet a saddle of venison against a gray squirrel, that they are better in a week. And now, Mrs. Hollister, I'm ready for a hissing mug of flip."

"Sure I know'd yee'd be wanting that same," said the landlady; "it's mixt and ready to the boiling. Sargeant, dear, be handing up the iron, will ye?—no the one in the far fire, it's black, ye will see. Ah! you've the thing now; look if it's not as red as a cherry."

The beverage was heated, and Richard took that kind of draught which men are apt to indulge in, who think that they have just executed a clever thing, especially when they like the liquor.

"Oh! you have a hand, Betty, that was formed to mix flip," cried Richard, when he paused for breath. "The very iron has a flavor in it. Here, John, drink, man, drink. I and you and Dr. Todd have done a good thing with the shoulder of that lad this very night. 'Duke, I made a song while you were gone—one day when I had nothing to do; so I'll sing you a verse or two, though I haven't really determined on the tune yet:—

What is life but a scene of care,
Where each one must toil in his way?
Then let us be jolly, and prove that we are
A set of good fellows, who seem very rare,
And can laugh and sing all the day.
Then let us be jolly,
And cast away folly,
For grief turns a black head to gray.

There, 'duke, what do you think of that? There is another verse of it, all but the last line. I haven't got a rhyme for the last line yet. Well, old John, what do you think of the music? as good as one of your war songs, ha?"

"Good!" said Mohegan, who had been sharing deeply in the potations of the landlady, besides paying a proper respect to the passing mugs of the Major and Marmaduke.

"Pravo! pravo! Richart," cried the Major, whose black eyes were beginning to swim in moisture; "pravissimo! it is a goot song; put Natty Pumppo hast a petter. Letter-stockint, vilt sing? olt poy, vilt sing ter song, as apout ter woots?"

"No, no, Major," returned the hunter, with a melancholy shake of the head, "I have lived to see what I thought eyes could never behold in these hills, and I have no heart left for singing. If he, that has a right to be master and ruler here, is forced to squinch his thirst, when a-dry, with snow-water, it ill becomes them that have lived by his bounty to be making merry, as if there was nothing in the world but sunshine and summer."

When he had spoken, Leather-stocking again dropped his head on his knees, and concealed his hard and wrinkled features with his hands. The change from the excessive cold without, to the heat of the bar-room, coupled with the depth and frequency of Richard's draughts, had already levelled whatever inequality there might have existed between him and the other guests, on the score of spirits; and he now held out a pair of swimming mugs of foaming flip toward the hunter, as he cried—

"Merry! ay! merry Christmas to you, old boy! Sunshine and summer! no! you are blind, Leather-stocking, 'tis moonshine and winter;—take these spectacles, and open your eyes—

> So let us be jolly,
> And cast away folly,
> For grief turns a black head to gray.

"Hear how old John turns his quavers. What damned dull music an Indian song is after all, Major! I wonder if they ever sing by note."

While Richard was singing and talking, Mohegan was uttering dull, monotonous tones, keeping time by a gentle motion of his head and body. He made use of but few words, and such as he did utter were in his native language, and consequently only understood by himself and Natty. Without heeding Richard, he continued to sing a kind of wild, melancholy air, that rose, at times, in sudden and quite elevated notes, and then fell again into the low, quavering sounds that seemed to compose the character of his music.

The attention of the company was now much divided, the men in the rear having formed themselves into little groups, where they were discussing various matters; among the principal of which were the treatment of mangy hogs, and Parson Grant's preaching; while Dr. Todd was endeavoring to explain to Marmaduke the nature of the hurt received by the young hunter. Mohegan continued to sing, while his countenance was becoming vacant, though, coupled with his thick bushy hair, it was assuming an expression very much like brutal ferocity. His notes were gradually growing louder, and soon rose to a height that caused a general cessation in the discourse. The hunter now raised his head again, and addressed the old warrior, warmly, in the Delaware language, which, for the benefit of our readers, we shall render freely into English.

"Why do you sing of your battles, Chingachgook, and of the warriors you have slain, when the worst enemy of all is near you, and keeps the Young Eagle from his rights? I have fought in as many battles as any warrior in your tribe, but cannot boast of my deeds at such a time as this."

"Hawk-eye," said the Indian, tottering with a doubtful step from his place, "I am the Great Snake of the Delawares. I can track the Mingoes like an adder that is stealing on the whip-poor-will's eggs, and strike them like a rattlesnake, dead at a blow. The white man made the tomahawk of Chingachgook bright as the water of Otsego, when the last sun is shining; but it is red with the blood of the Maquas."

"And why have you slain the Mingo warriors? Was it not to keep these hunting grounds and lakes to your father's children? and were they not given in solemn council to the Fire-eater? and does not the blood of a warrior run in the veins of the young chief, who should speak aloud, where his voice is now too low to be heard?"

The appeal of the hunter seemed in some measure to recall the confused faculties of the Indian, who turned his face toward the listeners and gazed intently on the Judge. He shook his head, throwing his hair back from his countenance, and exposed eyes that were glaring with an expression of wild resentment. But the man was not himself. His hand seemed to make a fruitless effort to release his tomahawk, which was confined by its handle to his belt, while his eyes gradually became vacant. Richard at that instant thrusting a mug before him, his features changed to the grin of idiocy, and seizing the vessel with both hands, he sank backward on the bench and drank until satiated, when he made an effort to lay aside the mug with the helplessness of total inebriety.

"Shed not blood!" exclaimed the hunter, as he watched the countenance of the Indian in its moment of ferocity; "but he is drunk, and can do no harm. This is the way with all the savages; give them liquor, and they make dogs of themselves. Well, well—the time will come when right will be done; and we must have patience."

Natty still spoke in the Delaware language, and of course was not understood. He had hardly concluded, before Richard cried—

"Well, old John is soon sowed up. Give him a berth, Captain, in the barn, and I will pay for it. I am rich to-night, ten times richer than 'duke, with all his lands, and military lots, and funded debts, and bonds, and mortgages.

> Come let us be jolly,
> And cast away folly,
> For grief—

Drink, King Hiram—drink, Mr. Doo-nothing—drink, sir, I say. This is a Christmas eve, which comes, you know, but once a year."

"He! he! he! the squire is quite moosical to-night,"

said Hiram, whose visage began to give marvellous signs of relaxation. "I rather guess we shall make a church on't yet, Squire?"

"A church, Mr. Doolittle! we will make a cathedral of it! bishops, priests, deacons, wardens, vestry, and choir: organ, organist, and bellows! By the Lord Harry, as Benjamin says, we will clap a steeple on the other end of it, and make two churches of it. What say you, 'duke, will you pay? ha! my cousin Judge, wil't pay!"

"Thou makest such a noise, Dickon," returned Marmaduke, "it is impossible that I can hear what Dr. Todd is saying,—I think thou observed'st, it is probable the wound will fester, so as to occasion danger to the limb in this cold weather?"

"Out of nater, sir, quite out of nater," said Elnathan, attempting to expectorate, but succeeding only in throwing a light, frothy substance, like a flake of snow, into the fire—"quite out of nater, that a wound so well dressed, and with the ball in my pocket, should fester. I s'pose, as the Judge talks of taking the young man into his house, it will be most convenient if I make but one charge on't."

"I should think one would do," returned Marmaduke, with that arch smile that so often beamed on his face; leaving the beholder in doubt whether he most enjoyed the character of his companion, or his own covert humor. The landlord had succeeded in placing the Indian on some straw in one of his outbuildings, where, covered with his own blanket, John continued for the remainder of the night.

In the mean time, Major Hartmann began to grow noisy and jocular, glass succeeded glass, and mug after mug was introduced, until the carousal had run deep into the night, or rather morning; when the veteran German expressed an inclination to return to the Mansion-house. Most of the party had already retired, but Marmaduke knew the habits of his friend too well to suggest an earlier adjournment. So soon, however, as the proposal was made, the Judge eagerly availed himself of it, and the trio prepared to depart. Mrs. Hollister attended them to the door in person, cautioning her guests as to the safest manner of leaving her premises.

"Lane on Mister Jones, Major," said she, "he's young, and will be a support to ye. Well, it's a charming sight to see ye, any way, at the Bould Dragoon; and sure it's no harm to be kaping a Christmas eve wid a light heart, for it's no telling when we may have sorrow come upon us. So good night, Joodge, and a merry Christmas to ye all, to-morrow morning."

The gentlemen made their adieus as well as they could, and taking the middle of the road, which was a fine, wide, and well-beaten path, they did tolerably well until they reached the gate of the Mansion-house: but on entering the Judge's domains, they encountered some slight difficulties. We shall not stop to relate them, but will just mention that, in the morning, sundry diverging paths were to be seen in the snow; and that once during their progress to the door, Marmaduke, missing his companions, was enabled to trace them, by one of these paths, to a spot where he discovered them with nothing visible but their heads: Richard singing in a most vivacious strain,

"Come, let us be jolly,
And cast away folly,
For grief turns a black head to gray."

[CHAPTER XV. Meanwhile, back at the mansion-house, there have been conversations between Elizabeth and Remarkable Pettibone, and between Remarkable and Ben Pump after Elizabeth has gone to bed. The latter dialogue is considerably the warmer for the steady consumption of a bottle of rum. It grows clear that the housekeeper is likely to resent Elizabeth's assumption of the rôle of mistress and that Ben enjoys talking about his seafaring past.

CHAPTER XVI. Before breakfast on Christmas morning Elizabeth steps out for some fresh air, meets Richard Jones and gets him his Christmas present—a commission as sheriff of Otsego County. Walking out to observe the "improvements" of Templeton, the two encounter Oliver Edwards, Natty Bumppo, and Chingachgook, who are debating which shall spend the single shilling they have among them for the entry fee in the traditional Christmas turkey shoot. Elizabeth offers another shilling, and Natty agrees to shoot for her; but Oliver, who shows great anxiety to win the bird, claims the right to precede his friend.

CHAPTER XVII. It seems that Natty has long had a rival in marksmanship, a woodchopper named Billy Kirby. They prepare for the test, which is to hit the head of a turkey at the distance of one hundred yards. Kirby misses; Oliver misses; Natty's gun snaps but does not fire. After some argument Natty is ruled to have had his chance. Kirby

misses again; Oliver declines a second shot; Natty, taking great care this time, kills the turkey, which Elizabeth asks Oliver to accept as a peace offering. As she and Richard turn back toward the mansion-house they meet Judge Temple, who wishes to speak to Oliver.

CHAPTER XVIII. The Judge has decided that he needs a new assistant, now that Richard is to be sheriff, and he asks Oliver to take the post. Oliver at first refuses; then, after some discussion in which Chingachgook takes the Judge's part, agrees to undertake the task as an experiment. The Temples go home, discussing Oliver's strange reluctance to accept such a promising post; the other party likewise discuss the event, Oliver remarking that he could not have foreseen a month earlier even a tentative acceptance of living and serving in the "dwelling of the greatest enemy of my race." Natty is most uncertain of the experiment, although he is aware that times are changing. Chingachgook is sure that the days when one could live by hunting are at an end. That afternoon there is a heavy rain and the snow disappears.

CHAPTER XIX. At night, however, the wind shifts; the weather turns suddenly severe; and in the morning all Templeton is covered with a sheet of ice. Oliver, in civilized clothing, arrives to take up his work; Major Hartmann departs. Three months pass as Oliver learns his duties. To the mystification of the Templeton folk, however, he spends all his leisure moments and many of his nights in Natty Bumppo's hut.

CHAPTER XX. Spring comes gradually. At the end of March Richard proposes an excursion to see Billy Kirby's "sugar bush" and a magnificent view of the valley which he has discovered. Elizabeth, Louisa Grant, Oliver, Monsieur Le Quoi, the Judge, and Richard all go on horseback. The Judge has already shown his determination to preserve the maple trees and encourage the maple-sugar industry, which is described in detail.

CHAPTER XXI. On the way to the "view" the Judge is led to reminiscence of his first travels in the region and his first meeting with Natty Bumppo. Oliver shows keen interest in the Judge's acquisition of the land and in Natty's views of the Indian rights, a subject which the Judge does not take to kindly. On the return to the village a tree falls across the path, and Oliver saves Louisa by grasping her horse's bridle. "Now, Mr. Edwards," she remarks at the end of the chapter, "both father and daughter owe their lives to you."

CHAPTER XXII. Thaws and freezes alternate until the close of April. Then one day the pigeons arrive from the south. They fly over the valley in such numbers that even the children can kill them, and are so ruthlessly destroyed that the villagers cover the ground with dead and dying birds. Natty Bumppo is disgusted at the wastefulness, but when the chance comes to humiliate Billy Kirby by bringing down a single pigeon he cannot resist the temptation and again displays incredible skill with his rifle.

CHAPTER XXIII. The season now advances rapidly. Fishing having begun, Richard organizes a night expedition to seine for bass; the first cast brings in two thousand fish. The Judge perceives that such methods are "a fearful expenditure of the choicest gifts of Providence."

CHAPTER XXIV. Elizabeth and Louisa, strolling along the shore of the lake, observe a fire on the farther side, where Natty has his cabin. The light approaches and a canoe appears, manned by Natty and Chingachgook. Natty refuses a gift of fish acquired by "such a sinful kind of fishing"; he then takes Elizabeth out in the canoe and exhibits his skill with the spear. Their expedition ends suddenly when Ben Pump, handling the seine, is knocked into the lake from Billy Kirby's boat. Ben cannot swim, but he is rescued by Natty, who entwines his spear in Ben's clothing and hair.

CHAPTER XXV. Next morning Richard expects to take the Judge to a spot where he hints coal may be found, but discovers that the Judge has spent a sleepless night after having received a letter from London. The letter is read by Richard and makes little sense to the reader; it appears, however, to convey the news of the loss of a ship which sailed from Falmouth in England about the first of September 1792. For some mysterious reason this is most upsetting to the Judge. He sends for his lawyer, Dirck Van der School, and spends the day drawing up confidential papers. Oliver is excluded from this business and is very curious; his questioning of Elizabeth and the lawyer is of no avail. For many days the Judge is uneasy and melancholy, but early in July he agrees to accompany Richard on the excursion relating to mines.

CHAPTER XXVI. As Richard and the Judge start off, Elizabeth and Louisa are ready to go out walking. The Judge warns them of the heat and suggests that they be careful not to stray too far into the forest. Oliver, who has planned to go fishing, offers to accompany the girls as their protector and is snubbed for his pains; they take

the mastiff Brave instead. Oliver then rows across the lake to Natty's cabin, where he is somewhat surprised to find Hiram Doolittle lurking in the bushes. He secures the cabin with a padlock and returns to the lake. The story then goes on as follows:]

. . . There were several places in the Otsego that were celebrated fishing-grounds for perch. One was nearly opposite to the cabin, and another, still more famous, was near a point, at the distance of a mile and a half above it, under the brow of the mountain, and on the same side of the lake with the hut. Oliver Edwards pulled his little skiff to the first, and sat, for a minute, undecided whether to continue there, with his eyes on the door of the cabin, or to change his ground, with a view to get superior game. While gazing about him, he saw the light-colored bark canoe of his old companions, riding on the water, at the point we have mentioned, and containing two figures, that he at once knew to be Mohegan and the Leather-stocking. This decided the matter, and the youth pulled, in a very few minutes, to the place where his friends were fishing, and fastened his boat to the light vessel of the Indian.

The old men received Oliver with welcoming nods, but neither drew his line from the water, nor in the least varied his occupation. When Edwards had secured his own boat, he baited his hook and threw it into the lake, without speaking.

"Did you stop at the wigwam, lad, as you rowed past?" asked Natty.

"Yes, and I found all safe; but that carpenter and justice of the peace, Mr., or as they call him, Squire, Doolittle, was prowling through the woods. I made sure of the door before I left the hut, and I think he is too great a coward to approach the hounds."

"There's little to be said in favor of that man," said Natty, while he drew in a perch and baited his hook. "He craves dreadfully to come into the cabin, and has as good as asked me as much to my face; but I put him off with unsartain answers so that he is no wiser than Solomon. This comes of having so many laws that such a man may be called on to intarpret them."

"I fear he is more knave than fool," cried Edwards; "he makes a tool of that simple man, the Sheriff; and I dread that his impertinent curiosity may yet give us much trouble."

"If he harbors too much about the cabin, lad, I'll shoot the creater," said the Leather-stocking, quite simply.

"No, no, Natty, you must remember the law," said Edwards, "or we shall have you in trouble; and that, old man, would be an evil day, and sore tidings to us all."

"Would it, boy!" exclaimed the hunter, raising his eyes with a look of friendly interest, toward the youth. "You have the true blood in your veins, Mr. Oliver; and I'll support it to the face of Judge Temple, or in any court in the country. How is it, John? Do I speak the true word? Is the lad staunch, and of the right blood?"

"He is a Delaware," said Mohegan, "and my brother. The young Eagle is brave, and he will be a chief. No harm can come."

"Well, well," cried the youth, impatiently, "say no more about it, my good friends; if I am not all that your partiality would make me, I am yours through life, in prosperity as in poverty. We will talk of other matters."

The old hunters yielded to his wish, which seemed to be their law. For a short time a profound silence prevailed, during which each man was very busy with his hook and line; but Edwards, probably feeling that it remained with him to renew the discourse, soon observed, with the air of one who knew not what he said—

"How beautifully tranquil and glassy the lake is! Saw you it ever more calm and even than at this moment, Natty?"

"I have known the Otsego water for five and forty years," said Leather-stocking; "and I will say that for it, which is, that a cleaner spring or better fishing is not to be found in the land. Yes, yes; I had the place to myself once, and a cheerful time I had of it. The game was plenty as heart could wish, and there was none to meddle with the ground, unless there might have been a hunting party of the Delawares crossing the hills, or, maybe, a rifling scout of them thieves, the Iroquois. There was one or two Frenchmen that squatted in the flats, further west, and married squaws; and some of the Scotch-Irishers, from the Cherry-Valley, would come on to the lake, and borrow my canoe to take a mess of parch, or drop a line for salmon-trout; but, in the main,

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80 Cherry-Valley, a settlement made in 1740 about ten miles northeast of Cooperstown. It was the scene of a massacre by Indians and Tories in 1778

it was a cheerful place, and I had but little to disturb me in it. John would come, and John knows."

Mohegan turned his dark face at this appeal; and, moving his hand forward with a graceful motion of assent, he spoke, using the Delaware language—

"The land was owned by my people; we gave it to my brother, in council—to the Fire-eater; and what the Delawares give lasts as long as the waters run. Hawk-eye smoked at that Council, for we loved him."

"No, no, John," said Natty; "I was no chief, seeing that I know'd nothing of scholarship, and had a white skin. But it was a comfortable hunting-ground then, lad, and would have been so to this day, but for the money of Marmaduke Temple, and the twisty ways of the law."

"It must have been a sight of melancholy pleasure indeed," said Edwards, while his eye roved along the shores and over the hills, where the clearings, groaning with the golden corn, were cheering the forests with the signs of life, "to have roamed over these mountains, and along this sheet of beautiful water, without a living soul to speak to, or to thwart your humor."

"Haven't I said it was cheerful?" said Leather-stocking. "Yes, yes; when the trees began to be covered with leaves, and the ice was out of the lake, it was a second paradise. I have travelled the woods for fifty-three years, and have made them my home for more than forty; and I can say that I have met but one place that was more to my liking; and that was only to eyesight, and not for hunting or fishing."

"And where was that?" asked Edwards.

"Where! why up on the Catskills. I used often to go up into the mountains after wolves' skins and bears; once they paid me to get them a stuffed painter, and so I often went. There's a place in them hills that I used to climb to when I wanted to see the carryings on of the world, that would well pay any man for a barked shin or a torn moccasin. You know the Catskills, lad; for you must have seen them on your left, as you followed the river up from York, looking as blue as a piece of clear sky, and holding the clouds on their tops, as the smoke curls over the head of an Indian chief at the council fire. Well, there's the High-peak and the Round-top, which lay back like a father and mother among their children, seeing they are far above all the other hills. But the place I mean is next to the river, where one of the ridges juts out a little from the rest, and where the rocks fall, for the best part of a thousand feet, so much up and down, that a man standing on their edges is fool enough to think he can jump from top to bottom."

"What see you when you get there?" asked Edwards.

"Creation," said Natty, dropping the end of his rod into the water, and sweeping one hand around him in a circle: "all creation, lad. I was on that hill when Vaughan burned 'Sopus in the last war; and I saw the vessels come out of the Highlands as plain as I can see that lime-scow rowing into the Susquehanna, though one was twenty times further from me than the other. The river was in sight for seventy miles, looking like a curled shaving under my feet, though it was eight long miles to its banks. I saw the hills in the Hampshire grants, the highlands of the river, and all that God had done, or man could do, far as eye could reach—you know that the Indians named me for my sight, lad; and from the flat on the top of that mountain, I have often found the place where Albany stands. And as for 'Sopus, the day the royal troops burnt the town, the smoke seemed so nigh, that I thought I could hear the screeches of the women."

"It must have been worth the toil to meet with such a glorious view."

"If being the best part of a mile in the air, and having men's farms and houses at your feet, with rivers looking like ribbons, and mountains bigger than the 'Vision,' seeming to be hay-stacks of green grass under you, gives any satisfaction to a man, I can recommend the spot. When I first came into the woods to live, I used to have weak spells when I felt lonesome; and then I would go into the Catskills, and spend a few days on that hill to look at the ways of man; but it's now many a year since I felt any such longings, and I am getting too old for rugged rocks. But there's a place, a short two miles back of that very hill, that in late times I relished better than the mountain; for it was more covered with the trees, and nateral."

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35 **a place . . . hills.** Cooper is almost certainly describing North Point, the site of the Catskill Mountain House, built in 1823. It is about halfway between Albany and Kingston, on the west bank of the Hudson • 54 **when . . . 'Sopus.** Kingston, settled by the Dutch under the name of Esopus, was burned by the British under the command of General Sir John Vaughan (1748?-1795) on October 16, 1777

"And where was that?" inquired Edwards, whose curiosity was strongly excited by the simple description of the hunter.

"Why, there's a fall in the hills where the water of two little ponds, that lie near each other, breaks out of their bounds and runs over the rocks into the valley. The stream is, maybe, such a one as would turn a mill, if so useless a thing was wanted in the wilderness. But the hand that made that 'Leap' never made a mill. There the water comes crooking and winding among the rocks; first so slow that a trout could swim in it, and then starting and running like a crater that wanted to make a far spring, till it gets to where the mountain divides, like the cleft hoof of a deer, leaving a deep hollow for the brook to tumble into. The first pitch is nigh two hundred feet, and the water looks like flakes of driven snow afore it touches the bottom; and there the stream gathers itself together again for a new start, and maybe flutters over fifty feet of flat rock before it falls for another hundred, when it jumps about from shelf to shelf, first turning this-away and then turning that-away, striving to get out of the hollow, till it finally comes to the plain."

"I have never hear of this spot before; it is not mentioned in the books."

"I never read a book in my life," said Leather-stocking; "and how should a man who has lived in towns and schools know anything about the wonders of the woods? No, no lad; there has that little stream of water been playing among the hills since He made the world, and not a dozen white men have ever laid eyes on it. The rock sweeps like mason-work, in a half-round, on both sides of the fall, and shelves over the bottom for fifty feet; so that when I've been sitting at the foot of the first pitch, and my hounds have run into the caverns behind the sheet of water, they've looked no bigger than so many rabbits. To my judgment, lad, it's the best piece of work that I've met with in the woods; and none know how often the hand of God is seen in the wilderness, but them that rove it for a man's life."

"What becomes of the water? In which direction does it run? Is it a tributary of the Delaware?"

"Anan!" said Natty.

"Does the water run into the Delaware?"

"No, no; it's a drop for the old Hudson, and a merry time it has till it gets down off the mountain. I've sat on the shelving rock many a long hour, boy, and watched the bubbles as they shot by me, and thought how long it would be before that very water, which seemed made for the wilderness, would be under the bottom of a vessel, and tossing in the salt sea. It is a spot to make a man solemnize. You can see right down into the valley that lies to the east of the High Peak, where, in the fall of the year, thousands of acres of woods are before your eyes, in the deep hollow, and along the side of the mountain, painted like ten thousand rainbows, by no hand of man, though without the ordering of God's providence."

"You are eloquent, Leather-stocking," exclaimed the youth.

"Anan!" repeated Natty.

"The recollection of the sight has warmed your blood, old man. How many years is it since you saw the place?"

The hunter made no reply; but, bending his ear near the water, he sat holding his breath, and listening attentively as if to some distant sound. At length he raised his head, and said—

"If I hadn't fastened the hounds with my own hands, with a fresh leash of green buckskin, I'd take a Bible oath that I heard old Hector ringing his cry on the mountain."

"It is impossible," said Edwards; "it is not an hour since I saw him in his kennel."

By this time the attention of Mohegan was attracted to the sounds; but, notwithstanding the youth was both silent and attentive, he could hear nothing but the lowing of some cattle from the western hills. He looked at the old men, Natty sitting with his hand to his ear, like a trumpet, and Mohegan bending forward, with an arm raised to a level with his face, holding the forefinger elevated as a signal for attention, and laughed aloud at what he deemed to be their imaginary sounds.

"Laugh if you will, boy," said Leather-stocking; "the hounds be out, and are hunting a deer. No man can deceive me in such a matter. I wouldn't have had the thing happen for a beaver's skin. Not that I care for the law! but the venison is lean now, and the dumb things run the flesh off their own bones for no good. Now do you hear the hounds?"

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43 Anan, a dialectal variation of anon, in the sense of "I beg your pardon" or "What did you say?"

Edwards started, as a full cry broke on his ear, changing from the distant sounds that were caused by some intervening hill, to confused echoes that rang among the rocks that the dogs were passing, and then directly to a deep and hollow baying that pealed under the forest on the lake shore. These variations in the tones of the hounds passed with amazing rapidity; and while his eyes were glancing along the margin of the water, a tearing of the branches of the alder and dogwood caught his attention, at a spot near them, and at the next moment a noble buck sprang on the shore, and buried himself in the lake. A full-mouthed cry followed, when Hector and the slut shot through the opening in the bushes, and darted into the lake also, bearing their breasts gallantly against the water.

CHAPTER XXVII

"I know'd it—I know'd it!" cried Natty, when both deer and hounds were in full view;—"the buck has gone by them with the wind, and it has been too much for the poor rogues; but I must break them of these tricks, or they'll give me a deal of trouble. He-ere, he-ere—shore with you, rascals—shore with you—will ye?—Oh! off with you, old Hector, or I'll hatchel your hide with my ramrod when I get ye."

The dogs knew their master's voice, and after swimming in a circle, as if reluctant to give over the chase, and yet afraid to persevere, they finally obeyed, and returned to the land, where they filled the air with their cries.

In the meantime the deer, urged by his fears, had swum over half the distance between the shore and the boats, before his terror permitted him to see the new danger. But at the sounds of Natty's voice, he turned short in his course, and for a few moments seemed about to rush back again, and brave the dogs. His retreat in this direction was, however, effectually cut off, and turning a second time, he urged his course obliquely for the centre of the lake, with an intention of landing on the western shore. As the buck swam by the fishermen, raising his nose high into the air, curling the water before his slim neck like the beak of a galley, the Leather-stocking began to sit very uneasy in his canoe.

"'Tis a noble creater!" he exclaimed; "what a pair of horns! a man might hang up all his garments on the branches. Let me see—July is the last month, and the flesh must be getting good." While he was talking, Natty had instinctively employed himself in fastening the inner end of the bark rope, that served him for a cable, to a paddle, and rising suddenly on his legs, he cast this buoy away, and cried—"Strike out, John! let her go. The creater's a fool to tempt a man in this way."

Mohegan threw the fastening of the youth's boat from the canoe, and with one stroke of his paddle sent the light bark over the water like a meteor.

"Hold!" exclaimed Edwards. "Remember the law, my old friends. You are in plain sight of the village, and I know that Judge Temple is determined to prosecute all indiscriminately, who kill deer out of season."

The remonstrance came too late: the canoe was already far from the skiff, and the two hunters were too much engaged in the pursuit to listen to his voice.



"Natty . . . passed his knife across the throat of the animal. . . ."

The buck was now within fifty yards of his pursuers, cutting the water gallantly, and snorting at each breath with terror and his exertions, while the canoe seemed to dance over the waves, as it rose and fell with the undulations made by its own motion. Leather-stocking raised his rifle and freshened the priming, but stood in suspense whether to slay his victim or not.

"Shall I, John, or no?" he said. "It seems but a poor advantage to take of the dumb thing too. I won't; it has taken to the water on its own nater, which is the

reason that God has given to a deer, and I'll give it the lake play; so, John, lay out your arm, and mind the turn of the buck; it's easy to catch them, but they'll turn like a snake."

The Indian laughed at the conceit of his friend, but continued to send the canoe forward with a velocity that proceeded much more from his skill than his strength. Both of the old men now used the language of the Delawares when they spoke.

"Hugh!" exclaimed Mohegan; "the deer turns his head. Hawk-eye, lift your spear."

Natty never moved abroad without taking with him every implement that might, by possibility, be of service in his pursuits. From his rifle he never parted; and although intending to fish with the line, the canoe was invariably furnished with all of its utensils, even to its grate. This precaution grew out of the habits of the hunter, who was often led, by his necessities or his sports, far beyond the limits of his original destination. A few years earlier than the date of our tale, the Leather-stocking had left his hut on the shores of the Otsego, with his rifle and his hounds, for a few days' hunting in the hills; but before he returned he had seen the waters of Ontario. One, two, or even three hundred miles had once been nothing to his sinews, which were now a little stiffened by age. The hunter did as Mohegan advised, and prepared to strike a blow, with the barbed weapon, into the neck of the buck.

"Lay her more to the left, John," he cried, "lay her more to the left; another stroke of the paddle, and I have him."

While speaking, he raised the spear, and darted it from him like an arrow. At that instant the buck turned, the long pole glanced by him, the iron striking against his horn, and buried itself, harmlessly, in the lake.

"Back water," cried Natty, as the canoe glided over the place where the spear had fallen; "hold water, John."

The pole soon reappeared, shooting upward from the lake, and as the hunter seized it in his hand, the Indian whirled the light canoe round, and renewed the chase. But this evolution gave the buck a great advantage; and it also allowed time for Edwards to approach the scene of action.

"Hold your hand, Natty!" cried the youth, "hold your hand! remember it is out of season."

This remonstrance was made as the bateau arrived close to the place where the deer was struggling with the water, his back now rising to the surface, now sinking beneath it, as the waves curled from his neck, the animal still sustaining itself nobly against the odds.

"Hurrah!" shouted Edwards, inflamed beyond prudence at the sight; "mind him as he doubles—mind him as he doubles; sheer more to the right, Mohegan, more to the right, and I'll have him by the horns; I'll throw the rope over his antlers."

The dark eye of the old warrior was dancing in his head, with a wild animation, and the sluggish repose in which his aged frame had been resting in the canoe was now changed to all the rapid inflections of practised agility. The canoe whirled with each cunning evolution of the chase, like a bubble floating in a whirlpool; and when the direction of the pursuit admitted of a straight course, the little bark skimmed the lake with a velocity that urged the deer to seek its safety in some new turn.

It was the frequency of these circuitous movements, that, by confining the action to so small a compass, enabled the youth to keep near his companions. More than twenty times both the pursued and the pursuers glided by him, just without the reach of his oars, until he thought the best way to view the sport was to remain stationary, and, by watching a favorable opportunity, assist as much as he could in taking the victim.

He was not required to wait long, for no sooner had he adopted this resolution, and risen in the boat, than he saw the deer coming bravely toward him, with an apparent intention of pushing for a point of land at some distance from the hounds, who were still barking and howling on the shore. Edwards caught the painter of his skiff, and, making a noose, cast it from him with all his force, and luckily succeeded in drawing its knot close around one of the antlers of the buck.

For one instant, the skiff was drawn through the water, but in the next, the canoe glided before it, and Natty, bending low, passed his knife across the throat of the animal, whose blood followed the wound, dying the waters. The short time that was passed in the last struggles of the animal was spent by the hunters in bringing their boats together, and securing them in that position, when Leather-stocking drew the deer from the water, and laid its lifeless form in the bottom of the canoe. He placed his hands on the ribs, and on different

parts of the body of his prize, and then, raising his head, he laughed in his peculiar manner.

"So much for Marmaduke Temple's law!" he said. "This warms a body's blood, old John; I haven't killed a buck in the lake afore this, sin' many a year. I call that good venison, lad; and I know them that will relish the creater's steaks, for all the betterments in the land."

The Indian had long been drooping with his years, and perhaps under the calamities of his race, but this invigorating and exciting sport caused a gleam of sunshine to cross his swarthy face that had long been absent from his features. It was evident the old man enjoyed the chase more as a memorial of his youthful sports and deeds, than with any expectation of profiting by the success. He felt the deer, however, lightly, his hand already trembling with the reaction of his unusual exertions, and smiled with a nod of approbation, as he said, in the emphatic and sententious manner of his people—

"Good."

"I am afraid, Natty," said Edwards, when the heat of the moment had passed, and his blood began to cool, "that we have all been equally transgressors of the law. But keep your own counsel, and there are none here to betray us. Yet, how came those dogs at large? I left them securely fastened, I know, for I felt the thongs, and examined the knots, when I was at the hut."

"It has been too much for the poor things," said Natty, "to have such a buck take the wind of them. See, lad, the pieces of the buckskin are hanging from their necks yet. Let us paddle up, John, and I will call them in, and look a little into the matter."

When the old hunter landed, and examined the thongs that were yet fast to the hounds, his countenance sensibly changed, and he shook his head doubtingly.

"Here has been a knife at work," he said:—"this skin was never torn, nor is this the mark of a hound's tooth. No, no,—Hector is not in fault, as I feared."

"Has the leather been cut?" cried Edwards.

"No, no—I didn't say it had been cut, lad; but this is a mark that was never made by a jump or a bite."

"Could that rascally carpenter have dared!"

"Ay! he durst to do anything where there is no danger," said Natty: "he is a curious body, and loves to be helping other people on with their consarns. But he had best not harbor so much near the wigwam!"

In the meantime, Mohegan had been examining, with an Indian's sagacity, the place where the leather thong had been separated. After scrutinizing it closely, he said, in Delaware—

"It was cut with a knife—a sharp blade and a long handle—the man was afraid of the dogs."

"How is this, Mohegan?" exclaimed Edwards: "you saw it not! how can you know these facts?"

"Listen, son," said the warrior. "The knife was sharp, for the cut is smooth;—the handle was long, for a man's arm would not reach from this gash to the cut that did not go through the skin:—he was a coward, or he would have cut the thongs around the necks of the hounds."

"On my life," cried Natty, "John is on the scent! It was the carpenter; and he has got on the rock back of the kennel, and let the dogs loose by fastening his knife to a stick. It would be an easy matter to do it, where a man is so minded."

"And why should he do so?" asked Edwards: "who has done him wrong, that he should trouble two old men like you?"

"It's a hard matter, lad, to know men's ways, I find, since the settlers have brought in their new fashions. But is there nothing to be found out in the place? and may be he is troubled with his longings after other people's business, as he often is."

"Your suspicions are just. Give me the canoe: I am young and strong, and will get down there yet, perhaps, in time to interrupt his plans. Heaven forbid that we should be at the mercy of such a man!"

His proposal was accepted, the deer being placed in



". . . the old hunter landed, and examined the thongs. . . ."

the skiff in order to lighten the canoe, and in less than five minutes the little vessel of bark was gliding over the glassy lake, and was soon hid by the points of land, as it shot close along the shore.

Mohegan followed slowly with the skiff, while Natty called his hounds to him, bade them keep close, and, shouldering his rifle, he ascended the mountain, with an intention of going to the hut by land.

[CHAPTER XXVIII. Elizabeth and Louisa walk to a point above Natty's hut, talking about the mysterious association of the three friends and speculating on Oliver's ancestry:]

. . . By this time they had gained the summit of the mountain, where they left the highway, and pursued their course under the shade of the stately trees that crowned the eminence. The day was becoming warm, and the girls plunged more deeply into the forest, as they found its invigorating coolness agreeably contrasted to the excessive heat they had experienced in the ascent. The conversation, as if by mutual consent, was entirely changed to the little incidents and scenes of their walk, and every tall pine, and every shrub or flower, called forth some simple expression of admiration.

In this manner they proceeded along the margin of the precipice, catching occasional glimpses of the placid Otsego, or pausing to listen to the rattling of wheels and the sounds of hammers, that rose from the valley, to mingle the signs of men with the scenes of nature, when Elizabeth suddenly started, and exclaimed—

"Listen! there are the cries of a child on this mountain! is there a clearing near us? or can some little one have strayed from its parents?"

"Such things frequently happen," returned Louisa. "Let us follow the sounds: it may be a wanderer starving on the hill."

Urged by this consideration, the females pursued the low, mournful sounds, that proceeded from the forest, with quick and impatient steps. More than once, the ardent Elizabeth was on the point of announcing that she saw the sufferer, when Louisa caught her by the arm, and pointing behind them, cried—

"Look at the dog!"

Brave had been their companion, from the time the voice of his young mistress lured him from his kennel, to the present moment. His advanced age had long before deprived him of his activity; and when his companions stopped to view the scenery, or to add to their bouquets, the mastiff would lay his huge frame on the ground, and await their movements, with his eyes closed, and a listlessness in his air that ill accorded with the character of a protector. But when, aroused by this cry from Louisa, Miss Temple turned, she saw the dog with his eyes keenly set on some distant object, his head bent near the ground, and his hair actually rising on his body, through fright or anger. It was most probably the latter, for he was growling in a low key, and occasionally showing his teeth, in a manner that would have terrified his mistress, had she not so well known his good qualities.

"Brave!" she said, "be quiet, Brave! what do you see, fellow?"

At the sounds of her voice, the rage of the mastiff, instead of being at all diminished, was very sensibly increased. He stalked in front of the ladies, and seated himself at the feet of his mistress, growling louder than before, and occasionally giving vent to his ire by a short, surly barking.

"What does he see?" said Elizabeth: "there must be some animal in sight."

Hearing no answer from her companion, Miss Temple turned her head, and beheld Louisa, standing with her face whitened to the color of death, and her finger pointing upward, with a sort of flickering, convulsed motion. The quick eye of Elizabeth glanced in the direction indicated by her friend, where she saw the fierce front and glaring eyes of a female panther, fixed on them in horrid malignity, and threatening to leap.

"Let us fly!" exclaimed Elizabeth, grasping the arm of Louisa, whose form yielded like melting snow.

There was not a single feeling in the temperament of Elizabeth Temple that could prompt her to desert a companion in such an extremity. She fell on her knees, by the side of the inanimate Louisa, tearing from the person of her friend, with instinctive readiness, such parts of her dress as might obstruct her respiration, and encouraging their only safeguard, the dog, at the same time, by the sounds of her voice.

"Courage, Brave!" she cried, her own tones beginning to tremble, "courage, courage, good Brave!"

A quarter-grown cub, that had hitherto been unseen, now appeared, dropping from the branches of a sapling that grew under the shade of the beech which held its

dam. This ignorant, but vicious creature, approached the dog, imitating the actions and sounds of its parent, but exhibiting a strange mixture of the playfulness of a kitten with the ferocity of its race. Standing on its hind legs, it would rend the bark of a tree with its fore paws, and play the antics of a cat; and then, by lashing itself with its tail, growling, and scratching the earth, it would attempt the manifestations of anger that rendered its parent so terrific.

All this time Brave stood firm and undaunted, his short tail erect, his body drawn backward on its haunches, and his eyes following the movements of both dam and cub. At every gambol played by the latter, it approached nigher to the dog, the growling of the three becoming more horrid at each moment, until the younger beast overleaping its intended bound, fell directly before the mastiff. There was a moment of fearful cries and struggles, but they ended almost as soon as commenced, by the cub appearing in the air, hurled from the jaws of Brave, with a violence that sent it against a tree so forcibly as to render it completely senseless.

Elizabeth witnessed the short struggle, and her blood was warming with the triumph of the dog, when she saw the form of the old panther in the air, springing twenty feet from the branch of the beech to the back of the mastiff. No words of ours can describe the fury of the conflict that followed. It was a confused struggle on the dry leaves, accompanied by loud and terrific cries. Miss Temple continued on her knees, bending over the form of Louisa, her eyes fixed on the animals, with an interest so horrid, and yet so intense, that she almost forgot her own stake in the result. So rapid and vigorous were the bounds of the inhabitant of the forest, that its active frame seemed constantly in the air, while the dog nobly faced his foe at each successive leap. When the panther lighted on the shoulders of the mastiff, which was its constant aim, old Brave, though torn with her talons, and stained with his own blood, that already flowed from a dozen wounds, would shake off his furious foe like a feather, and rearing on his hind legs, rush to the fray again, with jaws distended, and a dauntless eye. But age, and his pampered life, greatly disqualified the noble mastiff for such a struggle. In everything but courage, he was only the vestige of what he had once been. A higher bound than ever raised the wary and furious beast far beyond the reach of the dog, who was making a desperate but fruitless dash at her, from which she alighted in a favorable position, on the back of her aged foe. For a single moment only could the panther remain there, the great strength of the dog returning with a convulsive effort. But Elizabeth saw, as Brave fastened his teeth in the side of his enemy, that the collar of brass around his neck, which had been glittering throughout the fray, was of the color of blood, and directly, that his frame was sinking to the earth, where it soon lay prostrate and helpless. Several mighty efforts of the wild-cat to extricate herself from the jaws of the dog followed, but they were fruitless, until the mastiff turned on his back, his lips collapsed, and his teeth loosened, when the short convulsions and stillness that succeeded, announced the death of poor Brave.

Elizabeth now lay wholly at the mercy of the beast. There is said to be something in the front of the image of the Maker that daunts the hearts of the inferior beings of his creation; and it would seem that some such power, in the present instance, suspended the threatened blow. The eyes of the monster and the kneeling maiden met for an instant, when the former stooped to examine her fallen foe; next to scent her luckless cub. From the latter examination, it turned, however, with its eyes apparently emitting flashes of fire, its tail lashing its sides furiously, and its claws projecting inches from her broad feet.

Miss Temple did not or could not move. Her hands were clasped in the attitude of prayer, but her eyes were still drawn to her terrible enemy—her cheeks were blanched to the whiteness of marble, and her lips were slightly separated with horror.

The moment seemed now to have arrived for the fatal termination, and the beautiful figure of Elizabeth was bowing meekly to the stroke, when a rustling of leaves behind seemed rather to mock the organs than to meet her ears.

"Hist! hist!" said a low voice, "stoop lower, gal; your bonnet hides the creater's head."

It was rather the yielding of nature than a compliance with this unexpected order, that caused the head of our heroine to sink on her bosom; when she heard the report of the rifle, the whizzing of the bullet, and the enraged cries of the beast, who was rolling over on the earth biting its own flesh, and tearing the twigs and branches within its reach. At the next instant the form of the Leather-stocking rushed by her, and he called aloud—

"Come in, Hector, come in, old fool; 'tis a hard-lived animal, and may jump ag'in."

Natty fearlessly maintained his position in front of the females, notwithstanding the violent bounds and threatening aspect of the wounded panther, which gave several indications of returning strength and ferocity, until his rifle was again loaded, when he stepped up to the enraged animal, and placing the muzzle close to its head, every spark of life was extinguished by the discharge.

The death of her terrible enemy appeared to Elizabeth like a resurrection from her own grave. There was an elasticity in the mind of our heroine that rose to meet the pressure of instant danger, and the more direct it had been, the more her nature had struggled to overcome them. But still she was a woman. Had she been left to herself in her late extremity, she would probably have used her faculties to the utmost, and with discretion, in protecting her person; but encumbered with her inanimate friend, retreat was a thing not to be attempted. Notwithstanding the fearful aspect of her foe, the eye of Elizabeth had never shrunk from its gaze, and long after the event her thoughts would recur to her passing sensations, and the sweetness of her midnight sleep would be disturbed, as her active fancy conjured, in dreams, the most trifling movements of savage fury that the beast had exhibited in its moment of power.

We shall leave the reader to imagine the restoration of Louisa's senses, and the expressions of gratitude which fell from the young women. The former was effected by a little water, that was brought from one of the thousand springs of those mountains, in the cap of the Leather-stocking; and the latter were uttered with the warmth that might be expected from the character of Elizabeth. Natty received her vehement protestations of gratitude with a simple expression of good-will, and with indulgence for her present excitement, but with a carelessness that showed how little he thought of the service he had rendered.

"Well, well," he said, "be it so, gal; let it be so, if you wish it—we'll talk the thing over another time. Come, come—let us get into the road, for you've had terror enough to make you wish yourself in your father's house ag'in."

This was uttered as they were proceeding, at a pace that was adapted to the weakness of Louisa, toward the highway: on reaching which the ladies separated from their guide declaring themselves equal to the remainder of the walk without his assistance, and feeling encouraged by the sight of the village which lay beneath their feet like a picture, with its limpid lake in front, the winding stream along its margin, and its hundred chimneys of whitened bricks.

The reader need not to be told the nature of the emotions which two youthful, ingenuous, and well-educated girls would experience at their escape from a death so horrid as the one which had impended over them, while they pursued their way in silence along the track on the side of the mountain; nor how deep were their mental thanks to that Power which had given them their existence, and which had not deserted them in their extremity; neither how often they pressed each other's arms, as the assurance of their present safety came, like a healing balm athwart their troubled spirits, when their thoughts were recurring to the recent moments of horror.

Leather-stocking remained on the hill, gazing after their retiring figures, until they were hidden by a bend in the road, when he whistled in his dogs, and shouldering his rifle, he returned into the forest.

"Well, it was a skeary thing to the young creaters," said Natty, while he retrod the path toward the plain. "It might frighten an older woman, to see a she painter so near her, with a dead cub by its side. I wonder if I had aimed at the varmint's eye, if I shouldn't have touched the life sooner than in the forehead; but they are hard-lived animals, and it was a good shot, consid'ring that I could see nothing but the head and the peak of its tail. Hah! who goes there?"

"How goes it, Natty?" said Mr. Doolittle, stepping out of the bushes, with a motion that was a good deal accelerated by the sight of the rifle, that was already lowered in his direction. "What! shooting this warm day! mind, old man, the law don't get hold on you."

"The law, squire! I have shook hands with the law these forty year," returned Natty; "for what has a man who lives in the wilderness to do with the ways of the law?"

"Not much, may be," said Hiram; "but you sometimes trade in venison. I s'pose you know, Leather-stocking, that there is an act passed to lay a fine of five pounds currency, or twelve dollars and fifty cents, by decimals, on every man who kills a deer betwixt January and August. The Judge had a great hand in getting the law through."

"I can believe it," returned the old hunter; "I can

believe that, or anything, of a man who carries on as he does in the country."

"Yes, the law is quite positive, and the Judge is bent on putting it in force—five pounds penalty. I thought I heard your hounds out on the scent of so'thing this morning: I didn't know but they might get you in difficulty."

"They know their manners too well," said Natty, carelessly. "And how much goes to the state's evidence, squire?"

"How much!" repeated Hiram, quailing under the honest but sharp look of the hunter:—"the informer gets half I—I believe;— yes, I guess it's half. But there's blood on your sleeve, man—you haven't been shooting anything this morning?"

"I have, though," said the hunter, nodding his head significantly to the other, "and a good shot I made of it."

"H-e-m!" ejaculated the magistrate; "and where is the game? I s'pose it's of a good nater, for your dogs won't hunt at anything that isn't choice."

"They'll hunt anything I tell them to, squire," cried Natty, favoring the other with his laugh. "They'll hunt you, if I say so. He-e-e-re, he-e-e-re, Hector—he-e-e-re, slut—come this away, pups—come this away—come hither."

"Oh! I have always heard a good character of the dogs," returned Mr. Doolittle, quickening his pace by raising each leg in rapid succession, as the hounds scented around his person. "And where is the game, Leather-stocking?"

During this dialogue, the speakers had been walking at a very fast gait, and Natty swung the end of his rifle round, pointing through the bushes, and replied—

"There lies one. How do you like such meat?"

"This!" exclaimed Hiram; "why this is Judge Temple's dog Brave. Take care, Leather-stocking, and don't make an enemy of the Judge. I hope you haven't harmed the animal?"

"Look for yourself, Mr. Doolittle," said Natty, drawing his knife from his girdle, and wiping it, in a knowing manner, once or twice across his garment of buckskin; "does his throat look as if I had cut it with this knife?"

"It is dreadfully torn! it's an awful wound—no knife never did this deed. Who could have done it?"

"The painters behind you, squire."

"Painters!" echoed Hiram, whirling on his heel with an agility that would have done credit to a dancing-master.

"Be easy, man," said Natty; "there's two of the venomous things; but the dog finished one, and I have fastened the other's jaws for her; so don't be frightened, squire, they won't hurt you."

"And where's the deer?" cried Hiram, staring about him with a bewildered air.

"Anan! deer!" repeated Natty.

"Sartain, an't there venison here, or didn't you kill a buck?"

"What! when the law forbids the thing, squire!" said the old hunter. "I hope there's no law ag'in killing the painters."

"No; there's a bounty on the scalps—but—will your dogs hunt painters, Natty?"

"Anything; didn't I tell you they'd hunt a man? He-e-re, he-e-re, pups—"

"Yes, yes, I remember. Well, they are strange dogs, I must say—I am quite in a wonderment."

Natty had seated himself on the ground, and having laid the grim head of his late ferocious enemy in his lap, was drawing his knife with a practised hand around the ears, which he tore from the head of the beast in such a manner as to preserve their connexion, when he answered—

"What at, squire? did you never see a painter's scalp afore? Come, you are a magistrate, I wish you'd make me out an order for the bounty."

"The bounty!" repeated Hiram, holding the ears on the end of his finger, for a moment, as if uncertain how to proceed. "Well, let us go down to your hut, where you can take the oath, and I will write out the order. I suppose you have a Bible? all the law wants is the four evangelists and the Lord's prayer."

"I keep no books," said Natty a little coldly: "not such a Bible as the law needs."

"Oh! there's but one sort of Bible that's good in law," returned the magistrate: "and yourn will do as well as another's. Come, the carcasses are worth nothing, man; let us go down and take the oath."

"Softly, softly, squire," said the hunter, lifting his trophies very deliberately from the ground, and shouldering his rifle; "why do you want an oath at all, for a thing that your own eyes has seen? won't you believe yourself, that another man must swear to a fact that you know to be true? You have seen me scalp the creaters, and if I must swear to it, it shall be before Judge Temple, who needs an oath."

"But we have no pen or paper here, Leather-stocking; we must go to the hut for them, or how can I write the order?"

Natty turned his simple features on the cunning magistrate with another of his laughs, as he said—

"And what should I be doing with scholars' tools? I want no pens or paper, not knowing the use of either; and I keep none. No, no, I'll bring the scalps into the village, squire, and you can make out the order on one of your law-books, and it will be all the better for it. The deuce take this leather on the neck of the dog, it will strangle the old fool. Can you lend me a knife, squire?"

Hiram, who seemed particularly anxious to be on good terms with his companion, unhesitatingly complied. Natty cut the thong from the neck of the hound, and, as he returned the knife to its owner, carelessly remarked—

" 'Tis a good bit of steel, and has cut such leather as this very same, before now, I dare say."

"Do you mean to charge me with letting your hounds loose?" exclaimed Hiram, with a consciousness that disarmed his caution.

"Loose!" repeated the hunter—"I let them loose myself. I always let them loose before I leave the hut."

The ungovernable amazement with which Mr. Doolittle listened to this falsehood, would have betrayed his agency in the liberation of the dogs, had Natty wanted any further confirmation; and the coolness and management of the old man now disappeared in open indignation.

"Look you here, Mr. Doolittle," he said, striking the breech of his rifle violently on the ground; "what there is in the wigwam of a poor man like me, that one like you can crave, I don't know; but this I tell you to your face, that you never shall put foot under the roof of my cabin with my consent, and that if you harbor round the spot as you have done lately, you may meet with treatment that you will little relish."

"And let me tell you, Mr. Bumppo," said Hiram, retreating, however, with a quick step, "that I know you've broke the law, and that I'm a magistrate, and will make you feel it too, before you are a day older."

"That for you and your law too," cried Natty, snapping his fingers at the justice of the peace;—"away with you, you varmint, before the devil tempts me to give you your desarts. Take care, if I ever catch your prowling face in the woods ag'in, that I don't shoot it for an owl."

There is something at all times commanding in honest indignation, and Hiram did not stay to provoke the wrath of the old hunter to extremities. When the intruder was out of sight, Natty proceeded to the hut, where he found all quiet as the grave. He fastened his dogs, and tapping at the door, which was opened by Edwards, asked—

"Is all safe, lad!"

"Everything," returned the youth. "Some one attempted the lock, but it was too strong for him."

"I know the creater," said Natty, "but he'll not trust himself within reach of my rifle very soon—" What more was uttered by the Leather-stocking, in his vexation, was rendered inaudible by the closing of the door of the cabin.

[CHAPTER XXIX. In the meantime Richard and the Judge have been together, not, as it turns out, investigating possible coal deposits, but in order that Richard can demonstrate to the Judge a theory which he, Hiram Doolittle, and Jotham Riddel have concocted. This theory, to state it briefly—which Richard does not do—is that Natty, Chingachgook, and Oliver are secretly mining silver and smelting it in the hut which is so carefully guarded from prying eyes. Richard takes the Judge to a cave on the mountain back of the hut, where he shows digging tools and an excavation. There is no sign of ore, but the Judge's curiosity is roused to the point that he determines to interview Natty. Returning home, however, he meets Elizabeth and Louisa and hears their story; "and when the image of Natty again crossed his recollection, it was not as a lawless and depredating squatter, but as the preserver of his child."

CHAPTER XXX. At home, as Elizabeth and her father discuss the panther episode, Hiram Doolittle makes his appearance and, after much circumlocution, says that he thinks Natty has a deer in his cabin. The Judge tells Hiram to issue a search warrant himself, but Hiram evidently wants support and intimates to the Judge that the latter is showing partiality. The Judge then agrees to sign the warrant, calming Elizabeth by telling her that the fine will be no great matter. He goes to his office to make out the paper. Returning, he meets Oliver, and in their mutual relief at the escape of the girls, they reach a friendlier status than ever before. Oliver goes to pay his respects

to the Grants. Meanwhile, however, another and highly serious cause of friction is developing:]

. . . When Hiram Doolittle had obtained his search-warrant, his first business was to procure a proper officer to see it executed. The sheriff was absent, summoning in person the grand inquest for the county; the deputy, who resided in the village, was riding on the same errand, in a different part of the settlement; and the regular constable of the township had been selected for his station from motives of charity, being lame of a leg. Hiram intended to accompany the officer as a spectator, but he felt no very strong desire to bear the brunt of the battle. It was, however, Saturday, and the sun was already turning the shadows of the pines toward the east; on the morrow the conscientious magistrate could not engage in such an expedition at the peril of his soul; and long before Monday, the venison, and all vestiges of the death of the deer, might be secreted or destroyed. Happily, the lounging form of Billy Kirby met his eye, and Hiram, at all times fruitful in similar expedients, saw his way clear at once. Jotham, who was associated in the whole business, and who had left the mountain in consequence of a summons from his coadjutor, but who failed, equally with Hiram, in the unfortunate particular of nerve, was directed to summon the wood-chopper to the dwelling of the magistrate.

When Billy appeared, he was very kindly invited to take the chair in which he had already seated himself, and was treated in all respects as if he were an equal.

"Judge Temple has set his heart on putting the deer law in force," said Hiram, after the preliminary civilities were over, "and a complaint has been laid before him that a deer has been killed. He has issued a search-warrant, and sent for me to get somebody to execute it."

Kirby, who had no idea of being excluded from the deliberative part of any affair in which he was engaged, drew up his bushy head in a reflecting attitude, and, after musing a moment, replied by asking a few questions.

"The Sheriff is gone out of the way?"

"Not to be found."

"And his deputy too?"

"Both gone on the skirts of the Patent."

"But I saw the constable hobbling about town an hour ago."

"Yes, yes," said Hiram with a coaxing smile and knowing nod, "but this business wants a man—not a cripple."

"Why," said Billy, laughing, "will the chap make fight?"

"He's a little quarrelsome at times, and thinks he's the best man in the country at rough and tumble."

"I heard him brag once," said Jotham, "that there wasn't a man 'twixt the Mohawk Flats and the Pennsylvany line that was his match at a close hug."

"Did you?" exclaimed Kirby, raising his huge frame in his seat, like a lion stretching in his lair; "I rather guess he never felt a Varmounter's knuckles on his backbone. But who is the chap?"

"Why," said Jotham, "it's—"

"It's ag'in law to tell," interrupted Hiram, "unless you'll qualify to sarve. You'd be the very man to take him, Bill; and I'll make out a special deputation in a minute, when you will get the fees."

"What's the fees?" said Kirby, laying his large hand on the leaves of a statute-book, that Hiram had opened in order to give dignity to his office, which he turned over, in his rough manner, as if he were reflecting on a subject about which he had, in truth, already decided; "will they pay a man for a broken head?"

"They'll be something handsome," said Hiram.

"Damn the fees," said Billy, again laughing:—"does the fellow think he's the best wrestler in the county, though? what's his inches?"

"He's taller than you be," said Jotham, "and one of the biggest—"

Talkers, he was about to add, but the impatience of Kirby interrupted him. The wood-chopper had nothing fierce or even brutal in his appearance; the character of his expression was that of good-natured vanity. It was evident he prided himself on the powers of the physical man, like all who have nothing better to boast of; and, stretching out his broad hand, with the palm downward, he said, keeping his eyes fastened on his own bones and sinews—

"Come, give us a touch of the book. I'll swear, and you'll see that I'm a man to keep my oath."

Hiram did not give the wood-chopper time to change his mind, but the oath was administered without unnecessary delay. So soon as this preliminary was completed, the three worthies left the house, and proceeded by the nearest road toward the hut. They had reached the bank

of the lake, and were diverging from the route of the highway, before Kirby recollected that he was now entitled to the privilege of the initiated, and repeated his question as to the name of the offender.

"Which way, which way, Squire?" exclaimed the hardy wood-chopper; "I thought it was to search a house that you wanted me, not the woods. There is nobody lives on this side of the lake, for six miles, unless you count the Leather-stocking and old John for settlers. Come, tell me the chap's name, and I warrant me that I lead you to his clearing by a straighter path than this, for I know every sapling that grows within two miles of Templetown."

"This is the way," said Hiram, pointing forward and quickening his step, as if apprehensive that Kirby would desert, "and Bumppo is the man."

Kirby stopped short, and looked from one of his companions to the other in astonishment. He then burst into a loud laugh, and cried—

"Who? Leather-stocking! he may brag of his aim and his rifle, for he has the best of both, as I will own myself, for sin' he shot the pigeon I knock under to him; but for a wrestle! why, I would take the creatur' between my finger and thumb, and tie him in a bow-knot around my neck for a Barcelony. The man is seventy, and was never anything particular for strength."

"He's a deceiving man," said Hiram, "like all the hunters; he is stronger than he seems; besides, he has his rifle."

"That for his rifle!" cried Billy: "he'd no more hurt me with his rifle than he'd fly. He is a harmless creater, and I must say that I think he has as good right to kill deer as any man on the Patent. It's his main support, and this is a free country, where a man is privileged to follow any calling he likes."

"According to that doctrine," said Jotham, "anybody may shoot a deer."

"This is the man's calling, I tell you," returned Kirby, "and the law was never made for such as he."

"The law was made for all," observed Hiram, who began to think that the danger was likely to fall to his own share, notwithstanding his management; "and the law is particular in noticing parjury."

"See here, Squire Doolittle," said the reckless wood-chopper; "I don't care the valie of a beetlering for you and your parjury too. But as I have come so far, I'll go down and have a talk with the old man, and maybe we'll fry a steak of the deer together."

"Well, if you can get in peaceably, so much the better," said the magistrate. "To my notion, strife is very unpopular; I prefar, at all times, clever conduct to an ugly temper."

As the whole party moved at a great pace, they soon reached the hut, where Hiram thought it prudent to halt on the outside of the top of the fallen pine, which formed a chevaux-de-frise, to defend the approach to the fortress, on the side next the village. The delay was little relished by Kirby, who clapped his hands to his mouth, and gave a loud halloo that brought the dogs out of their kennel and, almost at the same instant, the scantily covered head of Natty from the door.

"Lie down, old fool," cried the hunter; "do you think there's more painters about you?"

"Ha! Leather-stocking, I've an arrand with you," cried Kirby; "here's the good people of the state have been writing you a small letter, and they're hired me to ride post."

"What would you have with me, Billy Kirby?" said Natty, stepping across his threshold, and raising his hand over his eyes to screen them from the rays of the setting sun, while he took a survey of his visitor. "I've no land to clear; and heaven knows I would set out six trees afore I would cut down one. Down, Hector, I say; into your kennel with ye."

"Would you, old boy?" roared Billy; "then so much the better for me. But I must do my arrand. Here's a letter for you, Leather-stocking. If you can read it, it's all well, and if you can't, here's Squire Doolittle at hand to let you know what it means. It seems you mistook the twentieth of July for the first of August, that's all."

By this time Natty had discovered the lank person of Hiram, drawn up under the cover of a high stump; and all that was complacent in his manner instantly gave way to marked distrust and dissatisfaction. He placed his head within the door of his hut, and said a few words in an undertone, when he again appeared, and continued:

"I've nothing for ye; so away, afore the evil one tempts

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25 **Barcelony,** Barcelona, a silk neckerchief • 56 **chevaux-de-frise,** literally "horses of Friesland"; large, six-sided joists studded with long iron spikes, used to block breaches in fortifications or to halt cavalry charges

me to do you harm. I owe you no spite, Billy Kirby, and what for should you trouble an old man, who has done you no harm?"

Kirby advanced through the top of the pine, to within a few feet of the hunter, where he seated himself on the end of a log with great composure, and began to examine the nose of Hector, with whom he was familiar, from their frequently meeting in the woods, where he sometimes fed the dog from his own basket of provisions.

"You've outshot me, and I'm not ashamed to say it," said the wood-chopper; "but I don't owe you a grudge for that, Natty! though it seems that you've shot once too often, for the story goes that you've killed a buck."

"I've fired but twice to-day, and both times at the painters," returned the Leather-stocking; "see, here are the scalps! I was just going in with them to the Judge's to ask the bounty."

While Natty was speaking, he tossed the ears to Kirby, who continued playing with them, with a careless air, holding them to the dogs, and laughing at their movements when they scented the unusual game.

But Hiram, emboldened by the advance of the deputed constable, now ventured to approach also, and took up the discourse with the air of authority that became his commission. His first measure was to read the warrant aloud, taking care to give due emphasis to the most material parts, and concluding with the name of the Judge in very audible and distinct tones.

"Did Marmaduke Temple put his name to that bit of paper?" said Natty, shaking his head;—"well, well, that man loves the new ways, and his betterments, and his lands, afore his own flesh and blood. But I won't mistrust the gal: she has an eye like a full-grown buck! poor thing, she didn't choose her father, and can't help it. I know but little of the law, Mr. Doolittle; what is to be done, now you've read your commission?"

"Oh! it's nothing but form, Natty," said Hiram, endeavoring to assume a friendly aspect. "Let's go in, and talk the thing over in reason; I dare say that the money can be easily found, and I partly conclude, from what passed, that Judge Temple will pay it himself."

The old hunter had kept a keen eye on the movements of his three visitors, from the beginning, and had maintained his position, just without the threshold of his cabin, with a determined manner, that showed he was not to be easily driven from his post. When Hiram drew nigher, as if expecting his proposition would be accepted, Natty lifted his hand, and motioned for him to retreat.

"Haven't I told you more than once, not to tempt me?" he said. "I trouble no man; why can't the law leave me to myself? Go back—go back, and tell your Judge that he may keep his bounty; but I won't have his wasty ways brought into my hut."

This offer, however, instead of appeasing the curiosity of Hiram, seemed to inflame it the more; while Kirby cried—

"Well, that's fair, squire; he forgives the county his demand, and the county should forgive him the fine; it's what I call an even trade, and should be concluded on the spot. I like quick dealings, and what's fair 'twixt man and man."

"I demand entrance into this house," said Hiram, summoning all the dignity he could master to his assistance, "in the name of the people; and by virtue of this warrant, and of my office, and with this peace-officer."

"Stand back, stand back, squire, and don't tempt me," said the Leather-stocking, motioning for him to retire, with great earnestness.

"Stop us at your peril," continued Hiram. "Billy! Jotham! close-up—I want testimony."

Hiram had mistaken the mild but determined air of Natty for submission, and had already put his foot on the threshold to enter, when he was seized unexpectedly by his shoulders, and hurled over the little bank toward the lake, to the distance of twenty feet. The suddenness of the movement, and the unexpected display of strength on the part of Natty, created a momentary astonishment in his invaders, that silenced all noises; but at the next instant Billy Kirby gave vent to his mirth in peals of laughter, that he seemed to heave up from his very soul.

"Well done, old stub!" he shouted: "the squire know'd you better than I did. Come, come, here's a green spot; take it out like men, while Jotham and I see fair play."

"William Kirby, I order you to do your duty," cried Hiram, from under the bank; "seize that man; I order you to seize him in the name of the people."

But the Leather-stocking now assumed a more threatening attitude; his rifle was in his hand, and its muzzle was directed toward the wood-chopper.

"Stand off, I bid ye," said Natty; "you know my aim, Billy Kirby; I don't crave your blood, but mine and

yourn both shall turn this green grass red, afore you put foot into the hut."

While the affair appeared trifling, the wood-chopper seemed disposed to take sides with the weaker party; but when the fire-arms were introduced, his manner very sensibly changed. He raised his large frame from the log, and facing the hunter with an open front, he replied—

"I didn't come here as your enemy, Leather-stocking; but I don't value the hollow piece of iron in your hand so much as a broken axe-helve; so, squire, say the word, and keep within the law, and we'll soon see who's the best man of the two."

But no magistrate was to be seen! The instant the rifle was produced, Hiram and Jotham vanished; and when the wood-chopper bent his eyes about him in surprise at receiving no answer, he discovered their retreating figures moving toward the village at a rate that sufficiently indicated that they had not only calculated the velocity of a rifle-bullet, but also its probable range.

"You've scared the creaters off," said Kirby, with great contempt expressed on his broad features; "but you are not going to scare me; so, Mr. Bumppo, down with your gun, or there'll be trouble 'twixt us."

Natty dropped his rifle, and replied—

"I wish you no harm, Billy Kirby; but I leave it to yourself, whether an old man's hut is to be run down by such varmint. I won't deny the buck to you, Billy, and you may take the skin in, if you please, and show it as testimony. The bounty will pay the fine, and that ought to satisfy any man."

"'Twill, old boy, 'twill," cried Kirby, every shade of displeasure vanishing from his open brow at the peace-offering; "throw out the hide, and that shall satisfy the law."

Natty entered the hut, and soon re-appeared, bringing with him the desired testimonial; and the wood-chopper departed, as thoroughly reconciled to the hunter as if nothing had happened. As he paced along the margin of the lake he would burst into frequent fits of laughter, while he recollected the summerset of Hiram; and, on the whole, he thought the affair a very capital joke.

Long before Billy reached the village, however, the news of his danger, and of Natty's disrespect of the law, and of Hiram's discomfiture, were in circulation. A good deal was said about sending for the Sheriff; some hints were given about calling out the posse comitatus to avenge the insulted laws; and many of the citizens were collected, deliberating how to proceed. The arrival of Billy with the skin, by removing all grounds for a search, changed the complexion of things materially. Nothing now remained but to collect the fine, and assert the dignity of the people; all of which, it was unanimously agreed, could be done as well on the succeeding Monday as on Saturday night,—a time kept sacred by a large portion of the settlers. Accordingly, all further proceedings were suspended for six-and-thirty hours.

[CHAPTER XXXI. Oliver, at the Grants, knows nothing of the encounter at the hut until, returning to the center of the town, he sees the villagers dispersing. Chester Lippet, the lawyer, tells him what has happened, and Oliver retains Lippet to defend Natty. He then goes in search of the Judge. At the mansion-house he finds Elizabeth serenely sure that the search warrant will bring no harm; she is quickly disillusioned by her father, who appears and says that Natty's obstinate resistance to the law must be punished. At this announcement Oliver loses his temper and accuses the Judge of being responsible for the impoverishment of Natty and Chingachgook. The Judge rightly regards the accusation as an attack on the validity of his title to the lands and discharges his assistant. Oliver then bids farewell to Elizabeth, who tells him to let Natty know that she is his friend.

CHAPTER XXXII. Late the following evening Richard returns from an expedition to arrest a gang of counterfeiters. He extracts the story of events from Ben Pump, after great difficulty, and at once assembles a posse to take Natty into custody. When they arrive at the hut, they find only a heap of ashes and smoldering logs. As they gaze at the embers Natty appears, to say that those who have driven the wild beasts from the wilderness have now driven an old man from the home that has been his for forty years. Richard apologizes for his duty, but takes Natty to the jail.]

CHAPTER XXXIII

The long days and early sun of July allowed time for a gathering of the interested, before the little bell of the academy announced that the appointed hour had arrived for administering right to the wronged, and punishment to the guilty. Ever since the dawn of day, the

highways and wood-paths that, issuing from the forests, and winding along the sides of the mountains, centred in Templeton, had been thronged with equestrians and footmen, bound to the haven of justice. There was to be seen a well-clad yeoman, mounted on a sleek, switch-tailed steed, ambling along the highway, with his red face elevated in a manner that said, "I have paid for my land, and fear no man;" while his bosom was swelling with the pride of being one of the grand inquest for the county. At his side rode a companion, his equal in independence of feeling, perhaps, but his inferior in thrift, as in property and consideration. This was a professed dealer in lawsuits,—a man whose name appeared in every calendar,—whose substance, gained in the multifarious expedients of a settler's changeable habits, was wasted in feeding the harpies of the courts. He was endeavoring to impress the mind of the grand juror with the merits of a cause now at issue. Along with these was a pedestrian, who, having thrown a rifle frock over his shirt, and placed his best wool hat above his sunburnt visage, had issued from his retreat in the woods by a footpath, and was striving to keep company with the others, on his way to hear and to decide the disputes of his neighbors, as a petit juror. Fifty similar little knots of countrymen might have been seen, on that morning, journeying toward the shire-town on the same errand.

By ten o'clock the streets of the village were filled with busy faces; some talking of their private concerns, some listening to a popular expounder of political creeds; and others gaping in at the open stores, admiring the finery, or examining scythes, axes, and such other manufactures as attracted their curiosity or excited their admiration. A few women were in the crowd, most carrying infants, and followed, at a lounging, listless gait, by their rustic lords and masters. There was one young couple, in whom connubial love was yet fresh, walking at a respectful distance from each other; while the swain directed the timid steps of his bride, by a gallant offering of a thumb!

At the first stroke of the bell, Richard issued from the door of the "Bold Dragoon," flourishing a sheathed sword, that he was fond of saying his ancestors had carried in one of Cromwell's victories, and crying, in an authoritative tone, to "clear the way for the court." The order was obeyed promptly, though not servilely, the members of the crowd nodding familiarly to the members of the procession as it passed. A party of constables with their staves followed the Sheriff, preceding Marmaduke, and four plain, grave-looking yeomen, who were his associates on the bench. There was nothing to distinguish these subordinate judges from the better part of the spectators, except gravity, which they affected a little more than common, and that one of their number was attired in an old-fashioned military coat, with skirts that reached no lower than the middle of his thighs, and bearing two little silver epaulettes, not half so big as a modern pair of shoulder-knots. This gentleman was a colonel of the militia, in attendance on a court-martial, who found leisure to steal a moment from his military to attend to his civil jurisdiction; but this incongruity excited neither notice nor comment. Three or four clean-shaved lawyers followed, as meekly as if they were lambs going to the slaughter. One or two of their number had contrived to obtain an air of scholastic gravity by wearing spectacles. The rear was brought up by another posse of constables, and the mob followed the whole into the room where the court held its sittings.

The edifice was composed of a basement of squared logs, perforated here and there with small grated windows, through which a few wistful faces were gazing at the crowd without. Among the captives were the guilty, downcast countenances of the counterfeiters, and the simple but honest features of the Leather-stocking. The dungeons were to be distinguished, externally, from the debtors' apartments only by the size of the apertures, the thickness of the grates, and by the heads of the spikes that were driven into the logs as a protection against the illegal use of edge-tools. The upper story was of frame-work, regularly covered with boards, and contained one room decently fitted up for the purposes of justice. A bench, raised on a narrow platform to the height of a man above the floor, and protected in front by a light railing, ran along one of its sides. In the centre was a seat, furnished with rude arms, that was always filled by the presiding judge. In front, on a level with the floor of the room, was a large table covered with green baize, and surrounded by benches; and at either of its ends were rows of seats, rising one over the other, for jury boxes. Each of these divisions was surrounded by a railing. The

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44 **Cromwell's.** Richard's remark does not jibe with his staunch Episcopalianism

remainder of the room was an open square, appropriated to the spectators.

When the judges were seated, the lawyers had taken possession of the table, and the noise of moving feet had ceased in the area, the proclamations were made in the usual form, the jurors were sworn, the charge was given, and the court proceeded to hear the business before them.

We shall not detain the reader with a description of the captious discussions that occupied the court for the first two hours. Judge Temple had impressed on the jury, in his charge, the necessity for despatch on their part, recommending to their notice, from motives of humanity, the prisoners in the jail, as the first objects of their attention. Accordingly, after the period we have mentioned had elapsed, the cry of the officer to "clear the way for the grand jury," announced the entrance of that body. The usual forms were observed, when the foreman handed up to the bench two bills, on both of which the Judge observed, at the first glance of his eye, the name of Nathaniel Bumppo. It was a leisure moment with the court; some low whispering passed between the bench and the Sheriff, who gave a signal to his officers, and in a very few minutes the silence that prevailed was interrupted by a general movement in the outer crowd; when presently the Leather-stocking made his appearance, ushered into the criminal's bar under the custody of two constables. The hum ceased, the people closed into the open space again, and the silence became so deep, that the hard breathing of the prisoner was audible.

Natty was dressed in his buckskin garments, without his coat, in place of which he wore only a shirt of coarse linen-check, fastened at his throat by the sinew of a deer, leaving his red neck and weather-beaten face exposed and bare. It was the first time that he had ever crossed the threshold of a court of justice, and curiosity seemed to be strongly blended with his personal feelings. He raised his eyes to the bench, thence to the jury-boxes, the bar, and the crowd without, meeting everywhere looks fastened on himself. After surveying his own person, as searching the cause of this unusual attraction, he once more turned his face around the assemblage, and opened his mouth in one of his silent and remarkable laughs.

"Prisoner, remove your cap," said Judge Temple.

The order was either unheard or unheeded.

"Nathaniel Bumppo, be uncovered," repeated the Judge.

Natty started at the sound of his name, and raising his face earnestly toward the bench, he said—

"Anan!"

Mr. Lippet arose from his seat at the table, and whispered in the ear of the prisoner; when Natty gave him a nod of assent, and took the deerskin covering from his head.

"Mr. District Attorney," said the Judge, "the prisoner is ready; we wait for the indictment."

The duties of public prosecutor were discharged by Dirck Van der School, who adjusted his spectacles, cast a cautious look around him at his brethren of the bar, which he ended by throwing his head aside so as to catch one glance over the glasses, when he proceeded to read the bill aloud. It was the usual charge for an assault and battery on the person of Hiram Doolittle, and was couched in the ancient language of such instruments, especial care having been taken by the scribe not to omit the name of a single offensive weapon known to the law. When he had done, Mr. Van der School removed his spectacles, which he closed and placed in his pocket, seemingly for the pleasure of again opening and replacing them on his nose. After this evolution was repeated once or twice, he handed the bill over to Mr. Lippet, with a cavalier air, that said as much as "Pick a hole in that if you can."

Natty listened to the charge with great attention, leaning forward toward the reader with an earnestness that denoted his interest; and when it was ended, he raised his tall body to the utmost, and drew a long sigh. All eyes were turned to the prisoner, whose voice was vainly expected to break the stillness of the room.

"You have heard the presentment that the grand jury have made, Nathaniel Bumppo," said the Judge; "what do you plead to the charge?"

The old man dropped his head for a moment in a reflecting attitude, and then raising it, he laughed before he answered—

"That I handled the man a little rough or so, is not to be denied; but that there was occasion to make use of all the things that the gentleman has spoken of, is downright untrue. I am not much of a wrestler, seeing that I'm getting old; but I was out among the Scotch-Irishers—let me see—it must have been as long ago as the first year of the old war—"

"Mr. Lippet, if you are retained for the prisoner," inter-

rupted Judge Temple, "instruct your client how to plead; if not, the court will assign him counsel."

Aroused from studying the indictment by this appeal, the attorney got up, and after a short dialogue with the hunter in a low voice, he informed the court that they were ready to proceed.

"Do you plead guilty or not guilty?" said the Judge.

"I may say not guilty with a clean conscience," returned Natty; "for there's no guilt in doing what's right; and I'd rather died on the spot, than had him put foot in the hut at that moment."

Richard started at this declaration, and bent his eyes significantly on Hiram, who returned the look with a slight movement of his eyebrows.

"Proceed to open the cause, Mr. District Attorney," continued the Judge. "Mr. Clark, enter the plea of not guilty."

After a short opening address from Mr. Van der School, Hiram was summoned to the bar to give his testimony. It was delivered to the letter, perhaps, but with all that moral coloring which can be conveyed under such expressions as, "thinking no harm," "feeling it my bounden duty as a magistrate," and "seeing that the constable was back'ard in the business." When he had done, and the district attorney declined putting any further interrogatories, Mr. Lippet arose, with an air of keen investigation, and asked the following questions:

"Are you a constable of this county, sir?"

"No, sir," said Hiram, "I'm only a justice-peace."

"I ask you, Mr. Doolittle, in the face of this court, putting it to your conscience and your knowledge of the law, whether you had any right to enter that man's dwelling?"

"Hem!" said Hiram, undergoing a violent struggle between his desire for vengeance and his love of legal fame; "I do suppose—that in—that is—strict law—that supposing—maybe I hadn't a real—lawful right;—but as the case was—and Billy was so back'ard—I thought I might come for'ard in the business."

"I ask you again, sir," continued the lawyer, following up his success, "whether this old, this friendless old man, did or did not repeatedly forbid your entrance?"

"Why, I must say," said Hiram, "that he was considerable cross-grained; not what I call clever, seeing that it was only one neighbor wanting to go into the house of another."

"Oh! then you own it was only meant for a neighborly visit on your part, and without the sanction of law. Remember, gentlemen, the words of the witness, 'one neighbor wanting to enter the house of another.' Now, sir, I ask you if Nathaniel Bumppo did not again and again order you not to enter?"

"There was some words passed between us," said Hiram, "but I read the warrant to him aloud."

"I repeat my question; did he tell you not to enter his habitation?"

"There was a good deal passed betwixt us—but I've the warrant in my pocket; maybe the court would wish to see it?"

"Witness," said Judge Temple, "answer the question directly; did or did not the prisoner forbid your entering his hut?"

"Why, I some think—"

"Answer without equivocation," continued the Judge, sternly.

"He did."

"And did you attempt to enter after this order?"

"I did; but the warrant was in my hand."

"Proceed, Mr. Lippet, with your examination."

But the attorney saw that the impression was in favor of his client, and, waving his hand with a supercilious manner, as if unwilling to insult the understanding of the jury with any further defence, he replied—

"No, sir; I leave it for your honor to charge; I rest my case here."

"Mr. District Attorney," said the Judge, "have you anything to say?"

Mr. Van der School removed his spectacles, folded them, and replacing them once more on his nose, eyed the other bill which he held in his hand, and then said, looking at the bar over the top of his glasses—

"I shall rest the prosecution here, if the court please."

Judge Temple arose and began the charge.

"Gentlemen of the jury," he said, "you have heard the testimony, and I shall detain you but a moment. If an officer meet with resistance in the execution of a process he has an undoubted right to call any citizen to his assistance; and the acts of such assistant come within the protection of the law. I shall leave you to judge, gentlemen, from the testimony, how far the witness in this prosecution can be so considered, feeling less reluctance to submit the case thus informally to your decision, because

there is yet another indictment to be tried, which involves heavier charges against the unfortunate prisoner."

The tone of Marmaduke was mild and insinuating, and as his sentiments were given with such apparent impartiality, they did not fail of carrying due weight with the jury. The grave-looking yeomen who composed this tribunal, laid their heads together for a few minutes, without leaving the box, when the foreman arose, and after the forms of the court were duly observed, he pronounced the prisoner to be—

"Not guilty."

"You are acquitted of this charge, Nathaniel Bumppo," said the Judge.

"Anan!" said Natty.

"You are found not guilty of striking and assaulting Mr. Doolittle."

"No, no, I'll not deny that I took him a little roughly by the shoulders," said Natty, looking about him with great simplicity, "and that I—"

"You are acquitted," interrupted the Judge, "and there is nothing further to be said or done in the matter."

A look of joy lighted up the features of the old man, who now comprehended the case, and placing his cap eagerly on his head again, he threw up the bar of his little prison, and said feelingly—

"I must say this for you, Judge Temple, that the law has not been so hard on me as I dreaded. I hope God will bless you for the kind things you've done to me this day."

But the staff of the constable was opposed to his egress, and Mr. Lippet whispered a few words in his ear, when the aged hunter sank back into his place, and, removing his cap, stroked down the remnants of his gray and sandy locks, with an air of mortification mingled with submission.

"Mr. District Attorney," said Judge Temple, affecting to busy himself with his minutes, "proceed with the second indictment."

Mr. Van der School took great care that no part of the presentment, which he now read, should be lost on his auditors. It accused the prisoner of resisting the execution of a search-warrant, by force of arms, and particularized, in the vague language of the law, among a variety of other weapons, the use of the rifle. This was indeed a more serious charge than an ordinary assault and battery, and a corresponding degree of interest was manifested by the spectators in its result. The prisoner was duly arraigned, and his plea again demanded. Mr. Lippet had anticipated the answers of Natty, and in a whisper advised him how to lead. But the feelings of the old hunter were awakened by some of the expressions of the indictment, and, forgetful of his caution, he exclaimed—

" 'Tis a wicked untruth; I crave no man's blood. Them thieves, the Iroquois, won't say it to my face, that I ever thirsted after man's blood. I have fou't as a soldier that feared his Maker and his officer, but I never pulled trigger on any but a warrior that was up and awake. No man can say that I ever struck even a Mingo in his blanket. I believe there's some who thinks there's no God in a wilderness!"

"Attend to your plea, Bumppo," said the Judge; "you hear that you are accused of using your rifle against an officer of justice? are you guilty or not guilty?"

By this time the irritated feelings of Natty had found vent; and he rested on the bar for a moment, in a musing posture, when he lifted his face, with his silent laugh, and, pointing to where the wood-chopper stood, he said—

"Would Billy Kirby be standing there, d'ye think, if I had used the rifle?"

"Then you deny it," said Mr. Lippet; "you plead not guilty?"

"Sartain," said Natty; "Billy knows that I never fired at all. Billy, do you remember the turkey last winter? ah! me! that was better than common firing; but I can't shoot as I used to could."

"Enter the plea of not guilty," said Judge Temple, strongly affected by the simplicity of the prisoner.

Hiram was again sworn, and his testimony given on the second charge. He had discovered his former error, and proceeded more cautiously than before. He related very distinctly, and for the man, with amazing terseness, the suspicion against the hunter, the complaint, the issuing of the warrant, and the swearing in of Kirby; all of which, he affirmed, were done in due form of law. He then added the manner in which the constable had been received; and stated distinctly, that Natty had pointed the rifle at Kirby, and threatened his life, if he attempted to execute his duty. All this was confirmed by Jotham, who was observed to adhere closely to the story of the magistrate. Mr. Lippet conducted an artful cross-examination of these two witnesses, but after consuming much time, was compelled to relinquish the attempt to obtain any advantage, in despair.

At length the district attorney called the wood-chopper to the bar. Billy gave an extremely confused account of the whole affair, although he evidently aimed at the truth, until Mr. Van der School aided him, by asking some direct questions:—

"It appears from examining the papers, that you demanded admission into the hut legally; so you were put in bodily fear by his rifle and threats?"

"I didn't mind them that, man," said Billy, snapping his fingers; "I should be a poor stick to mind old Leather-stocking."

"But I understood you to say (referring to your previous words (as delivered here in court) in the commencement of your testimony) that you thought he meant to shoot you?"

"To be sure I did; and so would you too, squire, if you had seen the chap dropping a muzzle that never misses, and cocking an eye that has a natural squint by long practice. I thought there would be a dust on't, and my back was up at once; but Leather-stocking gi'n up the skin, and so the matter ended."

"Ah! Billy," said Natty, shaking his head, "'twas a lucky thought in me to throw out the hide, or there might have been blood spilt; and I'm sure, if it had been yourn, I should have mourn'd it sorely the little while I have to stay."

"Well, Leather-stocking," returned Billy, facing the prisoner with a freedom and familiarity that utterly disregarded the presence of the court, "as you are on the subject, it may be that you've no—"

"Go on with your examination, Mr. District Attorney."

That gentleman eyed the familiarity between his witness and the prisoner with manifest disgust, and indicated to the court that he was done.

"Then you didn't feel frightened, Mr. Kirby?" said the counsel for the prisoner.

"Me! no," said Billy, casting his eyes over his own huge frame with evident self-satisfaction; "I'm not to be skeared so easy."

"You look like a hardy man; where were you born, sir?"

"Varmount state; 'tis a mountaynious place, but there's a stiff soil, and it's pretty much wooded with beech and maple."

"I have always heard so," said Mr. Lippet, soothingly. "You have been used to the rifle yourself, in that country?"

"I pull the second best trigger in this county. I knock under to Natty Bumppo there, sin' he shot the pigeon."

Leather-stocking raised his head, and laughed again, when he abruptly thrust out a wrinkled hand, and said—

"You're young yet, Billy, and hav'n't seen the matches that I have; but here's my hand; I bear no malice to you, I don't."

Mr. Lippet allowed this conciliatory offering to be accepted, and judiciously paused, while the spirit of peace was exercising its influence over the two; but the Judge interposed his authority.

"This is an improper place for such dialogues," he said. "Proceed with your examination of this witness, Mr. Lippet, or I shall order the next."

The attorney started, as if unconscious of any impropriety, and continued—

"So you settled the matter with Natty amicably on the spot, did you?"

"He gi'n me the skin, and I didn't want to quarrel with an old man; for my part, I see no such mighty matter in shooting a buck!"

"And you parted friends? and you would never have thought of bringing the business up before a court, hadn't you been subpœnaed?"

"I don't think I should; he gi'n the skin, and I didn't feel a hard thought, though Squire Doolittle got some affronted."

"I have done, sir," said Mr. Lippet, probably relying on the charge of the Judge, as he again seated himself, with the air of a man who felt that his success was certain.

When Mr. Van der School arose to address the jury, he commenced by saying—

"Gentlemen of the jury, I should have interrupted the leading questions put by the prisoner's counsel (by leading questions I mean telling him what to say), did I not feel confident that the law of the land was superior to any advantages (I mean legal advantages) which he might obtain by his art. The counsel for the prisoner, gentlemen, has endeavored to persuade you, in opposition to your own good sense, to believe that pointing a rifle at a constable (elected or deputed) is a very innocent affair; and that society (I mean the commonwealth, gentlemen) shall not be endangered thereby. But let me claim your attention, while we look over the particulars of this heinous offence." Here Mr. Van der School favored the jury with an abridgment of the testimony, recounted in such a manner as utterly to confuse the faculties of his worthy

listeners. After this exhibition he closed as follows:—"And now, gentlemen, having thus made plain to your senses the crime of which this unfortunate man has been guilty (unfortunate both on account of his ignorance and his guilt), I shall leave you to your own consciences; not in the least doubting that you will see the importance (notwithstanding the prisoner's counsel (doubtless relying on your former verdict) wishes to appear so confident of success) of punishing the offender, and asserting the dignity of the laws."

It was now the duty of the Judge to deliver his charge. It consisted of a short, comprehensive summary of the testimony, laying bare the artifice of the prisoner's counsel, and placing the facts in so obvious a light, that they could not well be misunderstood. "Living as we do, gentlemen," he concluded, "on the skirts of society, it becomes doubly necessary to protect the ministers of the law. If you believe the witnesses, in their construction of the acts of the prisoner, it is your duty to convict him; but if you believe that the old man, who this day appears before you, meant not to harm the constable, but was acting more under the influence of habit than by the instigations of malice, it will be your duty to judge him, but to do it with lenity."

As before, the jury did not leave their box; but, after a consultation of some little time, their foreman arose, and pronounced the prisoner—

"Guilty."

There was but little surprise manifested in the court room at this verdict, as the testimony, the greater part of which we have omitted, was too clear and direct to be passed over. The judges seemed to have anticipated this sentiment, for a consultation was passing among them also, during the deliberation of the jury, and the preparatory movements of the "bench" announced the coming sentence.

"Nathaniel Bumppo," commenced the Judge, making the customary pause.

The old hunter, who had been musing again, with his head on the bar, raised himself, and cried, with a prompt, military tone—

"Here."

The Judge waved his hand for silence, and proceeded—

"In forming their sentence, the court have been governed as much by the consideration of your ignorance of the laws, as by a strict sense of the importance of punishing such outrages as this of which you have been found guilty. They have therefore passed over the obvious punishment of whipping on the bare back, in mercy to your years; but as the dignity of the law requires an open exhibition of the consequences of your crime, it is ordered, that you be conveyed from this room to the public stocks, where you are to be confined for one hour; that you pay a fine to the state of one hundred dollars; and that you be imprisoned in the jail of this county for one calendar month, and furthermore, that your imprisonment do not cease until the said fine shall be paid. I feel it my duty, Nathaniel Bumppo—"

"And where should I get the money?" interrupted the Leather-stocking, eagerly;" where should I get the money? you'll take away the bounty on the painters, because I cut the throat of a deer; and how is an old man to find so much gold or silver in the woods? No, no, judge: think better of it, and don't talk of shutting me up in a jail for the little time I have to stay."

"If you have anything to urge against the passing of the sentence, the court will yet hear you," said the Judge, mildly.

"I have enough to say ag'in it," cried Natty, grasping the bar on which his fingers were working with a convulsed motion. "Where am I to get the money? Let me out into the woods and hills, where I've been used to breathe the clear air, and though I'm threescore and ten, if you've left game enough in the country, I'll travel night and day but I'll make you up the sum afore the season is over. Yes, yes—you see the reason of the thing, and the wickedness of shutting up an old man, that has spent his days, as one may say, where he could always look into the windows of heaven."

"I must be governed by the law—"

"Talk not to me of law, Marmaduke Temple," interrupted the hunter. "Did the beast of the forest mind your laws, when it was thirsty and hungering for the blood of your own child! She was kneeling to her God for a greater favor than I ask, and he heard her; and if you now say no to my prayers, do you think he will be deaf?"

"My private feelings must not enter into—"

"Hear me, Marmaduke Temple," interrupted the old man, with melancholy earnestness, "and hear reason. I've travelled these mountains when you was no judge, but an infant in your mother's arms; and I feel as if I had a right and a privilege to travel them ag'in afore I die. Have you

forgot the time that you come on to the lake-shore, when there wasn't even a jail to lodge in; and didn't I give you my own bear-skin to sleep on, and the fat of a noble buck to satisfy the cravings of your hunger? Yes, yes—you thought it no sin then to kill a deer! And this I did, though I had no reason to love you, for you had never done anything but harm to them that loved and sheltered me. And now, will you shut me up in your dungeons to pay me for my kindness? A hundred dollars! where should I get the money? No, no—there's them that says hard things of you, Marmaduke Temple, but you an't so bad as to wish to see an old man die in a prison, because he stood up for the right. Come, friend, let me pass; it's long sin' I've been used to such crowds, and I crave to be in the woods ag'in. Don't fear me, Judge—I bid you not to fear me; for if there's beaver enough left on the streams, or the buckskins will sell for a shilling a-piece, you shall have the last penny of the fine. Where are ye, pups! come away, dogs! come away! we have a grievous toil to do for our years, but it shall be done—yes, yes, I've promised it, and it shall be done!"

It is unnecessary to say, that the movement of the Leather-stocking was again intercepted by the constable; but before he had time to speak, a bustling in the crowd, and a loud hem, drew all eyes to another part of the room.

Benjamin had succeeded in edging his way through the people, and was now seen balancing his short body, with one foot in a window and the other on a railing of the jury-box. To the amazement of the whole court, the steward was evidently preparing to speak. After a good deal of difficulty, he succeeded in drawing from his pocket a small bag, and then found utterance.

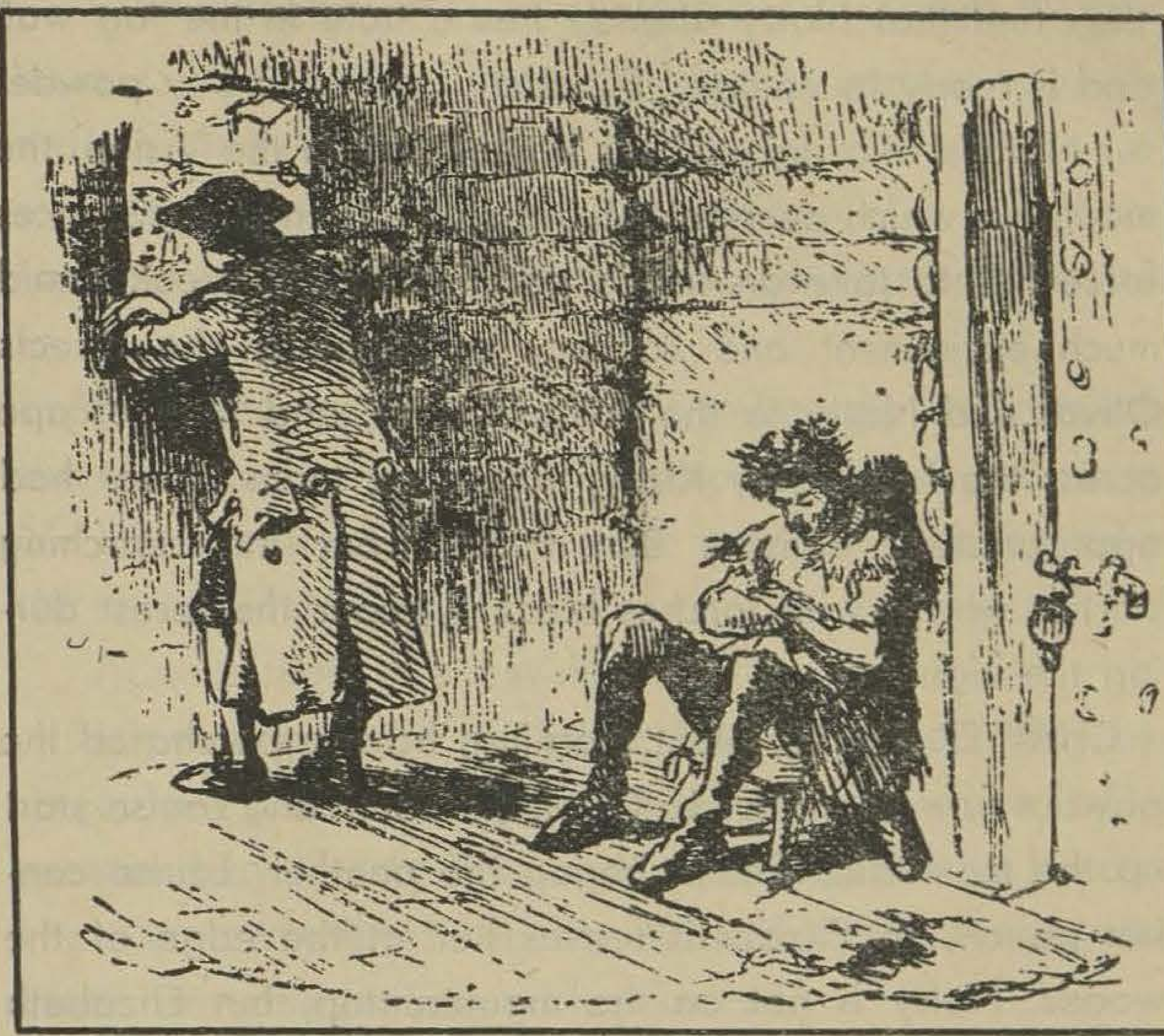
"If-so-be," he said, "that your honor is agreeable to trust the poor fellow out on another cruise among the beasts, here's a small matter that will help to bring down the risk, seeing that there's just thirty-five of your Spaniards in it; and I wish, from the bottom of my heart, that they was raal British guineas, for the sake of the old boy. But 'tis as it is; and if Squire Dickens will just be so good as to overhaul this small bit of an account, and take enough from the bag to settle the same, he's welcome to hold on upon the rest, till such time as the Leather-stocking can grapple with them said beaver, or, for that matter, forever, and no thanks asked."

As Benjamin concluded, he thrust out the wooden register of his arrears to the "Bold Dragoon" with one hand, while he offered his bag of dollars with the other. Astonishment at this singular interruption produced a profound stillness in the room, which was only interrupted by the Sheriff, who struck his sword on the table, and cried—

"Silence!"

"There must be an end of this," said the Judge, struggling to overcome his feelings. "Constable, lead the prisoner to the stocks. Mr. Clerk, what stands next on the calendar?"

Natty seemed to yield to his destiny, for he sank his head on his chest, and followed the officer from the court-room in silence. The crowd moved back for the passage of the prisoner, and when his tall form was seen descending from the outer door, a rush of the people to the scene of his disgrace followed.



The prisoners.

[CHAPTER XXXIV. Ben Pump, much incensed at the verdict, insists on taking the empty place in the stocks next to Natty Bumppo. When Hiram Doolittle unwarily comes near, Ben seizes one of his legs and gives him a drubbing; as a result Ben and Natty return to the jail together. Just before nightfall they are visited by Oliver, who apparently brings words of comfort, for by eight o'clock they have ostensibly retired for the night.

CHAPTER XXXV. An hour later Elizabeth and Louisa come to the jail, with a pocketbook containing two hundred dollars for Natty. Outside they meet Oliver, disguised as a teamster and driving a yoke of oxen. Inside

they find that Natty already has a hole in the log wall and is ready to escape. Elizabeth agrees to buy powder for Natty's rifle and deliver it next day to the Vision, the mountain which overlooks Templeton. Then circumstances force her to take an active part in the jail break; amid much excitement and comings and goings she directs Oliver and Natty to the Judge's boat, and they escape across the lake. Billy Kirby, whose ox team Oliver had appropriated, delivers Ben Pump from the searching parties which, with torches blazing, scour the forest during the night.

CHAPTER XXXVI. Next morning, having purchased the powder from Monsieur Le Quoi, Elizabeth and Louisa start up the mountain. Remembering the panther, Louisa cannot go on, so Elizabeth leaves her at the edge of the woods. Natty is not on the mountaintop, but Elizabeth hears a faint cry and, following the sound, discovers Chingachgook on a small rocky terrace, watered by a spring, about a hundred feet below. He is bitterly reviewing the wrongs done his race, but is about to tell Elizabeth of Oliver's identity when they are startled by immense volumes of smoke and the noise of flames. A voice is heard crying for Chingachgook, and an instant later Oliver joins them.

CHAPTER XXXVII. Oliver has been searching for the old Indian to take him out of the way of the swiftly spreading forest fire. He and Elizabeth quickly discover that they are surrounded by flames and cannot escape; Chingachgook is wholly reconciled to dying. As Oliver, thinking the end has come, declares his love for Elizabeth, Natty Bumppo's voice is heard, the can of powder explodes, and, a moment later, Natty appears by the spring.

CHAPTER XXXVIII. It appears that he has learned from Louisa of their position on the mountain. He has explained to her the origin of the fire—carelessly dropped torches from the night search—and sent her to the village to give the alarm. He produces a buckskin to wrap around Elizabeth's flimsy clothing, straps the uncoöperative Chingachgook to his back, and leads the way to safety along the crevice which is the course of the spring. They come to a rocky platform over the cavern which has excited so much curiosity and are joined there by Ben Pump and, to their surprise, Mr. Grant, who has been searching for Louisa. Chingachgook, after a dramatic farewell to the world, dies to the accompaniment of a great flash of lightning. Rain begins to fall, and not long after voices are heard calling Elizabeth. Oliver takes her to the road, promises that all will be explained on the morrow, and leaves her to be found and taken home by her father.

CHAPTER XXXIX. Next morning many miles of woods are black and smoking, but the fire is at a stop. The villagers are sure that it was set by Oliver and Natty and, urged on by curiosity as much as by wrath, gather a large force to besiege the mysterious cavern, now stoutly barricaded. There is much slapstick parleying and bloodless fighting, but the defenders of the cave are about to be overwhelmed when Judge Temple appears and orders the fighting halted. At almost the same moment Oliver and Major Hartmann come down the mountain, having shouted that all shall be yielded and the cave opened.

CHAPTER XL. Five or six minutes later an old man with snow-white hair and a vacant eye is carried from the cave on a deerskin chair. Major Hartmann and Oliver stand beside him. Judge Temple begins to suspect the truth, and when Oliver announces that the feeble oldster was once the rightful proprietor of the very soil on which all stand the Judge recognizes Major Effingham, the father of his one-time friend and partner. Oliver is revealed as his grandson, Edward Oliver Effingham, whose father had been drowned at sea in the ship whose loss had led the Judge to call in Dirck Van der School. The villagers are sent home and explanations begun. Major Hartmann has vouched to Oliver for Judge Temple's honest dealings; he is now justified by the Judge's representations that he has never regarded the estates as his own and has sought constantly for an opportunity of restoring to the Effinghams the property which he has held as trustee. Back at the mansion-house the Judge's will is produced, completely sustaining his explanations, and Oliver is promised half the Temple properties as soon as the transfer can be arranged.

CHAPTER XLI. Early in September Elizabeth and Oliver are married, and a few days later Major Effingham dies. After a brief stay in jail, Natty and Ben Pump are pardoned by the governor. Hiram Doolittle has been appeased and has left Templeton for opportunities farther west. Richard Jones has grown humble by the discovery that his silver mining theory had been based upon Jotham Riddel's faith in a diviner, and by the revelation that all the mystery was demanded by the concealment of the major. Monsieur Le Quoi has returned to Paris. It is now a mild October morning, and Elizabeth and Oliver are

taking a walk. She informs him that her father has procured a call from one of the towns on the Hudson for Mr. Grant; there Louisa will find society which may well lead to a suitable marriage. They approach the object of their walk:]

. . . The place at which they arrived was the little spot of level ground, where the cabin of the Leather-stocking had so long stood. Elizabeth found it entirely cleared of rubbish, and beautifully laid down in turf, by the removal of sods, which, in common with the surrounding country, had grown gay, under the influence of profuse showers, as if a second spring had passed over the land. This little place was surrounded by a circle of mason-work, and they entered by a small gate, near which, to the surprise of both, the rifle of Natty was leaning against the wall. Hector and the slut reposed on the grass by its side, as if conscious that, however altered, they were lying on the ground, and were surrounded by objects with which they were familiar. The hunter himself was stretched on the earth, before a headstone of white marble, pushing aside with his fingers the long grass that had already sprung up from the luxuriant soil around its base, apparently to lay bare the inscription. By the side of this stone, which was a simple slab at the head of a grave, stood a rich monument, decorated with an urn, and ornamented with the chisel.

Oliver and Elizabeth approached the graves with a light tread, unheard by the old hunter, whose sunburnt face was working, and whose eyes twinkled as if something impeded their vision. After some little time, Natty raised himself slowly from the ground, and said aloud—

"Well, well—I'm bold to say it's all right! There's something that I suppose is reading; but I can't make anything of it; though the pipe, and the tomahawk, and the moccasins be pretty well—pretty well, for a man that, I dares to say, never seed 'ither of the things. Ah's me! there they lie, side by side, happy enough! Who will there be to put me in the 'arth when my time comes?"

"When that unfortunate hour arrives, Natty, friends shall not be wanting to perform the last offices for you," said Oliver, a little touched at the hunter's soliloquy.

The old man turned, without manifesting surprise, for he had got the Indian habits in this particular, and running his hand under the bottom of his nose, seemed to wipe away his sorrow with the action.

"You've come out to see the graves, children, have ye?" he said; "well, well, they're wholesome sights to young as well as old."

"I hope they are fitted to your liking," said Effingham; "no one has a better right than yourself to be consulted in the matter."

"Why, seeing that I ain't used to fine graves," returned the old man, "it is but little matter consarning my taste. Ye laid the Major's head to the west, and Mohegan's to the east, did ye, lad?"

"At your request it was done."

"It's so best," said the hunter; "they thought they had to journey different ways, children; though there is One greater than all, who'll bring the just together, at his own time, and who'll whiten the skin of a black-moor, and place him on a footing with princes."

"There is but little reason to doubt that," said Elizabeth, whose decided tones were changed to a soft, melancholy voice; "I trust we shall all meet again, and be happy together."

"Shall we, child, shall we?" exclaimed the hunter, with unusual fervor; "there's comfort in that thought too. But before I go, I should like to know what 'tis you tell these people, that be flocking into the country like pigeons in the spring, of the old Delaware, and of the bravest white man that ever trod the hills."

Effingham and Elizabeth were surprised at the manner of the Leather-stocking, which was unusually impressive and solemn; but, attributing it to the scene, the young man turned to the monument, and read aloud—

" 'Sacred to the memory of Oliver Effingham, Esquire, formerly a Major in his B. Majesty's 60th Foot; a soldier of tried valor; a subject of chivalrous loyalty; and a man of honesty. To these virtues, he added the graces of a Christian. The morning of his life was spent in honor, wealth, and power; but its evening was obscured by poverty, neglect, and disease, which were alleviated only by the tender care of his old, faithful, and upright friend and attendant, Nathaniel Bumppo. His descendants rear this stone to the virtues of the master, and to the enduring gratitude of the servant.' "

The Leather-stocking stared at the sound of his own name, and a smile of joy illumined his wrinkled features, as he said—

"And did ye say it, lad? have you then got the old man's name cut in the stone, by the side of his master's? God

bless ye, children! 'twas a kind thought, and kindness goes to the heart as life shortens."

Elizabeth turned her back to the speakers. Effingham made a fruitless effort before he succeeded in saying—

"It is there cut in plain marble; but it should have been written in letters of gold!"

"Show me the name, boy," said Natty, with simple eagerness; "let me see my own name placed in such honor. 'Tis a gin'rous gift to a man who leaves none of his name and family behind him, in a country where he has tarried so long."

Effingham guided his finger to the spot, and Natty followed the windings of the letters to the end with deep interest, when he raised himself from the tomb, and said—

"I suppose it's all right; and it's kindly thought, and kindly done! But what have ye put over the red-skin?"

"You shall hear—

" 'This stone is raised to the memory of an Indian Chief, of the Delaware tribe, who was known by the several names of John Mohegan; Mohican—' "

"Mo-hee-can, lad, they call theirselves! 'he-can."

" 'Mohican; and Chingagook—' "

" 'Gach, boy;—'gach-gook; Chingachgook, which, intarpreted, means Big-sarpent. The name should be set down right, for an Indian's name has always some meaning in it."

"I will see it altered. 'He was the last of his people who continued to inhabit this country; and it may be said of him, that his faults were those of an Indian, and his virtues those of a man.' "

"You never said truer word, Mr. Oliver; ah's me! if you had know'd him as I did, in his prime, in that very battle where the old gentleman, who sleeps by his side, saved his life, when them thieves, the Iroquois, had him at the stake, you'd have said all that, and more too. I cut the thongs with this very hand, and gave him my own tomahawk and knife, seeing that the rifle was always my fav'rite weapon. He did lay about him like a man! I met him as I was coming home from the trail, with eleven Mingo scalps on his pole. You needn't shudder, Madam Effingham, for they was all from shaved heads and warriors. When I look about me, at these hills, where I used to could count sometimes twenty smokes, curling over the tree-tops, from the Delaware camps, it raises mournful thoughts, to think that not a red-skin is left of them all; unless it be a drunken vagabond from the Oneidas, or them Yankee Indians, who, they say, be moving up from the sea-shore; and who belong to none of God's creaters, to my seeming, being, as it were, neither fish nor flesh—neither white man nor savage. Well, well! the time has come at last, and I must go—"

"Go!" echoed Edwards, "whither do you go?"

The Leather-stocking, who had imbibed, unconsciously, many of the Indian qualities, though he always thought of himself as of a civilized being, compared with even the Delawares, averted his face to conceal the workings of his muscles, as he stooped to lift a large pack from behind the tomb, which he placed deliberately on his shoulders.

"Go!" exclaimed Elizabeth, approaching him with a hurried step; "you should not venture so far in the woods alone, at your time of life, Natty; indeed, it is imprudent. He is bent, Effingham, on some distant hunting."

"What Mrs. Effingham tells you is true, Leather-stocking," said Edwards; "there can be no necessity for your submitting to such hardships now! So throw aside your pack, and confine your hunt to the mountains near us, if you will go."

"Hardship! 'tis a pleasure, children, and the greatest that is left me on this side the grave."

"No, no; you shall not go to such a distance," cried Elizabeth, laying her white hand on his deer-skin pack—"I am right! I feel his camp-kettle, and a canister of powder! he must not be suffered to wander so far from us, Oliver; remember how suddenly Mohegan dropped away."

"I know'd the parting would come hard, children; I know'd it would!" said Natty, "and so I got aside to look at the graves by myself, and thought if I left ye the keepsake which the Major gave me when we first parted in the woods, ye wouldn't take it unkind, but would know, that, let the old man's body go where it might, his feelings stayed behind him."

"This means something more than common!" exclaimed the youth; "where is it, Natty, that you purpose going?"

The hunter drew nigh him with a confident, reasoning air, as if what he had to say would silence all objections, and replied—

"Why, lad, they tell me, that on the big lakes there's the best of hunting, and a great range, without a white man on it, unless it may be one like myself. I'm weary of living in clearings, and where the hammer is sounding in my ears from sunrise to sundown. And though I'm

much bound to ye both, children—I wouldn't say it if it was not true—I crave to go into the woods ag'in, I do."

"Woods!" echoed Elizabeth, trembling with her feelings; "do you not call these endless forests woods?"

"Ah! child, these be nothing to a man that's used to the wilderness. I have took but little comfort sin' your father come on with his settlers; but I wouldn't go far, while the life was in the body that lies under the sod there. But now he's gone, and Chingachgook is gone; and you be both young and happy. Yes! the big house has rung with merriment this month past! And now, I thought, was the time to try to get a little comfort in the close of my days. Woods! indeed! I doesn't call these woods, Madam Effingham, where I lose myself every day of my life in the clearings."

"If there be anything wanting to your comfort, name it, Leather-stocking; if it be attainable it is yours."

"You mean all for the best, lad; I know it; and so does Madam, too: but your ways isn't my ways. 'Tis like the dead there, who thought, when the breath was in them, that one went east, and one went west, to find their heavens; but they'll meet at last; and so shall we, children. Yes, ind as you've begun, and we shall meet in the land of the just at last."

"This is so new! so unexpected!" said Elizabeth, in almost breathless excitement; "I had thought you meant to live with us and die with us, Natty."

"Words are of no avail," exclaimed her husband; "the habits of forty years are not to be dispossessed by the ties of a day. I know you too well to urge you further, Natty; unless you will let me build you a hut on one of the distant hills, where we can sometimes see you, and know that you are comfortable."

"Don't fear for the Leather-stocking, children; God will see that his days be provided for, and his ind happy. I know you mean all for the best, but our ways doesn't agree. I love the woods, and ye relish the face of man; I eat when hungry, and drink when a-dry; and ye keep stated hours and rules: nay, nay, you even over-feed the dogs, lad, from pure kindness; and hounds should be gaunty to run well. The meanest of God's creaters be made for some use, and I'm formed for the wilderness; if ye love me, let me go where my soul craves to be ag'in!"

The appeal was decisive; and not another word of entreaty for him to remain was then uttered; but Elizabeth bent her head to her bosom and wept, while her husband dashed away the tears from his eyes; and, with hands that almost refused to perform their office, he produced his pocket-book, and extended a parcel of bank-notes to the hunter.

"Take these," he said, "at least take these; secure them about your person, and in the hour of need, they will do you good service."

The old man took the notes, and examined them with a curious eye.

"This, then, is some of the new-fashioned money that they've been making at Albany, out of paper! It can't be worth much to they that hasn't larning! No, no, lad—take back the stuff; it will do me no sarvice. I took kear to get all the Frenchman's powder afore he broke up, and they say lead grows where I'm going. It isn't even fit for wads, seeing that I use none but leather!—Madam Effingham, let an old man kiss your hand, and wish God's choicest blessings on you and your'n."

"Once more let me beseech you, stay!" cried Elizabeth. "Do not, Leather-stocking, leave me to grieve for the man who has twice rescued me from death, and who has served those I love so faithfully. For my sake, if not for your own, stay. I shall see you in those frightful dreams that still haunt my nights, dying in poverty and age, by the side of those terrific beasts you slew. There will be no evil, that sickness, want, and solitude can inflict, that my fancy will not conjure as your fate. Stay with us, old man, if not for your own sake, at least for ours."

"Such thoughts and bitter dreams, Madam Effingham," returned the hunter, solemnly, "will never haunt an innocent parson long. They'll pass away with God's pleasure. And if the cat-a-mounts be yet brought to your eyes in sleep, 'tis not for my sake, but to show you the power of Him that led me there to save you. Trust in God, Madam, and your honorable husband, and the thoughts for an old man like me can never be long nor bitter. I pray that the Lord will keep you in mind—the Lord that lives in clearings as well as in the wilderness—and bless you, and all that belong to you, from this time till the great day when the whites shall meet the red-skins in judgment, and justice shall be the law, and not power."

Elizabeth raised her head, and offered her colorless cheek to his salute, when he lifted his cap and touched it respectfully. His hand was grasped with convulsive

fervor by the youth, who continued silent. The hunter prepared himself for his journey, drawing his belt tighter, and wasting his moments in the little reluctant movements of a sorrowful departure. Once or twice he essayed to speak, but a rising in his throat prevented it. At length he shouldered his rifle, and cried with a clear huntsman's call that echoed through the woods—

"He-e-e-re, he-e-e-re, pups—away, dogs, away;—ye'll be footsore afore ye see the ind of the journey!"

The hounds leaped from the earth at this cry, and scenting around the graves and the silent pair, as if conscious of their own destination, they followed humbly at the heels of their master. A short pause succeeded, during which even the youth concealed his face on his grandfather's tomb. When the pride of manhood, however, had suppressed the feelings of nature, he turned to renew his entreaties, but saw that the cemetery was occupied only by himself and his wife.

"He is gone!" cried Effingham.

Elizabeth raised her face, and saw the old hunter standing, looking back for a moment, on the verge of the wood. As he caught their glances, he drew his hard hand hastily across his eyes again, waved it on high for an adieu, and uttering a forced cry to his dogs, who were crouching at his feet, he entered the forest.

This was the last that they ever saw of the Leather-stocking, whose rapid movements preceded the pursuit which Judge Temple both ordered and conducted. He had gone far toward the setting sun,—the foremost in that band of pioneers who are opening the way for the march of the nation across the continent.

1822·1823

POE

Edgar Allan Poe

1809 · 1849

Probably more than any other American author, Edgar Allan Poe—as a personality—has appealed to popular imagination. Generally, people think of him as a figure who might have emerged from one of his stories or poems—mysterious, wild, abnormal. There are, to be sure, elements of strangeness in the life of this neurotic genius. But it is dangerous to guess that his tales were merely autobiographical exploitations of his weird way of living. For one thing, it is easy to see that he deliberately tried to make people look upon him as a Byronic, enigmatic poet. For another, his highly logical criticisms and the tales themselves show that he used his extraordinary mind to work out his literary effects with almost mathematical exactitude.

Poe's tragic life was a product of bad luck and instability. The son of a wandering theatrical family, he was orphaned at two and became the ward of the John Allan family of Richmond, Virginia. Never legally adopted, he could not live quite the normal life of a son in a well-to-do family. Although in his early years both Mr. and Mrs. Allan did what they could to spoil him, friction grew between him and his foster father until he was withdrawn from the University of Virginia after less than a year of attendance. There followed a period of service in the army (1827-1829), an unhappy brief career at West Point (1830-1831), and a final break with Allan (1832).

Before the break Poe had published three books of



poetry—*Tamerlane and Other Poems* (1827), *Al Aaraaf, Tamerlane, and Minor Poems* (1829), and *Poems* (Second Edition, 1831)—none very successful financially. Now driven to try to make a living with his pen, he began writing tales. A sign that he had some success was that one of them, "The MS. Found in a Bottle," won a one-hundred-dollar prize in 1833. Befriended by one of the contest judges, John Pendleton Kennedy (p. 1115), he began a career as editor, serving on the staff of the *Southern Literary Messenger* (1835-1837), *Burton's Gentleman's Magazine* (1839), *Graham's Magazine* (1841-1842), and other periodicals. Other tales won repute for him, and he was an alert and canny editor; but his fiery temper and his instability worked against his success.

Although Poe was not at all times the brooding, gloomy person tradition has painted, his life was on the whole an unhappy one. In 1831 he found a home with Mrs. Maria Clemm, mother of Poe's cousin, Virginia—a home in which poverty and sickness had made life hard. In 1835 he married thirteen-year-old Virginia, a fragile child who suffered from a devastating illness destined to end her life when she was twenty-six. To forget home troubles or what seemed bad treatment by the world, Poe periodically went on drinking sprees which completely disorganized his high-strung nerves. Between such outbreaks there were periods of sorrowful remorse. Proud because of his aristocratic upbringing and because of the high opinion he had of his abilities, he was bitter about not doing better in the world. Even in 1845, after he had won wide popularity, a collection of his verse, *The Raven and Other Poems*, and a volume of his stories, *Tales of the Grotesque and Arabesque*, did not have much financial success He died, in mysterious circumstances, in Baltimore, October 7, 1849.

When Poe was about to start his career as a writer of tales, he evidently studied successful magazine stories with great care to find a formula for marketable fiction. He saw that, because of a complicated international copyright situation, the most remunerative market was the one for short narratives. He also found that in all the magazines—even the delicate *Godey's Lady's Book*—the tale of terror was thriving. Using the keen mind which eventually was to make him the outstanding journalistic critic of his day, he figured out a highly successful way of contriving such tales. This formula was that of the single effect, set forth in his "Review of *Twice-Told Tales*." The writer of a tale, Poe held, should subordinate everything in it to the effect he wanted the narrative to have upon the reader. This formula he employed so well that the tales he wrote have outlasted all the less skillful narratives which originally had been his models. Two elements in the tales chiefly accounted for their success: the climactic arrangement of happenings in them and a poetic style appropriate to their unfolding.

Panel (l. to r.): The University of Virginia • Edgar Allan Poe at 32 • "On the pallid bust of Pallas . . ." • Poe's cottage at Fordham • Helen Whitman and Poe

This poetic style and a similar "single effect" formula were also important in molding Poe's poems. Using words carefully chosen for their connotations and making the most of his mastery of rhythm and tone color, he wrote a number of memorable lyrics. Some of these are too showy in technique, too deliberately blurred in meaning to satisfy modern taste; but others, such as "Romance," "To Helen," "Israfel," and "To One in Paradise," still stand as masterpieces of their kind.

Complete Works of Edgar Allan Poe, 17 vols., ed. J. A. Harrison, New York, 1902 • **The Poems of Edgar Allan Poe,** ed. Killis Campbell, Boston, 1917 • Killis Campbell, **The Mind of Poe,** Cambridge, 1933
A. H. Quinn, **Edgar Allan Poe,** New York, 1941

Review of "Twice-Told Tales"

Since Poe's critical writings are of peculiar value in explaining the nature of his works, and are particularly useful for the study of his technical skill, they are presented before the selections from the creative writings themselves. The tales and then the poems follow, each group chronologically arranged.

The criticism of Hawthorne's book typifies Poe's overwhelming interest in "effect"—the impact which a work has upon the reader—an interest which leads him not only to rank Hawthorne as an essayist in exactly the way he does but also to give essays, poems, and tales their respective ranks in a literary hierarchy. Even the talk about originality is talk about effect, since Poe thought of originality—as he said elsewhere—as "the reader's sense of the new." And clearly, poems are given their preëminent place because they have the greatest effect upon the highest faculty of the reader.

The most famous passage in this essay is the paragraph beginning with the words, "A skilful literary artist has constructed a tale"—a passage almost inevitably quoted in any book on the short story. Here, very specifically, Poe asserts that everything in a tale—every incident, every combination of events, every word—must aid the author in achieving a preconceived emotional effect. In a revision of the passage five years later, Poe was to make the second sentence even more specific by revising it to read in part: "He then invents such incidents, he then combines such events, and **discusses them in such tone** as may best serve him in establishing this preconceived effect." (The darker type indicates the addition.) What Poe means by "tone" perhaps was indicated in an earlier article in which he noted that Hawthorne's "tone is singularly effective—wild, plaintive, thoughtful, and in full accordance with his themes."

This review was published in **Graham's Magazine,** May 1842. Parts of it were revised and included in an article, "Tale-Writing," in **Godey's Lady's Book,** November 1847, which shows some interesting modifications of Poe's judgments of Hawthorne.

We said a few hurried words about Mr. Hawthorne in our last number, with the design of speaking more fully in the present. We are still, however, pressed for room, and must necessarily discuss his volumes more briefly and more at random than their high merits deserve.

The book professes to be a collection of *tales,* yet is, in two respects, misnamed. These pieces are now in their third republication, and, of course, are thrice-told. Moreover, they are by no means *all* tales, either in the ordinary or in the legitimate understanding of the term. Many of them are pure essays; for example, "Sights from a Steeple," "Sunday at Home," "Little Annie's Ramble," "A Rill from the Town Pump," "The Toll-Gatherer's

1 **a few . . . words,** in a notice published in the April issue of **Graham's Magazine,** now available in **Works,** ed. Harrison (hereafter referred to as **Works**), XI, 102-104. The earlier review makes several of the same points made by the later one. It is notable, however, that in the first review Poe says that, despite its fame, "A Rill from the Town Pump" is "the least meritorious" of Hawthorne's compositions and that the best include, in addition to those cited in this second review, "David Swan"

Day," "The Haunted Mind," "The Sister Years," "Snow-Flakes," "Night Sketches," and "Foot-Prints on the Sea-Shore." We mention these matters chiefly on account of their discrepancy with that marked precision and finish by which the body of the work is distinguished.

Of the essays just named, we must be content to speak in brief. They are each and all beautiful, without being characterised by the polish and adaptation so visible in the tales proper. A painter would at once note their leading or predominant feature, and style it *repose.* There is no attempt at effect. All is quiet, thoughtful, subdued. Yet this repose may exist simultaneously with high originality of thought; and Mr. Hawthorne has demonstrated the fact. At every turn we meet with novel combinations; yet these combinations never surpass the limits of the quiet. We are soothed as we read; and withal is a calm astonishment that ideas so apparently obvious have never occurred or been presented to us before. Herein our author differs materially from Lamb or Hunt or Hazlitt—who, with vivid originality of manner and expression, have less of the true novelty of thought than is generally supposed, and whose originality, at best, has an uneasy and meretricious quaintness, replete with startling effects unfounded in nature, and inducing trains of reflection which lead to no satisfactory result. The Essays of Hawthorne have much of the character of Irving, with more of originality, and less of finish; while, compared with the Spectator, they have a vast superiority at all points. The Spectator, Mr. Irving, and Mr. Hawthorne have in common that tranquil and subdued manner which we have chosen to denominate *repose;* but, in the case of the two former, this repose is attained rather by the absence of novel combination, or of originality, than otherwise, and consists chiefly in the calm, quiet, unostentatious expression of common-place thoughts, in an unambitious, unadulterated Saxon. In them, by strong effort, we are made to conceive the absence of all. In the essays before us the absence of effort is too obvious to be mistaken, and a strong under current of *suggestion* runs continuously beneath the upper stream of the tranquil thesis. In short, these effusions of Mr. Hawthorne are the product of a truly imaginative intellect, restrained, and in some measure repressed, by fastidiousness of taste, by constitutional melancholy and by indolence.

But it is of his tales that we desire principally to speak. The tale proper, in our opinion, affords unquestionably the fairest field for the exercise of the loftiest talent, which can be afforded by the wide domains of mere prose. Were we bidden to say how the highest genius could be most advantageously employed for the best display of its own powers, we should answer, without hesitation—in the composition of a rhymed poem, not to exceed in length what might be perused in an hour. Within this limit alone can the highest order of true poetry exist. We need only here say, upon this topic, that, in almost all classes of composition, the unity of effect or impression is a point of the greatest importance. It is clear, moreover, that this unity cannot be thoroughly preserved in productions whose perusal cannot be completed at one sitting. We may continue the reading of a prose composition, from the very nature of prose itself, much longer than we can persevere, to any good purpose, in the perusal of a poem. This latter, if truly fulfilling the demands of the poetic sentiment, induces an exaltation of the soul which cannot be long sustained. All high excitements are necessarily transient. Thus a long poem is a paradox. And, without unity of impression, the deepest effects cannot be brought about. Epics were the offspring of an imperfect sense of Art, and their reign is no more. A poem *too* brief may produce a vivid, but never an intense or enduring impression. Without a certain continuity of effort—without a certain duration or repetition of purpose—the soul is never deeply moved. There must be the dropping of the water upon the rock. De Beranger has wrought brilliant things—pungent and spirit-stirring—but, like all immassive bodies, they lack *momentum,* and thus fail to satisfy the Poetic Sentiment. They sparkle and excite, but, from want of continuity, fail deeply to impress. Extreme brevity will degenerate into epigrammatism; but the sin of extreme length is even more unpardonable. *In medio tutissimus ibis.*

Were we called upon, however, to designate that class of composition which, next to such a poem as we have suggested, should best fulfil the demands of high genius —should offer it the most advantageous field of exertion—we should unhesitatingly speak of the prose tale,

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76 **De Beranger,** Pierre Jean de Béranger (1780-1857), a French poet • 83 **In medio . . . ibis.** You will go most safely in the middle path

as Mr. Hawthorne has here exemplified it. We allude to the short prose narrative, requiring from a half-hour to one or two hours in its perusal. The ordinary novel is objectionable, from its length, for reasons already stated in substance. As it cannot be read at one sitting, it deprives itself, of course, of the immense force derivable from *totality.* Worldly interests intervening during the pauses of perusal, modify, annul, or counteract, in a greater or less degree, the impressions of the book. But simple cessation in reading, would, of itself, be sufficient to destroy the true unity. In the brief tale, however, the author is enabled to carry out the fullness of his intention, be it what it may. During the hour of perusal the soul of the reader is at the writer's control. There are no external or extrinsic influences—resulting from weariness or interruption.

A skilful literary artist has constructed a tale. If wise, he has not fashioned his thoughts to accommodate his incidents; but having conceived, with deliberate care, a certain unique or single *effect* to be wrought out, he then invents such incidents—he then combines such events as may best aid him in establishing this preconceived effect. If his very initial sentence tend not to the outbringing of this effect, then he has failed in his first step. In the whole composition there should be no word written, of which the tendency, direct or indirect, is not to the one preestablished design. And by such means, with such care and skill, a picture is at length painted which leaves in the mind of him who contemplates it with a kindred art, a sense of the fullest satisfaction. The idea of the tale has been presented unblemished, because undisturbed; and this is an end unattainable by the novel. Undue brevity is just as exceptional here as in the poem; but undue length is yet more to be avoided.

We have said that the tale has a point of superiority even over the poem. In fact, while the *rhythm* of this latter is an essential aid in the development of the poet's highest idea—the idea of the Beautiful—the artificialities of this rhythm are an inseparable bar to the development of all points of thought or expression which have their basis in *Truth.* But Truth is often, and in very great degree, the aim of the tale. Some of the finest tales are tales of ratiocination. Thus the field of this species of composition, if not in so elevated a region on the mountain of Mind, is a table-land of far vaster extent than the domain of the mere poem. Its products are never so rich, but infinitely more numerous, and more appreciable by the mass of mankind. The writer of the prose tale, in short, may bring to his theme a vast variety of modes or inflections of thought and expression—(the ratiocinative, for example, the sarcastic, or the humorous) which are not only antagonistical to the nature of the poem, but absolutely forbidden by one of its most peculiar and indispensable adjuncts; we allude, of course, to rhythm. It may be added here, *par parenthèse,* that the author who aims at the purely beautiful in a prose tale is laboring at great disadvantage. For Beauty can be better treated in a poem. Not so with terror, or passion, or horror, or a multitude of such other points. And here it will be seen how full of prejudice are the usual animadversions against those *tales of effect,* many fine examples of which were found in the earlier numbers of Blackwood. The impressions produced were wrought in a legitimate sphere of action, and constituted a legitimate although sometimes an exaggerated interest. They were relished by every man of genius; although there were found many men of genius who condemned them without just ground. The true critic will but demand that the design intended be accomplished, to the fullest extent, by the means most advantageously applicable.

We have very few American tales of real merit—we may say, indeed, none, with the exception of "The Tales of a Traveller" of Washington Irving, and these "Twice-Told Tales" of Mr. Hawthorne. Some of the pieces of Mr. John Neal abound in vigor and originality; but in general, his compositions of this class are excessively diffuse, extravagant, and indicative of an imperfect sentiment of Art. Articles at random are, now and then, met with in our periodicals which might be advantageously compared with the best effusions of the British Magazines; but, upon the whole, we are far behind our progenitors in this department of literature.

Of Mr. Hawthorne's Tales we would say, emphatically, that they belong to the highest region of Art—an Art

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56 **par parenthèse,** by way of parenthesis • 64 **Blackwood,** a magazine in which Poe found a great deal of Gothic fiction. A tale which he wrote "à la Blackwood" parodied the Gothic technique • 76 **Mr. John Neal** (1793-1876), an American fiction writer

subservient to genius of a very lofty order. We had supposed, with good reason for so supposing, that he had been thrust into his present position by one of the impudent *cliques* which beset our literature, and whose pretensions it is our full purpose to expose at the earliest opportunity; but we have been most agreeably mistaken. We know of few compositions which the critic can more honestly commend than these "Twice-Told Tales." As Americans, we feel proud of the book.

Mr. Hawthorne's distinctive trait is invention, creation, imagination, originality—a trait which, in the literature of fiction, is positively worth all the rest. But the nature of originality, so far as regards its manifestation in letters, is but imperfectly understood. The invective or original mind as frequently displays itself in novelty of *tone* as in novelty of matter. Mr. Hawthorne is original at *all* points.

It would be a matter of some difficulty to designate the best of these tales; we repeat that, without exception, they are beautiful. "Wakefield" is remarkable for the skill with which an old idea—a well-known incident—is worked up or discussed. A man of whims conceives the purpose of quitting his wife and residing *incognito,* for twenty years, in her immediate neighborhood. Something of this kind actually happened in London. The force of Mr. Hawthorne's tale lies in the analysis of the motives which must or might have impelled the husband to such folly, in the first instance, with the possible causes of his perseverance. Upon this thesis a sketch of singular power has been constructed.

"The Wedding Knell" is full of the boldest imagination—an imagination fully controlled by taste. The most captious critic could find no flaw in this production.

"The Minister's Black Veil" is a masterly composition of which the sole defect is that to the rabble its exquisite skill will be *caviare.* The *obvious* meaning of this article will be found to smother its insinuated one. The *moral* put into the mouth of the dying minister will be supposed to convey the *true* import of the narrative; and that a crime of dark dye (having reference to the "young lady"), has been committed, is a point which only minds congenial with that of the author will perceive.

"Mr. Higginbotham's Catastrophe" is vividly original and managed most dexterously.

"Dr. Heidegger's Experiment" is exceedingly well imagined, and executed with surpassing ability. The artist breathes in every line of it.

"The White Old Maid" is objectionable, even more than the "Minister's Black Veil," on the score of its mysticism. Even with the thoughtful and analytic, there will be much trouble in penetrating its entire import.

"The Hollow of the Three Hills" we would quote in full, had we space;—not as evincing higher talent than any of the other pieces, but as affording an excellent example of the author's peculiar ability. The subject is commonplace. A witch subjects the Distant and the Past to the view of a mourner. It has been the fashion to describe, in such cases, a mirror in which the images of the absent appear; or a cloud of smoke is made to arise, and thence the figures are gradually unfolded. Mr. Hawthorne has wonderfully heightened his effect by making the ear, in place of the eye, the medium by which the fantasy is conveyed. The head of the mourner is enveloped in the cloak of the witch, and within its magic folds there arise sounds which have an all-sufficient intelligence. Throughout this article also, the artist is conspicuous—not more in positive than in negative merits. Not only is all done that should be done, but (what perhaps is an end with more difficulty attained) there is nothing done which should not be. Every word *tells,* and there is not a word that does *not* tell. . . .

In the way of objection we have scarcely a word to say of these tales. There is, perhaps, a somewhat too general or prevalent *tone*—a tone of melancholy and mysticism. The subjects are insufficiently varied. There is not so much of *versatility* evinced as we might well be warranted in expecting from the high powers of Mr. Hawthorne. But beyond these trivial exceptions we have really none to make. The style is purity itself. Force abounds. High imagination gleams from every page. Mr. Hawthorne is a man of the truest genius. We only regret that the limits of our Magazine will not permit us to pay him that full tribute of commendation, which, under other circumstances, we should be so eager to pay.

1842

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70 Every word . . . tell . . . . The omitted passage hints that Hawthorne plagiarized from Poe in "Howe's Masquerade." The accusation is unfounded

The Philosophy of Composition

What the "Review of **Twice-Told Tales**" does for Poe's theory of the tale, this essay does for his theory of the poem. Here is his account of the way he composed his most famous poem, "The Raven." Critics have argued interminably about the accuracy of this account, and of course there is no way of settling the dispute. Three points perhaps are worthy of emphasis: (1) that in the essay Poe himself labels irrelevant the primary circumstance or the necessity of composing the poem, thus dismissing in a curt paragraph an aspect of the poetic process with which literary historians are frequently most concerned; (2) that the account is perfectly in harmony with Poe's theories about the nature of artistic creations; (3) that, as Mr. Hervey Allen points out in his biography of Poe, **Israfel**: "The long period over which the composition of 'The Raven' stretched, a period of four years at least, shows that into the arrangement and composition of it went a great deal of critical thinking, artistic analysis, a logical arrangement of effects, and a painstaking construction of the spinal narrative which no mere emotion could have provided."

Whether the account is factual or not, it does suggest what its author was likely to have in mind as he composed or studied a poem: the relationship between happenings, details, rhythms, refrains—everything in the poem—and the effect. Moreover, this essay, which Poe called "my best specimen of analysis," offers an excellent example of his critical mind at work.

Charles Dickens, in a note now lying before me, alluding to an examination I once made of the mechanism of "Barnaby Rudge," says—"By the way, are you aware that Godwin wrote his 'Caleb Williams' backwards? He first involved his hero in a web of difficulties, forming the second volume, and then, for the first, cast about him for some mode of accounting for what had been done."

I cannot think this the *precise* mode of procedure on the part of Godwin—and indeed what he himself acknowledges is not altogether in accordance with Mr. Dickens's idea; but the author of "Caleb Williams" was too good an artist not to perceive the advantage derivable from at least a somewhat similar process. Nothing is more clear than that every plot, worth the name, must be elaborated to its *dénouement* before anything be attempted with the pen. It is only with the *dénouement* constantly in view that we can give a plot its indispensable air of consequence, or causation, by making the incidents, and especially the tone at all points, tend to the development of the intention.

There is a radical error, I think, in the usual mode of constructing a story. Either history affords a thesis, or one is suggested by an incident of the day, or, at best, the author sets himself to work, in the combination of striking events to form merely the basis of his narrative, designing, generally, to fill in with description, dialogue, or autorial comment whatever crevices of fact or action may from page to page render themselves apparent.

I prefer commencing with the consideration of an *effect*. Keeping originality *always* in view—for he is false to himself who ventures to dispense with so obvious and so easily attainable a source of interest—I say to myself, in the first place,—"Of the innumerable effects, or impressions, of which the heart, the intellect, or (more generally) the soul is susceptible, what one shall I, on the present occasion, select?" Having chosen a novel, first, and secondly a vivid effect, I consider whether it can be best wrought by incident or tone—whether by ordinary incidents and peculiar tone, or the converse, or by peculiarity both of incident and tone—afterward

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2 an examination . . . made, "a prospective review," published in 1841, of **Barnaby Rudge**, when the novel was still coming out serially. Poe guessed the identity of the murderer and thus proved that Dickens had not deceived the reader as the author of a ratiocinative tale should do • 4 Godwin. William Godwin testifies in the Preface to **Caleb Williams** that he wrote the book thus: "I formed the conception of a book of fictitious adventure, that should in some way be distinguished by a very powerful interest. Pursuing this idea, I invented first the third volume of my tale, then the second, and last of all the first . . ." • 15 **dénouement**, from the French **dénouer**—to untie; hence, the unraveling of a plot

looking about me (or rather within) for such combinations of event, or tone, as shall best aid me in the construction of the effect.

I have often thought how interesting a magazine paper might be written by any author who would—that is to say, who could—detail, step by step, the processes by which any one of his compositions attained its ultimate point of completion. Why such a paper has never been given to the world, I am much at a loss to say; but, perhaps, the authorial vanity has had more to do with the omission than any one other cause. Most writers—poets in especial—prefer having it understood that they compose by a species of fine frenzy—an ecstatic intuition; and would positively shudder at letting the public take a peep behind the scenes at the elaborate and vacillating crudities of thought, at the true purposes seized only at the last moment, at the innumerable glimpses of idea that arrived not at the maturity of full view, at the fully matured fancies discarded in despair as unmanageable, at the cautious selections and rejections, at the painful erasures and interpolations—in a word, at the wheels and pinions, the tackle for scene-shifting, the step-ladders and demon-traps, the cock's feathers, the red paint and the black patches, which in ninety-nine cases out of the hundred constitute the properties of the literary *histrio*.

I am aware, on the other hand, that the case is by no means common in which an author is at all in condition to retrace the steps by which his conclusions have been attained. In general, suggestions, having arisen pell-mell, are pursued and forgotten in a similar manner.

For my own part, I have neither sympathy with the repugnance alluded to, nor at any time the least difficulty in recalling to mind the progressive steps of any of my compositions; and, since the interest of an analysis, or reconstruction, such as I have considered a *desideratum*, is quite independent of any real or fancied interest in the thing analyzed, it will not be regarded as a breach of decorum on my part to show the *modus operandi* by which some one of my own works was put together. I select "The Raven" as most generally known. It is my design to render it manifest that no one point in its composition is referable either to accident or intuition; that the work proceeded, step by step, to its completion with the precision and rigid consequence of a mathematical problem.

Let us dismiss, as irrelevant to the poem *per se*, the circumstance—or say, the necessity—which in the first place gave rise to the intention of composing *a* poem that should suit at once the popular and the critical taste.

We commence, then, with this intention.

The initial consideration was that of extent. If any literary work is too long to be read at one sitting, we must be content to dispense with the immensely important effect derivable from unity of impression; for, if two sittings be required, the affairs of the world interfere, and everything like totality is at once destroyed. But since, *ceteris paribus*, no poet can afford to dispense with *anything* that may advance his design, it but remains to be seen whether there is, in extent, any advantage to counterbalance the loss of unity which attends it. Here I say no, at once. What we term a long poem is, in fact, merely a succession of brief ones—that is to say, of brief poetical effects. It is needless to demonstrate that a poem is such, only inasmuch as it intensely excites, by elevating, the soul; and all intense excitements are, through a psychal necessity, brief. For this reason, at least one half of the "Paradise Lost" is essentially prose—a succession of poetical excitements interspersed, *inevitably*, with corresponding depressions—the whole being deprived, through the extremeness of its length, of the vastly important artistic element, totality, or unity, of effect.

It appears evident, then, that there is a distinct limit, as regards length, to all works of literary art—the limit of a single sitting; and that, although in certain classes of prose composition, such as "Robinson Crusoe" (demanding no unity), this limit may be advantageously overpassed, it can never properly be overpassed in a poem. Within this limit, the extent of a poem may be made to bear mathematical relation to its merit—in other words, to the excitement or elevation—again, in other words, to the degree of the true poetical effect which it is capable of inducing; for it is clear that the brevity must be in direct ratio of the intensity of the intended effect:—this, with one proviso—that a certain

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26 **histrio,** actor • 39 **modus operandi,** method of working • 47 **per se,** by itself • 58 **ceteris paribus,** other things being equal • 67 **psychal,** psychological. The necessity for brevity in poetry, for the reason suggested in this sentence, is one of Poe's favorite ideas

degree of duration is absolutely requisite for the production of any effect at all.

Holding in view these considerations, as well as that degree of excitement which I deemed not above the popular while not below the critical taste, I reached at once what I conceived the proper *length* for my intended poem—a length of about one hundred lines. It is, in fact, a hundred and eight.

My next thought concerned the choice of an impression, or effect, to be conveyed: and here I may as well observe that, throughout the construction, I kept steadily in view the design of rendering the work *universally* appreciable. I should be carried too far out of my immediate topic were I to demonstrate a point upon which I have repeatedly insisted, and which with the poetical stands not in the slightest need of demonstration—the point, I mean, that Beauty is the sole legitimate province of the poem. A few words, however, in elucidation of my real meaning, which some of my friends have evinced a disposition to misrepresent. That pleasure which is at once the most intense, the most elevating, and the most pure, is, I believe, found in the contemplation of the beautiful. When, indeed, men speak of Beauty, they mean, precisely, not a quality, as is supposed, but an effect; they refer, in short, just to that intense and pure elevation of *soul—not* of intellect, or of heart—upon which I have commented, and which is experienced in consequence of contemplating "the beautiful." Now I designate Beauty as the province of the poem, merely because it is an obvious rule of Art that effects should be made to spring from direct causes—that objects should be attained through means best adapted for their attainment—on one as yet having been weak enough to deny that the peculiar elevation alluded to is *most readily* attained in the poem. Now the object, Truth, or the satisfaction of the intellect, and the object, Passion, or the excitement of the heart, are, although attainable to a certain extent in poetry, far more readily attainable in prose. Truth, in fact, demands a precision, and Passion a *homeliness* (the truly passionate will comprehend me), which are absolutely antagonistic to that Beauty which, I maintain, is the excitement or pleasurable elevation, of the soul. It by no means follows from anything here said that passion, or even truth, may not be introduced, and even profitably introduced, into a poem—for they may serve in elucidation, or aid the general effect, as do discords in music, by contrast; but the true artist will always contrive, first, to tone them into proper subservience to the predominant aim, and, secondly, to enveil them, as far as possible, in that Beauty which is the atmosphere and the essence of the poem.

Regarding, then, Beauty as my province, my next question referred to the *tone* of its highest manifestation; and all experience has shown that this tone is one of *sadness.* Beauty of whatever kind, in its supreme development, invariably excites the sensitive soul to tears. Melancholy is thus the most legitimate of all poetical tones.

The length, the province, and the tone, being thus determined, I betook myself to ordinary induction, with the view of obtaining some artistic piquancy which might serve me as a key-note in the construction of the poem—some pivot upon which the whole structure might turn. In carefully thinking over all the usual artistic effects—I did not fail to perceive immediately that no one had been so universally employed as that of the *refrain.* The universality of its employment sufficed to assure me of its intrinsic value, and spared me the necessity of submitting it to analysis. I considered it, however, with regard to its susceptibility of improvement, and soon saw it to be in a primitive condition. As commonly used, the *refrain,* or burden, not only is limited to lyric verse, but depends for its impression upon the force of monotone—both in sound and thought. The pleasure is deduced solely from the sense of identity —of repetition. I resolved to diversify, and so heighten, the effect, by adhering, in general, to the monotone of sound, while I continually varied that of thought: that is to say, I determined to produce continuously novel effects, by the variation of *the application* of the *refrain*—the refrain itself remaining, for the most part, unvaried.

These points being settled, I next bethought me of the *nature* of my *refrain.* Since its application was to be repeatedly varied, it was clear that the *refrain* itself must be brief, for there would have been an insurmountable difficulty in frequent variations of application in

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17 **Beauty . . . .** Compare Poe's statement, in "The Poetic Principle": "I would define, in brief, the Poetry of words as **The Rhythmical Creation of Beauty.** Its sole arbiter is Taste. With the Intellect or with the Conscience, it has only collateral relations. Unless incidentally, it has no concern whatever either with Duty or with Truth"

any sentence of length. In proportion to the brevity of the sentence, would, of course, be the facility of the variation. This led me at once to a single word as the best *refrain.*

The question now arose as to the *character* of the word. Having made up my mind to a *refrain,* the division of the poem into stanzas was, of course, a corollary: the *refrain* forming the close to each stanza. That such a close, to have force, must be sonorous and susceptible of protracted emphasis, admitted no doubt; and these considerations inevitably led me to the long *o* as the most sonorous vowel in connection with *r* as the most producible consonant.

The sound of the *refrain* being thus determined, it became necessary to select a word embodying this sound and at the same time in the fullest possible keeping with that melancholy which I had predetermined as the tone of the poem. In such a search it would have been absolutely impossible to overlook the word "Nevermore." In fact, it was the very first which presented itself.

The next desideratum was a pretext for the continuous use of the one word "Nevermore." In observing the difficulty which I at once found in inventing a sufficiently plausible reason for its continuous repetition, I did not fail to perceive that this difficulty arose solely from the pre-assumption that the word was to be so continuously or monotonously spoken by a *human* being; I did not fail to perceive, in short, that the difficulty lay in the reconciliation of this monotony with the exercise of reason on the part of the creature repeating the word. Here, then, immediately arose the idea of a *non*-reasoning creature capable of speech; and, very naturally, a parrot, in the first instance, suggested itself, but was superseded forthwith by a Raven as equally capable of speech, and infinitely more in keeping with the intended *tone.*

I had now gone so far as the conception of a Raven—the bird of ill-omen—monotonously repeating the one word, "Nevermore," at the conclusion of each stanza, in a poem of melancholy tone, and in length about one hundred lines. Now, never losing sight of the object *supremeness,* or perfection, at all points, I asked myself—"Of all melancholy topics, what, according to the *universal* understanding of mankind, is the *most* melancholy?" Death—was the obvious reply. "And when," I said, "is this most melancholy of topics most poetical?" From what I have already explained at some length, the answer here also is obvious—"When it most closely allies itself to *Beauty;* the death, then, of a beautiful woman, is unquestionably, the most poetical topic in the world—and equally is it beyond doubt that the lips best suited for such a topic are those of a bereaved lover."

I had now to combine the two ideas, of a lover lamenting his deceased mistress and a Raven continuously repeating the word "Nevermore." I had to combine these, bearing in mind my design of varying at every turn the *application* of the word repeated; but the only intelligible mode of such combination is that of imagining the Raven employing the word in answer to the queries of the lover. And here it was that I saw at once the opportunity afforded for the effect on which I had been depending—that is to say, the effect of the *variation of application.* I saw that I could make the first query propounded by the lover—the first query to which the Raven should reply "Nevermore"—that I could make this first query a commonplace one, the second less so, the third still less, and so on, until at length the lover, startled from his original nonchalance by the melancholy character of the word itself, by its frequent repetition and by a consideration of the ominous reputation of the fowl that uttered it, is at length excited to superstition, and wildly propounds queries of a far different character—queries whose solution he has passionately at heart—propounds them half in superstition and half in that species of despair which delights in self-torture—propounds them, not altogether because he believes in the prophetic or demoniac character of the bird (which, reason assures him, is merely repeating a lesson learned by rote), but because he experiences a frenzied pleasure in so modelling his questions as to receive from the *expected* "Nevermore" the most delicious because the most intolerable of sorrow. Perceiving the opportunity thus afforded me—or, more strictly, thus forced upon me in the progress of the construction—I first established in mind the climax, or concluding query—that query to which "Nevermore" should be in the last place an answer—that query in reply to which this word "Nevermore" should involve the utmost conceivable amount of sorrow and despair.

Here then the poem may be said to have its beginning—at the end, where all works of art should begin—for it was here, at this point of my preconsiderations,

that I first put pen to paper in the composition of the stanza:

"Prophet," said I, "thing of evil! prophet still if bird or devil!
By that heaven that bends above us—by that God we both adore,
Tell this soul with sorrow laden, if within the distant Aidenn,
It shall clasp a sainted maiden whom the angels name Lenore—
Clasp a rare and radiant maiden whom the angels name Lenore."
Quoth the Raven, "Nevermore."

I composed this stanza, at this point, first, that by establishing the climax, I might the better vary and graduate, as regards seriousness and importance, the preceding queries of the lover; and secondly, that I might definitely settle the rhythm, the meter, and the length and general arrangement of the stanza,—as well as graduate the stanzas which were to precede, so that none of them might surpass this in rhythmical effect. Had I been able, in the subsequent composition, to construct more vigorous stanzas, I should, without scruple, have purposely enfeebled them, so as not to interfere with the climacteric effect.

And here I may as well say a few words of the versification. My first object (as usual) was originality. The extent to which this has been neglected, in versification, is one of the most unaccountable things in the world. Admitting that there is little possibility of variety in mere *rhythm,* it is still clear that the possible varieties of meter and stanza are absolutely infinite—and yet, *for centuries, no man, in verse, has ever done, or ever seemed to think of doing, an original thing.* The fact is, that originality (unless in minds of very unusual force) is by no means a matter, as some suppose, of impulse or intuition. In general, to be found, it must be elaborately sought, and although a positive merit of the highest class, demands in its attainment less of invention than negation.

Of course, I pretend to no originality in either the rhythm or meter of *The Raven.* The former is trochaic—the latter is octameter acatelectic, alternating with heptameter catalectic repeated in the refrain of the fifth verse, and terminating with tetrameter catalectic. Less pedantically—the feet employed throughout (trochees) consist of a long syllable followed by a short: the first line of the stanza consists of eight of these feet—the second of seven and a half (in effect two-thirds)—the third of eight—the fourth of seven and a half—the fifth the same—the sixth three and a half. Now, each of these lines, taken individually, has been employed before; and what originality *The Raven* has, is in their *combination into stanza;* nothing even remotely approaching this combination has ever been attempted. The effect of this originality of combination is aided by other unusual, and some altogether novel effects, arising from an extension of the application of the principles of rhyme and alliteration.

The next point to be considered was the mode of bringing together the lover and the Raven—and the first branch of this consideration was the *locale.* For this the most natural suggestion might seem to be a forest, or the fields—but it has always appeared to me that a close *circumscription of space* is absolutely necessary to the effect of insulated incident:—it has the force of a frame to a picture. It has an indisputable moral power in keeping concentrated the attention, and, of course, must not be confounded with mere unity of place.

I determined, then, to place the lover in his chamber—in a chamber rendered sacred to him by memories of her who had frequented it. The room is represented as richly furnished—this in mere pursuance of the ideas I have already explained on the subject of Beauty, as the sole true poetical thesis.

The *locale* being thus determined, I had now to introduce the bird—and the thought of introducing him through the window, was inevitable. The idea of making the lover suppose, in the first instance, that the flapping of the wings of the bird against the shutter, is a "tapping" at the door, originated in a wish to increase, by prolonging, the reader's curiosity, and in a desire to admit the incidental effect arising from the lover's throwing open the door, finding all dark, and thence adopting the half-fancy that it was the spirit of his mistress that knocked.

I made the night tempestuous, first, to account for the Raven's seeking admission, and secondly, for the effect of contrast with the (physical) serenity within the chamber.

I made the bird alight on the bust of Pallas, also for the effect of contrast between the marble and the plumage—it being understood that the bust was absolutely

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57 circumscription of space, i.e., a limitation of the scene

suggested by the bird—the bust of *Pallas* being chosen, first, as most in keeping with the scholarship of the lover, and secondly, for the sonorousness of the word, *Pallas,* itself.

About the middle of the poem, also, I have availed myself of the force of contrast, with a view of deepening the ultimate impression. For example, an air of the fantastic—approaching as nearly to the ludicrous as was admissible—is given to the Raven's entrance. He comes in "with many a flirt and flutter."

Not the *least obeisance made he*—not a moment stopped
or stayed he,
But with mien of lord or lady, perched above my chamber door.

In the two stanzas which follow, the design is more obviously carried out:—

Then this ebony bird beguiling my sad fancy into smiling
By the *grave and stern decorum of the countenance it wore,*
"Though thy *crest be shorn and shaven* thou," I said, "art sure no craven,
Ghastly grim and ancient Raven wandering from the nightly shore—
Tell me what thy lordly name is on the Night's Plutonian shore?"
Quoth the Raven, "Nevermore."

Much I marvelled *this ungainly fowl* to hear discourse so plainly
Though its answer little meaning—little relevancy bore;
For we cannot help agreeing that no living human being
Ever yet was blessed with seeing bird above his chamber door—
Bird or beast upon the sculptured bust above his chamber door,
With such name as "Nevermore."

The effect of the *dénouement* being thus provided for, I immediately drop the fantastic for a tone of the most profound seriousness—this tone commencing in the stanza directly following the one last quoted, with the line,

But the Raven, sitting lonely on that placid bust, spoke only, etc.

From this epoch the lover no longer jests—no longer sees any thing even of the fantastic in the Raven's demeanor. He speaks of him as a "grim, ungainly, ghastly, gaunt, and ominous bird of yore," and feels the "fiery eyes" burning into his "bosom's core." This revolution of thought, or fancy, on the lover's part, is intended to induce a similar one on the part of the reader—to bring the mind into a proper frame for the *dénouement*—which is now brought about as rapidly and as *directly* as possible.

With the *dénouement* proper—with the Raven's reply, "Nevermore," to the lover's final demand if he shall meet his mistress in another world—the poem, in its obvious phase, that of a simple narrative, may be said to have its completion. So far, every thing is within the limits of the accountable—of the real. A raven, having learned by rote the single word "Nevermore," and having escaped from the custody of its owner, is driven at midnight, through the violence of a storm, to seek admission at a window from which a light still gleams—the chamber-window of a student, occupied half in poring over a volume, half in dreaming of a beloved mistress deceased. The casement being thrown open at the fluttering of the bird's wings, the bird itself perches on the most convenient seat out of the immediate reach of the student, who, amused by the incident and the oddity of the visitor's demeanor, demands of it, in jest and without looking for a reply, its name. The raven addressed, answers with its customary word, "Nevermore"—a word which finds immediate echo in the melancholy heart of the student, who, giving utterance aloud to certain thoughts suggested by the occasion, is again startled by the fowl's repetition of "Nevermore." The student now guesses the state of the case, but is impelled, as I have before explained, by the human thirst for self-torture, and in part by superstition, to propound such queries to the bird as will bring him, the lover, the most of the luxury of sorrow, through the anticipated answer "Nevermore." With the indulgence, to the extreme, of this self-torture, the narration, in what I have termed its first or obvious phase, has a natural termination, and so far there has been no overstepping of the limits of the real.

But in subjects so handled, however skillfully, or with however vivid an array of incident, there is always a certain hardness or nakedness, which repels the artistical eye. Two things are invariably required—first, some amount of complexity, or more properly, adaptation; and, secondly, some amount of suggestiveness—some under-

current, however indefinite, of meaning. It is this latter, in especial, which imparts to a work of art so much of that *richness* (to borrow from colloquy a forcible term) which we are too fond of confounding with *the ideal.* It is the *excess* of the suggested meaning—it is the rendering this the upper instead of the under current of the theme—which turns into prose (and that of the very flattest kind) the so-called poetry of the so-called transcendentalists.

Holding these opinions, I added the two concluding stanzas of the poem—their suggestiveness being thus made to pervade all the narrative which has preceded them. The undercurrent of meaning is rendered first apparent in the lines—

"Take thy beak from out *my heart,* and take thy form from off my door!"
Quoth the Raven, "Nevermore!"

It will be observed that the words, "from out my heart," involve the first metaphorical expression in the poem. They, with the answer, "Nevermore," dispose the mind to seek a moral in all that has been previously narrated. The reader begins now to regard the Raven as emblematical—but it is not until the very last line of the very last stanza, that the intention of making him emblematical of *Mournful and Never-ending Remembrance* is permitted distinctly to be seen:

And the Raven, never flitting, still is sitting, still is sitting,
On the pallid bust of Pallas, just above my chamber door;
And his eyes have all the seeming of a demon's that is dreaming,
And the lamplight o'er him streaming throws his shadow on the floor;
And my soul *from out that shadow* that lies floating on the floor
Shall be lifted—nevermore.

1846

The Fall of the House of Usher

Some of the things Poe said in "The Philosophy of Composition" imply something about his methods in this most famous of his tales. "It is an obvious rule of art," he said, "that effects should be made to spring from direct causes—that objects should be attained through means best adapted for their attainment. . . ." It might be said, therefore, that, in modern psychological terms, he regarded the work of art as a stimulus setting up a response in the reader. How does this relationship come about? Another passage suggests that the reader reacts in certain ways in sympathy with a character in the story. ("This revolution of thought, or fancy, on the lover's part," said Poe, "is intended to induce **a similar one** on the part of the reader. . . .")

Thus a chain is set up: incidents in the narrative cause the character to have certain emotions, and the reader experiences similar emotions. When the character's reaction changes or develops, so does that of the reader. So that a story may be climactic, Poe may "vary and graduate, as regards seriousness and importance," the parts of his narrative. Thus a story may have two interrelated narrative strands, each climactically arranged—a set of incidents or stimuli and a set of effects or responses to those stimuli by the character and consequently by the sympathetic reader.

These details about Poe's method of constructing a story, applied to "The Fall of the House of Usher," indicate that the reader may well notice its two interrelated strands of narrative—the one dealing with the emotions of the "affected" character and the one dealing with the incidents which have the effects. Studying the character (here undoubtedly the narrator), the reader will find that though, at the beginning of the tale, the "I" of the story is disturbed by "a sense of insufferable gloom," he can stand aside, as it were, and detachedly attempt to discover why he feels as he does. But as the happenings unfold, his uneasiness changes to fear, his fear grows, and his detachment decreases, until at the end he "flees aghast" and his "brain reels" as the "walls of the house rush

asunder." Poe's assumption probably is that the record of this developing emotion arouses "in the mind of him who contemplates it with a kindred art" a similarly developing emotion.

Now the incidents in the tale, of course, should be appropriate causes for such a developing emotion. As one examines the tale, one may see in the strange appearance of the house, the actions of its mad inmate, Usher, the strange burial and return to life of Madeline, and the dissolution of the house, incidents likely to stimulate mounting terror. But a more subtle and unified thread of narrative, some of it connoted by the "tone" of the story, does even more to suggest the reason for increasing terror. This is made up of a series of increasingly weird identifications. There is an identification, for instance, between the house and its inmates, at first detachedly called by the narrator a "quaint" identification by the "peasantry" but later discovered to be something much more weird than a mere "equivocal appellation." There are the identifications between Usher and his sister, between works of art and actual happenings, and finally between the madness of Usher and the (at least momentary) madness of the narrator. These, more than the explicitly detailed incidents, account for the crescendo of horror which ends the tale.

Son coeur est un luth suspendu;
Sitot qu'on le touche il resonne.—BÉRANGER

During the whole of a dull, dark, and soundless day in the autumn of the year, when the clouds hung oppressively low in the heavens, I had been passing alone, on horseback, through a singularly dreary tract of country; and at length found myself, as the shades of the evening drew on, within view of the melancholy House of Usher. I know not how it was, but, with the first glimpse of the building, a sense of insufferable gloom pervaded my spirit. I say insufferable; for the feeling was unrelieved by any of that half pleasurable, because poetic, sentiment with which the mind usually receives even the sternest natural images of the desolate or terrible. I looked upon the scene before me—upon the mere house, and the simple landscape features of the domain, upon the bleak walls, upon the vacant eyelike windows, upon a few rank sedges, and upon a few white trunks of decayed trees—with an utter depression of soul which I can compare to no earthly sensation more properly than to the afterdream of the reveler upon opium: the bitter lapse into everyday life, the hideous dropping off of the veil. There was an iciness, a sinking, a sickening of the heart, an unredeemed dreariness of thought, which no goading of the imagination could torture into aught of the sublime. What was it—I paused to think—what was it that so unnerved me in the contemplation of the House of Usher? It was a mystery all insoluble; nor could I grapple with the shadowy fancies that crowded upon me as I pondered. I was forced to fall back upon the unsatisfactory conclusion that while, beyond doubt, there *are* combinations of very simple natural objects which have the power of thus affecting us, still the analysis of this power lies among considerations beyond our depth. It was possible, I reflected, that a mere different arrangement of the particulars of the scene, of the details of the picture, would be sufficient to modify, or perhaps to annihilate, its capacity for sorrowful impression, and, acting upon this idea, I reined my horse to the precipitous brink of a black and lurid tarn that lay in unruffled luster by the dwelling, and gazed down—but with a shudder even more thrilling than before—upon the remodeled and inverted images of the gray sedge, and the ghastly tree-stems, and the vacant and eyelike windows.

Nevertheless, in this mansion of gloom I now proposed to myself a sojourn of some weeks. Its proprietor, Roderick Usher, had been one of my boon companions in boyhood; but many years had elapsed since our last meeting. A letter, however, had lately reached me in a distant part of the country—a letter from him—which in its wildly importunate nature had admitted of no other than a personal reply. The MS. gave evidence of nervous agitation. The writer spoke of acute bodily illness, of a mental disorder which oppressed him, and of an earnest desire to see me, as his best and indeed his only personal friend, with a view of attempting, by the cheerfulness of my society, some alleviation of his malady. It was the manner in which all this, and much more, was said—it was the

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Son coeur . . . . His heart is a suspended lute which resounds as soon as it is touched. The quotation is from the poem, "Le Refus," by Pierre Jean de Béranger

apparent *heart* that went with his request—which allowed me no room for hesitation; and I accordingly obeyed forthwith what I still considered a very singular summons.

Although as boys we had been even intimate associates, yet I really knew little of my friend. His reserve had been always excessive and habitual. I was aware, however, that his very ancient family had been noted, time out of mind, for a peculiar sensibility of temperament, displaying itself, through long ages, in many works of exalted art, and manifested of late in repeated deeds of munificent yet unobtrusive charity, as well as in a passionate devotion to the intricacies, perhaps even more than to the orthodox and easily recognizable beauties, of musical science. I had learned, too, the very remarkable fact that the stem of the Usher race, all time-honored as it was, had put forth at no period any enduring branch; in other words, that the entire family lay in the direct line of descent, and had always, with a very trifling and very temporary variation, so lain. It was this deficiency, I considered, while running over in thought the perfect keeping of the character of the premises with the accredited character of the people, and while speculating upon the possible influence which the one, in the long lapse of centuries, might have exercised upon the other—it was this deficiency, perhaps, of collateral issue, and the consequent undeviating transmission from sire to son of the patrimony with the name, which had at length so identified the two as to merge the original title of the estate in the quaint and equivocal appellation of the "House of Usher"—an appellation which seemed to include, in the minds of the peasantry who used it, both the family and the family mansion.

I have said that the sole effect of my somewhat childish experiment, that of looking down within the tarn, had been to deepen the first singular impression. There can be no doubt that the consciousness of the rapid increase of my superstition—for why should I not so term it?—served mainly to accelerate the increase itself. Such, I have long known, is the paradoxical law of all sentiments having terror as a basis. And it might have been for this reason only, that, when I again uplifted my eyes to the house itself from its image in the pool, there grew in my mind a strange fancy—a fancy so ridiculous, indeed, that I but mention it to show the vivid force of the sensations which oppressed me. I had so worked upon my imagination as really to believe that about the whole mansion and domain there hung an atmosphere peculiar to themselves and their immediate vicinity: an atmosphere which had no affinity with the air of heaven, but which had reeked up from the decayed trees, and the gray wall, and the silent tarn; a pestilent and mystic vapor, dull, sluggish, faintly discernible, and leaden-hued.

Shaking off from my spirit what *must* have been a dream, I scanned more narrowly the real aspect of the building. Its principal feature seemed to be that of an excessive antiquity. The discoloration of ages had been great. Minute fungi overspread the whole exterior, hanging in a fine tangled webwork from the eaves. Yet all this was apart from any extraordinary dilapidation. No portion of the masonry had fallen; and there appeared to be a wild inconsistency between its still perfect adaptation of parts and the crumbling condition of the individual stones. In this there was much that reminded me of the specious totality of old woodwork which has rotted for long years in some neglected vault, with no disturbance from the breath of the external air. Beyond this indication of extensive decay, however, the fabric gave little token of instability. Perhaps the eye of a scrutinizing observer might have discovered a barely perceptible fissure, which, extending from the roof of the building in front, made its way down the wall in a zigzag direction, until it became lost in the sullen waters of the tarn.

Noticing these things, I rode over a short causeway to the house. A servant in waiting took my horse, and I entered the Gothic archway of the hall. A valet, of stealthy step, thence conducted me in silence through many dark and intricate passages in my progress to the *studio* of his master. Much that I encountered on the way contributed, I know not how, to heighten the vague sentiments of which I have already spoken. While the objects around me—while the carvings of the ceiling, the somber tapestries of the walls, the ebon blackness of the floors, and the phantasmagoric armorial trophies which rattled as I strode, were but matters to which, or to such as which, I had been accustomed from my infancy,—while I hesitated not to acknowledge how familiar was all this, I still wondered to find how unfamiliar were the fancies which ordinary images were stirring up. On one of the staircases I met the physician of the family. His countenance, I thought, wore a mingled expression of low cunning and perplexity. He accosted me with trepidation and passed on. The valet now threw open a door and ushered me into the presence of his master.

The room in which I found myself was very large and lofty. The windows were long, narrow, and pointed, and at so vast a distance from the black oaken floor as to be altogether inaccessible from within. Feeble gleams of encrimsoned light made their way through the trellised panes, and served to render sufficiently distinct the more prominent objects around; the eye, however, struggled in vain to reach the remoter angles of the chamber, or the recesses of the vaulted and fretted ceiling. Dark draperies hung upon the walls. The general furniture was profuse, comfortless, antique, and tattered. Many books and musical instruments lay scattered about, but failed to give any vitality to the scene. I felt that I breathed an atmosphere of sorrow. An air of stern, deep, and irredeemable gloom hung over and pervaded all.

Upon my entrance, Usher arose from a sofa on which he had been lying at full length, and greeted me with a vivacious warmth which had much in it, I at first thought, of an overdone cordiality—of the constrained effort of the *ennuye* man of the world. A glance, however, at his countenance, convinced me of his perfect sincerity. We sat down; and for some moments, while he spoke not, I gazed upon him with a feeling half of pity, half of awe. Surely man had never before so terribly altered, in so brief a period, as had Roderick Usher! It was with difficulty that I could bring myself to admit the identity of the wan being before me with the companion of my early boyhood. Yet the character of his face had been at all times remarkable. A cadaverousness of complexion; an eye large, liquid, and luminous beyond comparison; lips somewhat thin and very pallid, but of a surpassingly beautiful curve; a nose of a delicate Hebrew model, but with a breadth of nostril unusual in similar formations; a finely-molded chin, speaking, in its want of prominence, of a want of moral energy; hair of a more than weblike softness and tenuity,—these features, with an inordinate expansion above the regions of the temple, made up altogether a countenance not easily to be forgotten. And now in the mere exaggeration of the prevailing character of these features, and of the expression they were wont to convey, lay so much of change that I doubted to whom I spoke. The now ghastly pallor of the skin, and the now miraculous luster of the eye, above all things startled and even awed me. The silken hair, too, had been suffered to grow all unheeded, and as, in its wild gossamer texture, it floated rather than fell about the face, I could not, even with effort, connect its arabesque expression with any idea of simple humanity.

In the manner of my friend I was at once struck with an incoherence, an inconsistency; and I soon found this to arise from a series of feeble and futile struggles to overcome an habitual trepidancy, an excessive nervous agitation. For something of this nature I had indeed been prepared, no less by his letter than by reminiscences of certain boyish traits, and by conclusions deduced from his peculiar physical conformation and temperament. His action was alternately vivacious and sullen. His voice varied rapidly from a tremulous indecision (when the animal spirits seemed utterly in abeyance) to that species of energetic concision—that abrupt, weighty, unhurried, and hollow-sounding enunciation, that leaden, self-balanced, and perfectly modulated guttural utterance—which may be observed in the lost drunkard, or the irreclaimable eater of opium, during the periods of his most intense excitement.

It was thus that he spoke of the object of my visit, of his earnest desire to see me, and of the solace he expected me to afford him. He entered at some length into what he conceived to be the nature of his malady. It was, he said, a constitutional and a family evil, and one for which he despaired to find a remedy—a mere nervous affection, he immediately added, which would undoubtedly soon pass off. It displayed itself in a host of unnatural sensations. Some of these, as he detailed them, interested and bewildered me; although, perhaps, the terms and the general manner of the narration had their weight. He suffered much from a morbid acuteness of the senses; the most insipid food was alone endurable; he could wear only garments of certain texture; the odors of all flowers were oppressive; his eyes were tortured by even faint light; and there were but peculiar sounds, and these from stringed instruments, which did not inspire him with horror.

To an anomalous species of terror I found him a bounden slave. "I shall perish," said he, "I *must* perish in this deplorable folly. Thus, thus, and not otherwise, shall I be lost. I dread the events of the future, not in themselves, but in their results. I shudder at the thought of

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28 **the character . . . face.** As critics have noted, the description of Usher is remarkably like one appropriate for Poe. The "inordinate expansion," according to phrenologists of the day, indicated "ideality"

any, even the most trivial, incident, which may operate upon this intolerable agitation of soul. I have, indeed, no abhorrence of danger, except in its absolute effect,—in terror. In this unnerved, in this pitiable condition, I feel that the period will sooner or later arrive when I must abandon life and reason together in some struggle with the grim phantasm, FEAR."

I learned moreover at intervals, and through broken and equivocal hints, another singular feature of his mental condition. He was enchained by certain superstitious impressions in regard to the dwelling which he tenanted, and whence for many years he had never ventured forth, in regard to an influence whose supposititious force was conveyed in terms too shadowy here to be restated,—an influence which some peculiarities in the mere form and substance of his family mansion had, by dint of long sufferance, he said, obtained over his spirit; an effect which the *physique* of the gray walls and turrets, and of the dim tarn into which they all looked down, had at length brought about upon the *morale* of his existence.

He admitted, however, although with hesitation, that much of the peculiar gloom which thus afflicted him could be traced to a more natural and far more palpable origin,—to the severe and long-continued illness, indeed to the evidently approaching dissolution, of a tenderly beloved sister, his sole companion for long years, his last and only relative on earth. "Her decease," he said, with a bitterness which I can never forget, "would leave him (him, the hopeless and the frail) the last of the ancient race of the Ushers." While he spoke, the lady Madeline (for so was she called) passed slowly through a remote portion of the apartment, and, without having noticed my presence, disappeared. I regarded her with an utter astonishment not unmingled with dread, and yet I found it impossible to account for such feelings. A sensation of stupor oppressed me, as my eyes followed her retreating steps. When a door, at length, closed upon her, my glance sought instinctively and eagerly the countenance of the brother; but he had buried his face in his hands, and I could only perceive that a far more than ordinary wanness had overspread the emaciated fingers through which trickled many passionate tears.

The disease of the lady Madeline had long baffled the skill of her physicians. A settled apathy, a gradual wasting away of the person, and frequent although transient affections of a partially cataleptical character, were the unusual diagnosis. Hitherto she had steadily borne up against the pressure of her malady, and had not betaken herself finally to bed; but, on the closing-in of the evening of my arrival at the house, she succumbed (as her brother told me at night with inexpressible agitation) to the prostrating power of the destroyer; and I learned that the glimpse I had obtained of her person would thus probably be the last I should obtain,—that the lady, at least while living, would be seen by me no more.

For several days ensuing, her name was unmentioned by either Usher or myself; and during this period I was busied in earnest endeavors to alleviate the melancholy of my friend. We painted and read together; or I listened, as if in a dream, to the wild improvisations of his speaking guitar. And thus, as a closer and still closer intimacy admitted me more unreservedly into the recesses of his spirit, the more bitterly did I perceive the futility of all attempt at cheering a mind from which darkness, as if an inherent positive quality, poured forth upon all objects of the moral and physical universe, in one unceasing radiation of gloom.

I shall ever bear about me a memory of the many solemn hours I thus spent alone with the master of the House of Usher. Yet I should fail in my attempt to convey an idea of the exact character of the studies, or of the occupations, in which he involved me, or led me the way. An excited and highly distempered ideality threw a sulphureous luster over all. His long, improvised dirges will ring forever in my ears. Among other things, I hold painfully in mind a certain singular perversion and amplification of the wild air of the last waltz of Von Weber. From the paintings over which his elaborate fancy brooded, and which grew, touch by touch, into vaguenesses at which I shuddered the more thrillingly because I shuddered knowing not why,—from these paintings (vivid as their images now are before me) I would in vain endeavor to educe more than a small portion which should lie within the compass of merely written words. By the utter simplicity, by the nakedness of his designs, he arrested and over-awed attention. If ever mortal painted an idea, that mortal was Roderick Usher. For me at least, in the circumstances then sur-

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77 the last . . . Von Weber, No. 5 of Danses brillantes by Karl Gottlieb Reissiger (1798-1859), based on Von Weber's last waltz

rounding me, there arose, out of the pure abstractions which the hypochondriac contrived to throw upon his canvas, an intensity of intolerable awe, no shadow of which felt I ever yet in the contemplation of the certainly glowing yet too concrete reveries of Fuseli.

One of the phantasmagoric conceptions of my friend, partaking not so rigidly of the spirit of abstraction, may be shadowed forth, although feebly, in words. A small picture presented the interior of an immensely long and rectangular vault or tunnel, with low walls, smooth, white, and without interruption or device. Certain accessory points of the design served well to convey the idea that this excavation lay at an exceeding depth below the surface of the earth. No outlet was observed in any portion of its vast extent, and no torch, or other artificial source of light, was discernible; yet a flood of intense rays rolled throughout, and bathed the whole in a ghastly and inappropriate splendor.

I have just spoken of that morbid condition of the auditory nerve which rendered all music intolerable to the sufferer, with the exception of certain effects of stringed instruments. It was, perhaps, the narrow limits to which he thus confined himself upon the guitar, which gave birth, in great measure, to the fantastic character of his performances. But the fervid *facility* of his *impromptus* could not be so accounted for. They must have been, and were, in the notes as well as in the words of his wild fantasias (for he not unfrequently accompanied himself with rimed verbal improvisations), the result of that intense mental collectedness and concentration to which I have previously alluded as observable only in particular moments of the highest artificial excitement. The words of one of these rhapsodies I have easily remembered. I was, perhaps, the more forcibly impressed with it as he gave it, because, in the under or mystic current of its meaning, I fancied that I perceived, and for the first time, a full consciousness, on the part of Usher, of the tottering of his lofty reason upon her throne. The verses, which were entitled "The Haunted Palace," ran very nearly, if not accurately, thus:—

I

In the greenest of our valleys
    By good angels tenanted,
Once a fair and stately palace—
    Radiant palace—reared its head.
In the monarch Thought's dominion,
    It stood there;
Never seraph spread a pinion
    Over fabric half so fair.

II

Banners yellow, glorious, golden,
    On its roof did float and flow
(This—all this—was in the olden
    Time long ago),
And every gentle air that dallied,
    In that sweet day,
Along the ramparts plumed and pallid,
    A winged odor went away.

III

Wanderers in that happy valley
    Through two luminous windows saw
Spirits moving musically
    To a lute's well-tuned law,
Round about a throne, where sitting,
    Porphyrogene,
In state his glory well befitting,
    The ruler of the realm was seen.

IV

And all with pearl and ruby glowing
    Was the fair palace door,
Through which came flowing, flowing, flowing,
    And sparkling evermore,
A troop of Echoes, whose sweet duty
    Was but to sing,
In voices of surpassing beauty,
    The wit and wisdom of their king.

V

But evil things, in robes of sorrow,
    Assailed the monarch's high estate;
(Ah, let us mourn, for never morrow
    Shall dawn upon him, desolate!)
And, round about his home, the glory

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5 Fuseli, Heinrich Fuseli, a Swiss painter who was taught in the Royal Academy at London • **8 A small picture.** Compare the vault in which the body of Madeline is placed later in the story • **39 "The Haunted Palace."** Poe said this poem was intended "to imply a mind haunted by phantoms." It should be compared with the description of Usher in the eighth paragraph of the story • **62 Porphyrogene,** a name meaning "born to the purple"

That blushed and bloomed
Is but a dim-remembered story
Of the old time entombed.

VI

And travelers now within that valley
Through the red-litten windows see
Vast forms that move fantastically
To a discordant melody;
While, like a ghastly rapid river,
Through the pale door,
A hideous throng rush out forever,
And laugh—but smile no more.

I well remember that suggestions arising from this ballad led us into a train of thought, wherein there became manifest an opinion of Usher's which I mention, not so much on account of its novelty (for other men have thought thus) as on account of the pertinacity with which he maintained it. This opinion, in its general form, was that of the sentience of all vegetable things. But in his disordered fancy, the idea had assumed a more daring character, and trespassed, under certain conditions, upon the kingdom of inorganization. I lack words to express the full extent or the earnest *abandon* of his persuasion. The belief, however, was connected (as I have previously hinted) with the gray stones of the home of his forefathers. The conditions of the sentience had been here, he imagined, fulfilled in the method of collocation of these stones,—in the order of their arrangement, as well as in that of the many fungi which overspread them, and of the decayed trees which stood around; above all, in the long undisturbed endurance of this arrangement, and in its reduplication in the still waters of the tarn. Its evidence—the evidence of the sentience—was to be seen, he said (and I here started as he spoke), in the gradual yet certain condensation of an atmosphere of their own about the waters and the walls. The result was discoverable, he added, in that silent yet importunate and terrible influence which for centuries had molded the destinies of his family, and which made *him* what I now saw him,—what he was. Such opinions need no comment, and I will make none.

Our books—the books which for years had formed no small portion of the mental existence of the invalid—were, as might be supposed, in strict keeping with this character of phantasm. We pored together over such works as the Ververt and Chartreuse of Gresset; the Belphegor of Machiavelli; the Heaven and Hell of Swedenborg; the Subterranean Voyage of Nicholas Klimm by Holberg; the Chiromancy of Robert Flud, of Jean D'Indagine, and of De la Chambre; the Journey into the Blue Distance of Tieck; and the City of the Sun of Campanella. One favorite volume was a small octavo edition of the *Directorium Inquisitorum,* by the Dominician Eymeric de Gironne; and there were passages in Pomponius Mela, about the old African Satyrs and Aegipans, over which Usher would sit dreaming for hours. His chief delight, however, was found in the perusal of an exceedingly rare and curious book in quarto Gothic,—the manual of a forgotten church,—the *Vigilioe Mortuorum secundum Chorum Ecclesioe Maguntinoe.*

I could not help thinking of the wild ritual of this work, and of its probable influence upon the hypochondriac, when one evening, having informed me abruptly that the lady Madeline was no more, he stated his intention of preserving her corpse for a fortnight, (previously

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15 **other men.** "Watson, Dr. Percival, Spallanzani, and especially the Bishop of Llandaff."—Poe. See **Chemical Essays,** Vol. V • 45 **Ververt and Chartreuse,** anticlerical and licentious poems by Jean Baptiste Gresset (1709-1777) • 46 **Belphegor,** a novel by Machiavelli (1469-1527) which tells how the archdemon Balfagor visited the earth and then returned to hell • 47 **Swedenborg,** Emmanuel Swedenborg, Swedish mystic (1688-1772) • 48 **Holberg,** Ludwig Holberg (1684-1754), who published the book mentioned, in Latin, in 1741. The title brings in another mention of a journey into supernatural realms • 48 **Chiromancy,** palmistry • 48 **Robert Flud** (1547-1637), English physician and writer on pseudo-science • 49 **Jean D'Indagine,** author of **Chiromantia** (1522), a work on palmistry • 49 **De la Chambre,** Maria Cireau de la Chambre (1594-1669), French writer on palmistry • 50 **Tieck,** Ludwig Tieck (1773-1853), German writer. Tieck is not known to have written any such book. Perhaps Poe invented the title so as to repeat the motif of the journey from one world to another, thus foreshadowing Madeline's revival after death • 51 **Campanella,** Tommaso Campanella (1568-1639), an Italian philosopher. His **Civitas Solis,** actually a Utopian treatise, serves here, by title, to connote the world beyond • 52 **Directorium Inquisitorum** (1503) was by Nicholas Eymeric de Girone, inquisitor-general for Castile in 1536. The book gives in detail an account of the tortures of the Inquisition, and the title not only augments the suggestion of the exoticism of Usher's reading but also foreshadows the torture Madeline is to undergo • 54 **Pomponius Mela** (first century A.D.), author of a geography often concerned with strange beasts. Here a journey into distant lands, instead of a journey into the other world, is suggested • 55 **Aegipans,** goat-god Pan • 58 **Vigilioe Mortuorum . . . ,** "The Watches of the Dead according to the Choir of the Church of Mayence." As the author points out, this title is definitely related to what happens in the next paragraph. It is also related to the nightly torments of Usher and his guest later in the tale

to its final interment) in one of the numerous vaults within the main walls of the building. The worldly reason, however, assigned for this singular proceeding was one which I did not feel at liberty to dispute. The brother had been led to his resolution (so he told me) by consideration of the unusual character of the malady of the deceased, of certain obtrusive and eager inquiries on the part of her medical men, and of the remote and exposed situation of the burial ground of the family. I will not deny that when I called to mind the sinister countenance of the person whom I met upon the staircase, on the day of my arrival at the house, I had no desire to oppose what I regarded as at best but a harmless, and by no means an unnatural, precaution.

At the request of Usher, I personally aided him in the arrangement for the temporary entombment. The body having been encoffined, we two alone bore it to its rest. The vault in which we placed it (and which had been so long unopened that our torches, half smothered in its oppressive atmosphere, gave us little opportunity for investigation) was small, damp, and entirely without means of admission for light; lying, at great depth, immediately beneath that portion of the building in which was my own sleeping apartment. It had been used apparently, in remote feudal times, for the worst purposes of a donjon keep, and in later days as a place of deposit for powder, or some other highly combustible substance, as a portion of its floor, and the whole interior of a long archway through which we reached it, were carefully sheathed with copper. The door, of massive iron, had been also similarly protected. Its immense weight caused an unusually sharp grating sound as it moved upon its hinges.

Having deposited our mournful burden upon tressels within this region of horror, we partially turned aside the yet unscrewed lid of the coffin, and looked upon the face of the tenant. A striking similitude between the brother and sister now first arrested my attention; and Usher, divining, perhaps, my thoughts, murmured out some few words from which I learned that the deceased and himself had been twins, and that sympathies existed between them. Our glances, however, rested not long upon the dead, for we could not regard her unawed. The disease which had thus entombed the lady in the maturity of youth, had left, as usual in all maladies of a strictly cataleptical character, the mockery of a faint blush upon the bosom and the face, and that suspiciously lingering smile upon the lip which is so terrible in death. We replaced and screwed down the lid, and having secured the door of iron, made our way, with toil, into the scarcely less gloomy apartments of the upper portion of the house.

And now, some days of bitter grief having elapsed, an observable change came over the features of the mental disorder of my friend. His ordinary manner had vanished. His ordinary occupations were neglected or forgotten. He roamed from chamber to chamber with hurried, unequal, and objectless step. The pallor of his countenance had assumed, if possible, a more ghastly hue, but the luminousness of his eye had utterly gone out. The once occasional huskiness of his tone was heard no more; and a tremulous quavor, as if of extreme terror, habitually characterized his utterance. There were times, indeed, when I thought his unceasingly agitated mind was laboring with some oppressive secret, to divulge which he struggled for the necessary courage. At times, again, I was obliged to resolve all into the mere inexplicable vagaries of madness, for I beheld him gazing upon vacancy for long hours, in an attitude of the profoundest attention, as if listening to some imaginary sound. It was no wonder that his condition terrified—that it infected me. I felt creeping upon me, by slow yet certain degrees, the wild influences of his own fantastic yet impressive superstitions.

It was, especially, upon retiring to bed late in the night of the seventh or eighth day after the placing of the lady Madeline within the donjon, that I experienced the full power of such feelings. Sleep came not near my couch, while the hours waned and waned away. I struggled to reason off the nervousness which had dominion over me. I endeavored to believe that much if not all of what I felt was due to the bewildering influence of the gloomy furniture of the room,—of the dark and tattered draperies which, tortured into motion by the breath of a rising tempest, swayed fitfully to and fro

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14 **precaution.** The medical man, briefly glimpsed at the start of the story, at this point serves his sole purpose in the narrative. Usher's fear of "body-snatching" causes the temporary entombment of Madeline within the House of Usher. The earlier characterization of the doctor is meager but sufficient: his "mingled expression of perplexity and cunning" motivates Usher's apprehension

upon the walls, and rustled uneasily about the decorations of the bed. But my efforts were fruitless. An irrepressible tremor gradually pervaded my frame; and at length there sat upon my very heart an incubus of utterly causeless alarm. Shaking this off with a gasp and a struggle, I uplifted myself upon the pillows, and, peering earnestly within the intense darkness of the chamber, hearkened—I know not why, except that an instinctive spirit prompted me—to certain low and indefinite sounds which came, through the pauses of the storm, at long intervals, I knew not whence. Overpowered by an intense sentiment of horror, unaccountable yet unendurable, I threw on my clothes with haste (for I felt that I should sleep no more during the night), and endeavored to arouse myself from the pitiable condition to which I had fallen, by pacing rapidly to and fro through the apartment.

I had taken but few turns in this manner, when a light step on an adjoining staircase arrested my attention. I presently recognized it as that of Usher. In an instant afterward he rapped with a gentle touch at my door, and entered, bearing a lamp. His countenance was, as usual, cadaverously wan—but, moreover, there was a species of mad hilarity in his eyes,—an evidently restrained hysteria in his whole demeanor. His air appalled me—but anything was preferable to the solitude which I had so long endured, and I even welcomed his presence as a relief.

"And you have not seen it?" he said abruptly, after having stared about him for some moments in silence,—"you have not then seen it?—but, stay! you shall." Thus speaking, and having carefully shaded his lamp, he hurried to one of the casements, and threw it freely open to the storm.

The impetuous fury of the entering gust nearly lifted us from our feet. It was, indeed, a tempestuous yet sternly beautiful night, and one wildly singular in its terror and its beauty. A whirl wind had apparently collected its force in our vicinity, for there were frequent and violent alterations in the direction of the wind; and the exceeding density of the clouds (which hung so low as to press upon the turrets of the house) did not prevent our perceiving the lifelike velocity with which they flew careering from all points against each other, without passing away into the distance. I say that even their exceeding density did not prevent our perceiving this; yet we had no glimpse of the moon or stars, nor was there any flashing forth of the lightning. But the under surfaces of the huge masses of agitated vapor, as well as all terrestrial objects immediately around us, were glowing in the unnatural light of a faintly luminous and distinctly visible gaseous exhalation which hung about and enshrouded the mansion.

"You must not—you shall not behold this!" said I shudderingly, to Usher, as I led him with a gentle violence from the window to a seat. "These appearances, which bewilder you, are merely electrical phenomena not uncommon—or it may be that they have their ghastly origin in the rank miasma of the tarn. Let us close this casement; the air is chilling and dangerous to your frame. Here is one of your favorite romances. I will read, and you shall listen;—and so we will pass away this terrible night together."

The antique volume which I had taken up was the "Mad Trist" of Sir Launcelot Canning, but I had called it a favorite of Usher's more in sad jest than in earnest; for, in truth, there is little in its uncouth and unimaginative prolixity which could have had interest for the lofty and spiritual ideality of my friend. It was, however, the only book immediately at hand; and I indulged a vague hope that the excitement which now agitated the hypochondriac might find relief (for the history of mental disorder is full of similar anomalies) even in the extremeness of the folly which I should read. Could I have judged, indeed, by the wild, overstrained air of vivacity with which he hearkened, or apparently hearkened, to the words of the tale, I might well have congratulated myself upon the success of my design.

I had arrived at that well-known portion of the story where Ethelred, the hero of the Trist, having sought in vain for peaceable admission into the dwelling of the hermit, proceeds to make good an entrance by force. Here, it will be remembered, the words of the narrative run thus:—

"And Ethelred, who was by nature of a doughty heart, and who was now mighty withal on account of the powerfulness of the wine which he had drunken, waited no longer to hold parley with the hermit, who, in sooth, was of an obstinate and maliceful turn, but, feeling the rain upon his shoulders, and fearing the rising of the tempest, uplifted his mace outright, and with blows made quickly room in the plankings of the door for his

gauntleted hand; and now, pulling therewith sturdily, he so cracked, and ripped, and tore all asunder, that the noise of the dry and hollow-sounding wood alarumed and reverberated throughout the forest."

At the termination of this sentence I started, and for a moment paused; for it appeared to me (although I at once concluded that my excited fancy had deceived me) —it appeared to me that from some very remote portion of the mansion there came, indistinctly, to my ears, what might have been in its exact similarity of character the echo (but a stifled and dull one certainly) of the very cracking and ripping sound which Sir Launcelot had so particularly described. It was, beyond doubt, the coincidence alone which had arrested my attention; for amid the rattling of the sashes of the casements, and the ordinary commingled noises of the still increasing storm, the sound, in itself, had nothing, surely, which should have interested or disturbed me. I continued the story:—

"But the good champion Ethelred, now entering within the door, was sore enraged and amazed to perceive no signal of the maliceful hermit; but, in the stead thereof, a dragon of a scaly and prodigious demeanor, and of a fiery tongue, which sate in guard before a palace of gold with a floor of silver, and upon the wall there hung a shield of shining brass with this legend enwritten:—

Who entereth herein, a conqueror hath bin;
Who slayeth the dragon, the shield he shall win.

And Ethelred uplifted his mace, and struck upon the head of the dragon, which fell before him, and gave up his pesty breath, with a shriek so horrid and harsh, and withal so piercing, that Ethelred had fain to close his ears with his hands against the dreadful noise of it, the like whereof was never before heard."

Here again I paused abruptly, and now with a feeling of wild amazement, for there could be no doubt whatever that, in this instance, I did actually hear (although from what direction it proceeded I found it impossible to say) a low and apparently distant, but harsh, protracted, and most unusual screaming or grating sound,—the exact counterpart of what my fancy had already conjured up for the dragon's unnatural shriek as described by the romancer.

Oppressed as I certainly was, upon the occurrence of this second and most extraordinary coincidence, by a thousand conflicting sensations, in which wonder and extreme terror were predominant, I still retained sufficient presence of mind to avoid exciting, by any observation, the sensitive nervousness of my companion. I was by no means certain that he had noticed the sounds in question; although, assuredly, a strange alteration had during the last few minutes taken place in his demeanor. From a position fronting my own, he had gradually brought round his chair, so as to sit with his face to the door of the chamber; and thus I could but partially perceive his features, although I saw that his lips trembled as if he were murmuring inaudibly. His head had dropped upon his breast; yet I knew that he was not asleep, from the wide rigid opening of the eyes as I caught a glance of it in profile. The motion of his body, too, was at variance with this idea, for he rocked from side to side with a gentle yet constant and uniform sway. Having rapidly taken notice of all this, I resumed the narrative of Sir Launcelot, which thus proceeded:—

"And now the champion, having escaped from the terrible fury of the dragon, bethinking himself of the brazen shield, and of the breaking up of the enchantment which was upon it, removed the carcass from out of the way before him, and approached valorously over the silver pavement of the castle to where the shield was upon the wall; which in sooth tarried not for his full coming, but fell down at his feet upon the silver floor, with a mighty great and terrible ringing sound."

No sooner had these syllables passed my lips than— as if a shield of brass had indeed, at the moment, fallen heavily upon a floor of silver—I became aware of a distinct, hollow, metallic, and clangorous yet apparently muffled reverberation. Completely unnerved, I leaped to my feet; but the measured rocking movement of Usher was undisturbed. I rushed to the chair in which he sat. His eyes were bent fixedly before him, and throughout his whole countenance there reigned a stony rigidity. But, as I placed my hand upon his shoulder, there came a strong shudder over his whole person; a sickly smile quivered about his lips; and I saw that he spoke in a low, hurried, and gibbering murmur, as if unconscious of my presence. Bending closely over him, I at length drank in the hideous import of his words.

"Not hear it?—yes, I hear it, and *have* heard it. Long —long—long—many minutes, many hours, many days, have I heard it, yet I dared not—oh, pity me, miserable wretch that I am!—I dared not—I *dared* not speak! *We*

have put her living in the tomb! Said I not that my senses were acute? I *now* tell you that I have heard her first feeble movements in the hollow coffin. I heard them—many, many days ago—yet I dared not—*I dared not speak!* And now—tonight—Ethelred—ha! ha!—the breaking of the hermit's door, and the deathcry of the dragon, and the clangor of the shield!—say, rather, the rending of her coffin, and the grating of the iron hinges of her prison, and her struggles within the coppered archway of the vault! Oh, whither shall I fly? Will she not be here anon? Is she not hurrying to upbraid me for my haste? Have I not heard her footstep on the stair? Do I not distinguish that heavy and horrible beating of her heart? Madman!"—here he sprang furiously to his feet, and shrieked out his syllables, as if in the effort he were giving up his soul—*"Madman! I tell you that she now stands without the door!"*

As if in the superhuman energy of his utterance there had been found the potency of a spell, the huge antique panels to which the speaker pointed threw slowly back, upon the instant, their ponderous and ebony jaws. It was the work of the rushing gust—but then without those doors there *did* stand the lofty and enshrouded figure of the lady Madeline of Usher! There was blood upon her white robes, and the evidence of some bitter struggle upon every portion of her emaciated frame. For a moment she remained trembling and reeling to and fro upon the threshold—then, with a low moaning cry, fell heavily inward upon the person of her brother, and in her violent and now final death agonies, bore him to the floor a corpse, and a victim to the terrors he had anticipated.

From that chamber and from that mansion I fled aghast. The storm was still abroad in all its wrath as I found myself crossing the old causeway. Suddenly there shot along the path a wild light, and I turned to see whence a gleam so unusual could have issued; for the vast house and its shadows were along behind me. The radiance was that of the full, setting, and blood-red moon, which now shone vividly through that once barely discernible fissure, of which I have before spoken as extending from the roof of the building, in a zigzag direction, to the base. While I gazed, this fissure rapidly widened—there came a fierce breath of the whirlwind—the entire orb of the satellite burst at once upon my sight—my brain reeled as I saw the mighty walls rushing asunder—there was a long, tumultuous shouting sound like the voice of a thousand waters—and the deep and dank tarn at my feet closed sullenly and silently over the fragments of the *"House of Usher."*

1839

Ligeia

Poe believed that this was his best story, and at least some readers who are at times distressed by Poe's lack of subtlety may share his preference. One problem he faced (one he had previously tried to cope with in a similar story, "Morella") was that of unifying a narrative which tended to break into two disunited parts—one telling of the life and death of his chief character; and another telling of her return, several years later, to the world of the living.

He did this by (1) creating, in the first part, the character Ligeia, whose characteristics were of exactly the sort to give fictional probability to her strange conquest of death in the second part; (2) emphasizing throughout the theme of metempsychosis—the belief in transmigration of souls; (3) "discussing"—as he might have put it—his incidents "in such tone as best served him in establishing the preconceived effect." In making subtle use of this last device, Poe caused a series of highly suggestive words and images, associated with Ligeia in the first portion of the narrative, to prepare for and slowly build up to her weird return in the second.

This story was published in the **American Museum**, September 1838, and was included in **Tales of the Grotesque and Arabesque** (1840). Since some of the revisions in the last half of the tale interestingly suggest how

Poe improved his narrative, a few are pointed out in the footnotes.

And the will therein lieth, which dieth not. Who knoweth the mysteries of the will, with its vigor? For God is but a great will pervading all things by nature of its intentness. Man doth not yield himself to the angels, nor unto death utterly, save only through the weakness of his feeble will.—JOSEPH GLANVILL

I cannot, for my soul, remember how, when, or even precisely where, I first became acquainted with the lady Ligeia. Long years have since elapsed, and my memory is feeble through much suffering. Or, perhaps, I cannot *now* bring these points to mind, because, in truth, the character of my beloved, her rare learning, her singular yet placid cast of beauty, and the thrilling and enthralling eloquence of her low musical language, made their way into my heart by paces so steadily and stealthily progressive that they have been unnoticed and unknown. Yet I believe that I met her first and most frequently in some large, old decaying city near the Rhine. Of her family—I have surely heard her speak. That it is of a remotely ancient date cannot be doubted. Ligeia! Ligeia! Buried in studies of a nature more than all else adapted to deaden impressions of the outward world, it is by that sweet word alone—by Ligeia—that I bring before mine eyes in fancy the image of her who is no more. And now, while I write, a recollection flashes upon me that I have *never known* the paternal name of her who was my friend and my betrothed, and who became the partner of my studies, and finally the wife of my bosom. Was it a playful charge on the part of my Ligeia? or was it a test of my strength of affection, that I should institute no inquiries upon this point? or was it rather a caprice of my own—a wildly romantic offering on the shrine of the most passionate devotion? I but indistinctly recall the fact myself—what wonder that I have utterly forgotten the circumstances which originated or attended it? And, indeed, if ever that spirit which is entitled *Romance*—if ever she, the wan and the misty-winged *Ashtophet* of idolatrous Egypt, presided, as they tell, over marriages ill-omened, then most surely she presided over mine.

There is one dear topic, however, on which my memory fails me not. It is the *person* of Ligeia. In stature she was tall, somewhat slender, and, in her latter days, even emaciated. I would in vain attempt to portray the majesty, the quiet ease, of her demeanor, or the incomprehensible lightness and elasticity of her footfall. She came and departed as a shadow. I was never made aware of her entrance into my closed study save by the dear music of her low sweet voice, as she placed her marble hand upon my shoulder. In beauty of her face no maiden ever equalled her. It was the radiance of an opium dream—an airy and spirit-lifting vision more wildly divine than the phantasies which hovered about the slumbering souls of the daughters of Delos. Yet her features were not of that regular mould which we have been falsely taught to worship in the classical labors of the heathen. "There is no exquisite beauty," says Bacon, Lord Verulam, speaking truly of all the forms and *genera* of beauty, "without some *strangeness* in the proportion." Yet, although I saw that the features of Ligeia were not of a classic regularity—although I perceived that her loveliness was indeed "exquisite," and felt that there was much of "strangeness" pervading it, yet I have tried in vain to detect the irregularity and to trace home my own perception of "the strange." I examined the contour of the lofty and pale forehead—it was faultless—how cold indeed that word when applied to a majesty so divine!—the skin rivalling the purest ivory, the commanding extent and repose, the gentle prominence of the regions above the temples; and then the raven-black, the glossy, the luxuriant and naturally-curling tresses, setting forth the full force of the Homeric epithet, "hyacinthe"! I looked at the delicate outlines of the nose—and nowhere but in the graceful medallions of the Hebrews had I beheld a similar perfection. There were the same luxurious smoothness of sur-

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Text: the revised version printed in the **Broadway Journal**, September 27, 1845 • **Joseph Glanvill,** English philosopher (1636-1680), associated with the Cambridge Platonists. The quotation has not been located • 31 **Ashtophet,** probably Ashtoreth, a Canaanitish deity who, after adoption in Egypt, had the significance Poe suggests • 47 **daughters of Delos,** an obscure reference, perhaps to Greek maidens who made offerings in the temple on the island of Delos • 50 **Bacon,** a slight misquotation, since Bacon's word is not "exquisite" but "excellent" • 62 **gentle . . . temples,** in Poe's day, according to phrenological lore, signified "love of life" • 67 **medallions . . . Hebrews,** the Roman bas-reliefs of the Jews

face, the same scarcely perceptible tendency to the aquiline, the same harmoniously curved nostrils speaking the free spirit. I regarded the sweet mouth. Here was indeed the triumph of all things heavenly—the magnificent turn of the short upper lip—the soft, voluptuous slumber of the under—the dimples which sported, and the color which spoke—the teeth glancing back, with a brilliancy almost startling, every ray of the holy light which fell upon them in her serene and placid, yet most exultingly radiant of all smiles. I scrutinized the formation of the chin—and here, too, I found the gentleness of breadth, the softness and the majesty, the fullness and the spirituality, of the Greek—the contour which the God Apollo revealed but in a dream, to Cleomenes, the son of the Athenian. And then I peered into the large eyes of Ligeia.

For eyes we have no models in the remotely antique. It might have been, too, that in these eyes of my beloved lay the secret to which Lord Verulam alludes. They were, I must believe, far larger than the ordinary eyes of our own race. They were even fuller than the fullest of the gazelle eyes of the tribe of the valley of Nourjahad. Yet it was only at intervals—in moments of intense excitement—that this peculiarity became more than slightly noticeable in Ligeia. And at such moments was her beauty—in my heated fancy thus it appeared perhaps—the beauty of being either above or apart from the earth—the beauty of the Fabulous Houri of the Turk. The hue of the orbs was the most brilliant of black, and, far over them, hung jetty lashes of great length. The brows, slightly irregular in outline, had the same tint. The "strangeness," however, which I found in the eyes, was of a nature distinct from the formation, or the color, or the brilliancy of the features, and must, after all, be referred to the *expression.* Ah, word of no meaning! behind whose vast latitude of mere sound we intrench our ignorance of so much of the spiritual. The expression of the eyes of Ligeia! How for long hours have I pondered upon it! How have I, through the whole of a midsummer night, struggled to fathom it! What was it—that something more profound than the well of Democritus—which lay far within the pupils of my beloved? What *was* it? I was possessed with a passion to discover. Those eyes! those large, those shining, those divine orbs! they became to me twin stars of Leda, and I to them devoutest of astrologers.

There is no point, among the many incomprehensible anomalies of the science of mind, more thrillingly exciting than the fact—never, I believe, noticed in the schools—that, in our endeavors to recall to memory something long forgotten, we often find ourselves *upon the very verge* of remembrance, without being able, in the end, to remember. And thus how frequently, in my intense scrutiny of Ligeia's eyes, have I felt approaching the full knowledge of their expression—felt it approaching—yet not quite be mine—and so at length entirely depart! And (strange, oh strangest mystery of all!) I found, in the commonest objects of the universe, a circle of analogies to that expression. I mean to say that, subsequently to the period when Ligeia's beauty passed into my spirit, there dwelling as in a shrine, I derived, from many existences in the material world, a sentiment such as I felt always aroused within me by her large and luminous orbs. Yet not the more could I define that sentiment, or analyze, or even steadily view it. I recognized it, let me repeat, sometimes in the survey of a rapidly-growing vine—in the contemplation of a moth, a butterfly, a chrysalis, a stream of running water. I have felt it in the ocean; in the falling of a meteor. I have felt it in the glances of unusually aged people. And there are one or two stars in heaven—(one especially, a star of the sixth magnitude, double and changeable, to be found near the large star in Lyra) in a telescopic scrutiny of which I have been made aware of the feeling. I have been filled with it by certain sounds from stringed instruments, and not unfrequently by passages from books. Among innumerable other instances, I well remember something in a volume of Joseph Glanvill, which (perhaps merely from its quaintness—who shall say?) never failed to inspire me with the sentiment;—"And the will therein lieth, which dieth not. Who knoweth the mysteries of the will, with its vigor? For God is but a great will pervading all things by nature of its intentness. Man doth not yield him to the angels, nor unto death utterly, save only through the weakness of his feeble will."

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14 **Cleomenes**, an Athenian sculptor whose most famous work is the Venus de' Medici. There is no legend of a revelation by Apollo to Cleomenes • 21 **Nourjahad** refers to an Oriental novel, **The History of Nourjahad** (1767) by Mrs. Frances Sheridan • 27 **Fabulous Houri**, the beautiful women who inhabit the Mohammedan heaven • 40 **Democritus**, a Greek philosopher who said that truth lies in a deep well • 72 **Lyra**, a constellation containing a binary star known as Epsilon Lyra

Length of years, and subsequent reflection, have enabled me to trace, indeed, some remote connection between this passage in the English moralist and a portion of the character of Ligeia. An *intensity* in thought, action, or speech, was possibly, in her, a result, or at least an index of that gigantic volition which, during our long intercourse, failed to give other and more immediate evidence of its existence. Of all the women whom I have ever known, she, the outwardly calm, the ever-placid Ligeia, was the most violently a prey to the tumultuous vultures of stern passion. And of such passion I could form no estimate, save by the miraculous expansion of those eyes which at once so delighted and appalled me—by the almost magical melody, modulation, distinctness, and placidity of her very low voice—and by the fierce energy (rendered doubly effective by contrast with her manner of utterance) of the wild words which she habitually uttered.

I have spoken of the learning of Ligeia: it was immense—such as I have never known in woman. In the classical tongues was she deeply proficient, and as far as my own acquaintance extended in regard to the modern dialects of Europe, I have never known her at fault. Indeed upon any theme of the most admired, because simply the most abstruse of the boasted erudition of the academy, have I *ever* found Ligeia at fault? How singularly—how thrillingly, this one point in the nature of my wife forced itself, at this late period only, upon my attention! I said her knowledge was such as I have never known in woman—but where breathes the man who has traversed, and successfully, *all* the wide areas of moral, physical, and mathematical science? I saw not then what I now clearly perceive, that the acquisitions of Ligeia were gigantic, were astounding; yet I was sufficiently aware of her infinite supremacy to resign myself, with a child-like confidence, to her guidance through the chaotic world of metaphysical investigation at which I was most busily occupied during the earlier years of our marriage. With how vast a triumph—with how vivid a delight—with how much of all that is ethereal in hope—did I *feel*, as she bent over me in studies but little sought—but less known—that delicious vista by slow degrees expanding before me, down whose long, gorgeous, and all untrodden path, I might at length pass onward to the goal of a wisdom too divinely precious not to be forbidden!

How poignant, then, must have been the grief with which, after some years, I beheld my well-grounded expectations take wings to themselves and fly away! Without Ligeia I was but as a child groping benighted. Her presence, her readings alone, rendered vividly luminous the many mysteries of the transcendentalism in which we were immersed. Wanting the radiant lustre of her eyes, letters, lambent and golden, grew duller than Saturnian lead. And now those eyes shone less and less frequently upon the pages over which I pored. Ligeia grew ill. The wild eyes blazed with a too-too glorious effulgence; the pale fingers became of the transparent waxen hue of the grave, and the blue veins upon the lofty forehead swelled and sank impetuously with the tides of the most gentle emotion. I saw that she must die—and I struggled desperately in spirit with the grim Azrael. And the struggles of the passionate wife were, to my astonishment, even more energetic than my own. There had been much in her stern nature to impress me with the belief that, to her, death would have come without its terrors;—but not so. Words are impotent to convey any just idea of the fierceness of resistance with which she wrestled with the Shadow. I groaned in anguish at the pitiable spectacle. I would have soothed—I would have reasoned; but, in the intensity of her wild desire for life,—for life—*but* for life—solace and reason were alike the utmost of folly. Yet not until the last instance, amid the most convulsive writhings of her fierce spirit, was shaken the external placidity of her demeanor. Her voice grew more gentle—grew more low—yet I would not wish to dwell upon the wild meaning of the quietly uttered words. My brain reeled as I hearkened entranced, to a melody more than mortal—to assumptions and aspirations which mortality had never before known.

That she loved me I should not have doubted; and I might have been easily aware that, in a bosom such as hers, love would have reigned no ordinary passion. But in death only, was I fully impressed with the strength of her affection. For long hours, detaining my hand, would she pour out before me the overflowing of a heart whose more than passionate devotion amounted to idolatry. How had I deserved to be so blessed by such confessions?

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51 transcendentalism refers less to the specific beliefs of the Concord school than to the vague, the strange, in philosophy • 53 Saturnian, pertaining to Saturn, Roman god renowned in fable as a king during a golden age • 61 Azrael, the angel of death, who separates the soul from the body

—how had I deserved to be so cursed with the removal of my beloved in the hour of her making them? But upon this subject I cannot bear to dilate. Let me say only, that in Ligeia's more than womanly abandonment to a love, alas! all unmerited, all unworthily bestowed, I at length recognized the principle of her longing with so wildly earnest a desire for the life which was now fleeing so rapidly away. It is this wild longing—it is this eager vehemence of desire for life—*but* for life—that I have no power to portray—no utterance capable of expressing.

At high noon of the night in which she departed, beckoning me, peremptorily, to her side, she bade me repeat certain verses composed by herself not many days before. I obeyed her.—They were these:

Lo! 'tis a gala night
  Within the lonesome latter years!
An angel throng, bewinged, bedight
  In veils, and drowned in tears,
Sit in a theatre, to see
  A play of hopes and fears,
While the orchestra breathes fitfully
  The music of the spheres.

Mimes, in the form of God on high,
  Mutter and mumble low,
And hither and thither fly—
  Mere puppets they, who come and go
At bidding of vast formless things
  That shift the scenery to and fro,
Flapping from out their Condor wings
  Invisible Woe!

That motley drama!—oh, be sure
  It shall not be forgot!
With its Phantom chased forevermore,
  By a crowd that seized it not,
Through a circle that ever returneth in
  To the self-same spot,
And much of madness and more of Sin
  And Horror the soul of the plot.

But see, amid the mimic rout,
  A crawling shape intrude!
A blood-red thing that writhes from out
  The scenic solitude!
It writhes!—it writhes!—with mortal pangs
  The mimes become its food,
And the seraphs sob at vermin fangs
  In human gore imbued.

Out—out are the lights—out all!
  And over each quivering form,
The curtain, a funeral pall,
  Comes down with the rush of a storm,
And the angels, all pallid and wan,
  Uprising, unveiling, affirm
That the play is the tragedy, "Man,"
  And its hero the Conqueror Worm.

"O God!" half shrieked Ligeia, leaping to her feet and extending her arms aloft with a spasmodic movement, as I made an end of these lines—"O God! O Divine Father!—shall these things be undeviatingly so?—shall this Conqueror be not once conquered? Are we not part and parcel of Thee? Who—who knoweth the mysteries of the will with its vigor? Man doth not yield him to the angels, *nor unto death utterly* save only through the weakness of his feeble will."

And now, as if exhausted with emotion, she suffered her white arms to fall, and returned solemnly to her bed of death. And as she breathed her last sighs, there came mingled with them a low murmur from her lips. I bent to them my ear and distinguished, again, the concluding words of the passage in Glanvill—*"Man doth not yield him to the angels, nor unto death utterly, save only through the weakness of his feeble will."*

She died;—and I, crushed into the very dust with sorrow, could no longer endure the lonely desolation of my dwelling in the dim and decaying city by the Rhine. I

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11 **At high noon** marks the beginning of a passage, including the poem and the two paragraphs following the poem, which replaced the paragraph telling of Ligeia's death in the first version of the story. This version read: "Methinks I again behold the terrific struggles of her lofty, her nearly idealized nature, with the might and terror, and the majesty, of the great Shadow. But she perished. The giant **will** succumbed to a power more stern. And I thought, as I gazed upon the corpse, of the wild passage in Joseph Glanville: 'The will therein lieth, which dieth not. Who knoweth the mysteries of the will, with its vigor? For God is but a great will pervading all things by the nature of its intentness. Man doth not yield him to the angels, **nor unto death utterly**, save only through the weakness of his feeble will' "

had no lack of what the world calls wealth. Ligeia had brought me far more, very far more than ordinarily falls to the lot of mortals. After a few months, therefore, of weary and aimless wandering, I purchased, and put in some repair, an abbey, which I shall not name, in one of the wildest and least frequented portions of fair England. The gloomy and dreary grandeur of the building, the almost savage aspect of the domain, the many melancholy and time-honored memories connected with both, had much in unison with the feelings of utter abandonment which had driven me into that remote and unsocial region of the country. Yet although the external abbey, with its verdant decay hanging about it, suffered but little alteration, I gave way, with a childlike perversity, and perchance with a faint hope of alleviating my sorrows, to a display of more than regal magnificence within.—For such follies, even in childhood, I had imbibed a taste and now they came back to me as if in the dotage of grief. Alas, I feel how much even of incipient madness might have been discovered in the gorgeous and fantastic draperies, in the solemn carvings of Egypt, in the wild cornices and furniture, in the Bedlam patterns of the carpets of tufted gold! I had become a bounden slave in the trammels of opium, and my labors and my orders had taken a coloring from my dreams. But these absurdities I must not pause to detail. Let me speak only of that one chamber, ever accursed, whither in a moment of mental alienation, I led from the altar as my bride—as the successor of the unforgotten Ligeia—the fair-haired and blue-eyed Lady Rowena Trevanion, of Tremaine.

There is no individual portion of the architecture and decoration of that bridal chamber which is not now visibly before me. Where were the souls of the haughty family of the bride, when, through thirst of gold, they permitted to pass the threshold of an apartment *so* bedecked, a maiden and a daughter so beloved? I have said that I minutely remember the details of the chamber—yet I am sadly forgetful on topics of deep moment—and here there was no system, no keeping, in the fantastic display, to take hold upon the memory. The room lay in a high turret of the castellated abbey, was pentagonal in shape, and of capacious size. Occupying the whole southern face of the pentagon was the sole window—an immense sheet of unbroken glass from Venice—a single pane, and tinted of a leaden hue, so that the rays of either the sun or moon, passing through it, fell with a ghastly lustre on the objects within. Over the upper portion of this huge window, extended the trellis-work of an aged vine, which clambered up the massy walls of the turret. The ceiling, of gloomy-looking oak, was excessively lofty, vaulted, and elaborately fretted with the wildest and most grotesque specimens of a semi-Gothic, semi-Druidical device. From out the most central recess of this melancholy vaulting, depended, by a single chain of gold with long links, a huge censer of the same metal, Saracenic in pattern, and with many perforations so contrived that there writhed in and out of them, as if endued with a serpent vitality, a continual succession of parti-colored fires.

Some few ottomans and golden candelabra, of Eastern figure, were in various stations about—and there was the couch, too—the bridal couch—of an Indian model, and low, and sculptured of solid ebony, with a pall-like canopy above. In each of the angles of the chamber stood on end a gigantic sarcophagus of black granite, from the tombs of the kings over against Luxor, with their aged lids full of immemorial sculpture. But in draping of the apartment lay, alas! the chief phantasy of all. The lofty walls, gigantic in height—even unproportionably so—were hung from summit to foot, in vast folds, with a heavy and massive-looking tapestry—tapestry of a material which was found alike as a carpet on the floor, as a covering for the ottomans and the ebony bed, as a canopy for the bed, and as the gorgeous volutes of the curtains which partially shaded the window. The material was the richest cloth of gold. It was spotted all over, at irregular intervals, with arabesque figures, about a foot in diameter, and wrought upon the cloth in patterns of the most jetty black. But these figures partook of the true character of the arabesque only when regarded from a single point of view. By a contrivance now common, and indeed traceable to a very remote period of antiquity, they were made changeable in aspect. To one entering the room, they bore the appearance of simple monstrosities; but upon a farther advance, this appearance gradually departed; and step by step, as the visitor moved his station in the chamber, he saw himself surrounded by an endless succession of the ghastly forms which belong to the superstition of the Norman, or arise in the guilty

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22 **Bedlam**, insane; derived from Bedlam, an asylum in London • 62 **pall-like**, added to the earlier version, which spoke simply of "a canopy" • 65 **Luxor**, a center of archeological research near Thebes

slumbers of the monk. The phantasmagoric effect was vastly heightened by the artificial introduction of a strong continual current of wind behind the draperies—giving a hideous and uneasy animation to the whole.

In halls such as these—in a bridal chamber such as this—I passed, with the lady of Tremaine, the unhallowed hours of the first month of our marriage—passed them with but little disquietude. That my wife dreaded the fierce moodiness of my temper—that she shunned me and loved me but little—I could not help perceiving; but it gave me rather pleasure than otherwise. I loathed her with a hatred belonging more to demon than to man. My memory flew back (oh, with what intensity of regret!) to Ligeia, the beloved, the august, the beautiful, the entombed. I revelled in recollections of her purity, of her wisdom, of her lofty, her ethereal nature, of her passionate, her idolatrous love. Now, then, did my spirit fully and freely burn with more than all the fires of her own. In the excitement of my opium dreams (for I was habitually fettered in the shackles of the drug) I would call aloud upon her name, during the silence of the night, or among the sheltered recesses of the glens by day, as if, through the wild eagerness, the solemn passion, the consuming ardor of my longing for the departed, I could restore her to the pathway she had abandoned—ah, *could* it be forever?—upon the earth.

About the commencement of the second month of the marriage, the Lady Rowena was attacked with sudden illness, from which her recovery was slow. The fever which consumed her rendered her nights uneasy; and in her perturbed state of half-slumber, she spoke of sounds, and of motions in and about the chamber of the turret, which I concluded had no origin save in the distemper of her fancy, or perhaps in the phantasmagoric influences of the chamber itself. She became at length convalescent—finally well. Yet but a brief period elapsed, ere a second more violent disorder again threw her upon a bed of suffering; and from this attack her frame, at all times feeble, never altogether recovered. Her illnesses were, after this epoch, of alarming character, and of more alarming recurrence, defying alike the knowledge and the great exertions of her physicians. With the increase of the chronic disease which had thus, apparently, taken too sure hold upon her constitution to be eradicated by human means, I could not fail to observe a similar increase in the nervous irritation of her temperament, and in her excitability by trivial causes of fear. She spoke again, and now more frequently and pertinaciously, of the sounds—of the slight sounds—and of the unusual motions among the tapestries, to which she had formerly alluded.

One night, near the closing in of September, she pressed this distressing subject with more than usual emphasis upon my attention. She had just awakened from an unquiet slumber, and I had been watching, with feelings half of anxiety, half of vague terror, the workings of her emaciated countenance. I sat by the side of her ebony bed, upon one of the ottomans of India. She partly arose, and spoke, in an earnest low whisper, of sounds which she *then* heard, but which I could not hear—and of motions which she *then* saw, but which I could not perceive. The wind was rushing hurriedly behind the tapestries, and I wished to show her (what, let me confess it, I could not *all* believe) that those almost inarticulate breathings, and those very gentle variations of the figures upon the wall, were but the natural effects of that customary rushing of the wind. But a deadly pallor, overspreading her face, had proved to me that my exertions to reassure her would be fruitless. She appeared to be fainting, and no attendants were within call. I remembered where was deposited a decanter of light wine which had been ordered by her physicians, and hastened across the chamber to procure it. But, as I stepped beneath the light of the censer, two circumstances of a startling nature attracted my attention. I had felt that some palpable although invisible object had passed lightly by my person; and I saw that there lay upon the golden carpet, in the very middle of the rich lustre thrown from the censer, a shadow—a faint, indefinite shadow of angelic aspect—such as might be fancied for the shadow of a shade. But I was wild with the excitement of an immoderate dose of opium, and heeded these things but little, nor spoke of them to Rowena. Having found the wine, I recrossed the chamber and poured out a goblet-ful, which I held to the lips of the fainting lady. She had now partially recovered, however, and took the vessel herself, while I sank

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14 the august, added in the later version • 47 fear, followed in the earlier version with the sentence, "Indeed reason seemed fast tottering from her throne." By cutting out the sentence, the author casts less doubt upon the perceptions of Lady Rowena, thus more effectively preparing for the reincarnation of Ligeia

upon an ottoman near me, with my eyes fastened upon her person. It was then that I became distinctly aware of a gentle foot-fall upon the carpet, and near the couch; and in a second thereafter, as Rowena was in the act of raising the wine to her lips, I saw, or may have dreamed that I saw, fall within the goblet, as if from some invisible spring in the atmosphere of the room, three or four large drops of a brilliant and ruby colored fluid. If this I saw—not so Rowena. She swallowed the wine unhesitatingly, and I forbore to speak to her of a circumstance which must, after all, I considered, have been but the suggestion of a vivid imagination, rendered morbidly active by the terror of the lady, by the opium, and by the hour.

Yet I cannot conceal it from my own perception that, immediately subsequent to the fall of the ruby-drops, a rapid change for the worse took place in the disorder of my wife; so that, on the third subsequent night, the hands of her menials prepared her for the tomb, and on the fourth, I sat alone, with her shrouded body, in that fantastic chamber which had received her as my bride. Wild visions, opium-engendered, flitted, shadow-like, before me. I gazed with unquiet eye upon the sarcophagi in the angles of the room, upon the varying figures of the drapery, and upon the writhing of the parti-colored fires in the censer overhead. My eyes then fell, as I called to mind the circumstances of a former night, to the spot beneath the glare of the censer where I had seen the faint traces of the shadow. It was there, however, no longer; and breathing with greater freedom, I turned my glances to the pallid and rigid figure upon the bed. Then rushed upon me a thousand memories of Ligeia—and then came back upon my heart, with the turbulent violence of a flood, the whole of that unutterable woe with which I had regarded *her* thus enshrouded. The night waned; and still, with a bosom full of bitter thoughts of the one only and supremely beloved, I remained gazing upon the body of Rowena.

It might have been midnight, or perhaps earlier, or later, for I had taken no note of time, when a sob, low, gentle, but very distinct, startled me from my revery.—I *felt* that it came from the bed of ebony—the bed of death. I listened in an agony of superstitious terror—but there was no repetition of the sound. I strained my vision to detect any motion in the corpse—but there was not the slightest perceptible. Yet I could not have been deceived. I *had* heard the noise, however faint, and my soul was awakened within me. I resolutely and perseveringly kept my attention riveted upon the body. Many minutes elapsed before any circumstance occurred tending to throw light upon the mystery. At length it became evident that a slight, a very feeble, and barely noticeable tinge of color had flushed up within the cheeks, and along the sunken small veins of the eyelids. Through a species of unutterable horror and awe, for which the language of mortality has no sufficiently energetic expression, I felt my heart cease to beat, my limbs grow rigid where I sat. Yet a sense of duty finally operated to restore my self-possession. I could no longer doubt that we had been precipitate in our preparations—that Rowena still lived. It was necessary that some immediate exertion be made; yet the turret was altogether apart from the portion of the abbey tenanted by the servants—there were none within call—I had no means of summoning them to my aid without leaving the room for many minutes—and this I could not venture to do. I therefore struggled alone in my endeavors to call back the spirit still hovering. In a short period it was certain, however, that a relapse had taken place; the color disappeared from both eyelid and cheek, leaving a wanness even more than that of marble; the lips became doubly shrivelled and pinched up in the ghastly expression of death; a repulsive clamminess and coldness overspread rapidly the surface of the body; and all the usual rigorous stiffness immediately supervened. I fell back with a shudder upon the couch from which I had been so startlingly aroused, and again gave myself up to passionate waking visions of Ligeia.

An hour thus elapsed when (could it be possible?) I was a second time aware of some vague sound issuing from the region of the bed. I listened—in extremity of horror. The sound came again—it was a sigh. Rushing to the corpse, I saw—distinctly saw—a tremor upon the lips. In a minute afterward they relaxed, disclosing a bright line of the pearly teeth. Amazement now struggled in my bosom with the profound awe which had hitherto reigned there alone. I felt that my vision grew dim, that my reason wandered; and it was only by a violent effort that I at length succeeded in nerving myself to the task which duty thus once more had pointed out. There was now a partial glow upon the forehead and upon the cheek and throat; a perceptible warmth pervaded the



whole frame; there was even a slight pulsation at the heart. The lady *lived;* and with redoubled ardor I betook myself to the task of restoration. I chafed and bathed the temples and the hands, and used every exertion which experience, and no little medical reading, could suggest. But in vain. Suddenly, the color fled, the pulsation ceased, the lips resumed the expression of the dead, and in an instant afterward, the whole body took upon itself the icy chilliness, the livid hue, the intense rigidity, the sunken outline, and all the loathsome peculiarities of that which has been, for many days, a tenant of the tomb.

And again I sunk into visions of Ligeia—and again (what marvel that I shudder while I write?), *again* there reached my ears a low sob from the region of the ebony bed. But why shall I minutely detail the unspeakable horrors of that night? Why shall I pause to relate how, time after time, until near the period of the gray dawn, this hideous drama of revivification was repeated; how each terrific relapse was only into a sterner and apparently more irredeemable death; how each agony wore the aspect of a struggle with some invisible foe; and how each struggle was succeeded by I know not what wild change in the personal appearance of the corpse? Let me hurry to a conclusion.

The greater part of the fearful night had worn away, and she who had been dead, once again stirred—and now more vigorously than hitherto, although arousing from a dissolution more appalling in its utter hopelessness than any. I had long ceased to struggle or to move, and remained sitting rigidly upon the ottoman, a helpless prey to a whirl of violent emotions, of which extreme awe was perhaps the least terrible, the least consuming. The corpse, I repeat, stirred and now more vigorously than before. The hues of life flushed up with unwonted energy into the countenance—the limbs relaxed—and, save that the eyelids were yet pressed heavily together, and that the bandages and draperies of the grave still imparted their charnel character to the figure, I might have dreamed that Rowena had indeed shaken off, utterly, the fetters of Death. But if this idea was not, even then, altogether adopted, I could at least doubt no longer, when arising from the bed, tottering, with feeble steps, with closed eyes, and with the manner of one bewildered in a dream, the thing that was enshrouded advanced boldly and palpably into the middle of the apartment.

I trembled not—I stirred not—for a crowd of unutterable fancies connected with the air, the stature, the demeanor of the figure, rushing hurriedly through my brain, had paralyzed—had chilled me into stone. I stirred not—but gazed upon the apparition. There was a mad disorder in my thoughts—a tumult unappeasable. Could it, indeed, be the *living* Rowena who confronted me? Could it indeed be Rowena *at all*—the fair-haired, the blue-eyed Lady Rowena Trevanion of Tremaine? Why, *why* should I doubt it? The bandage lay heavily about the mouth—but then might it not be the mouth of the breathing Lady of Tremaine? And the cheeks—there were the roses as in her noon of life—yes, these might indeed be the fair cheeks of the living Lady of Tremaine. And the chin, with its dimples, as in health, might it not be hers?—but *had she then grown taller since her malady?* What inexpressible madness seized me with that thought? One bound, and I had reached her feet! Shrinking from my touch, she let fall from her head, unloosened, the ghastly cerements which had confined it, and there streamed forth, into the rushing atmosphere of the chamber, huge masses of long and dishevelled hair; *it was blacker than the raven wings of the midnight!* And now slowly opened *the eyes* of the figure which stood before me. "Here then, at least," I shrieked aloud, "can I never—can I never be mistaken—these are the full, and the black, and the wild eyes—of my lost love—of the lady—of the LADY LIGEIA!"

1838·1845

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20 **how each agony,** and the remainder of this sentence, did not appear in the earlier version of the story • 26 **she . . . dead,** in the later version, replaced "the corpse of Rowena." By making this change and the one next recorded, Poe prepared for the reappearance of Ligeia by using ambiguous words to refer to the corpse • 44 **the thing . . . enshrouded,** in the later version, replaced "the Lady of Tremaine" of the earlier version • 47 **the stature,** added in the second version, perhaps to indicate more definitely that the change had taken place • 53 **Could it indeed,** and the remainder of this sentence, added in the revised version. This emphasizes the contrast, which now becomes important

The Murders in the Rue Morgue

Mr. Howard Haycraft, in his history of detective fiction, Murder for Pleasure, calls this "the world's first detective story," and in 1941 many authors and lovers of this kind of narrative paid a centenary tribute to Poe as the inventor of the form. Besides originating the general form, in his experiment Poe originated practically all the important technical devices constantly used in narratives of crime and detection. Among such devices, Mr. Haycraft lists "the transcendent and eccentric detective; the admiring and slightly stupid foil; the well-intentioned blundering and unimaginativeness of the official guardians of the law; the locked room convention; the pointing finger of unjust suspicion; the solution by surprise; deduction by putting one's self in another's position (now called psychology); concealment by means of the ultra-obvious; the staged ruse to force the culprit's hand; even the expansive and condescending explanation when the chase is done."

The technique of the story is clearly related to that of Poe's horror stories. Here, too, events have an effect upon a sympathetic character, the narrator, and supposedly a similar effect upon the reader. Here, however, the events —Dupin's acts and deductions—presumably have their chief effect not on the "soul" or "heart" but on the "mind." The rather slow start, with its emphasis upon the deductive process, is therefore appropriate.

What song the Syrens sang, or what name Achilles assumed when he hid himself among women, although puzzling questions, are not beyond all *conjecture.*—SIR THOMAS BROWNE

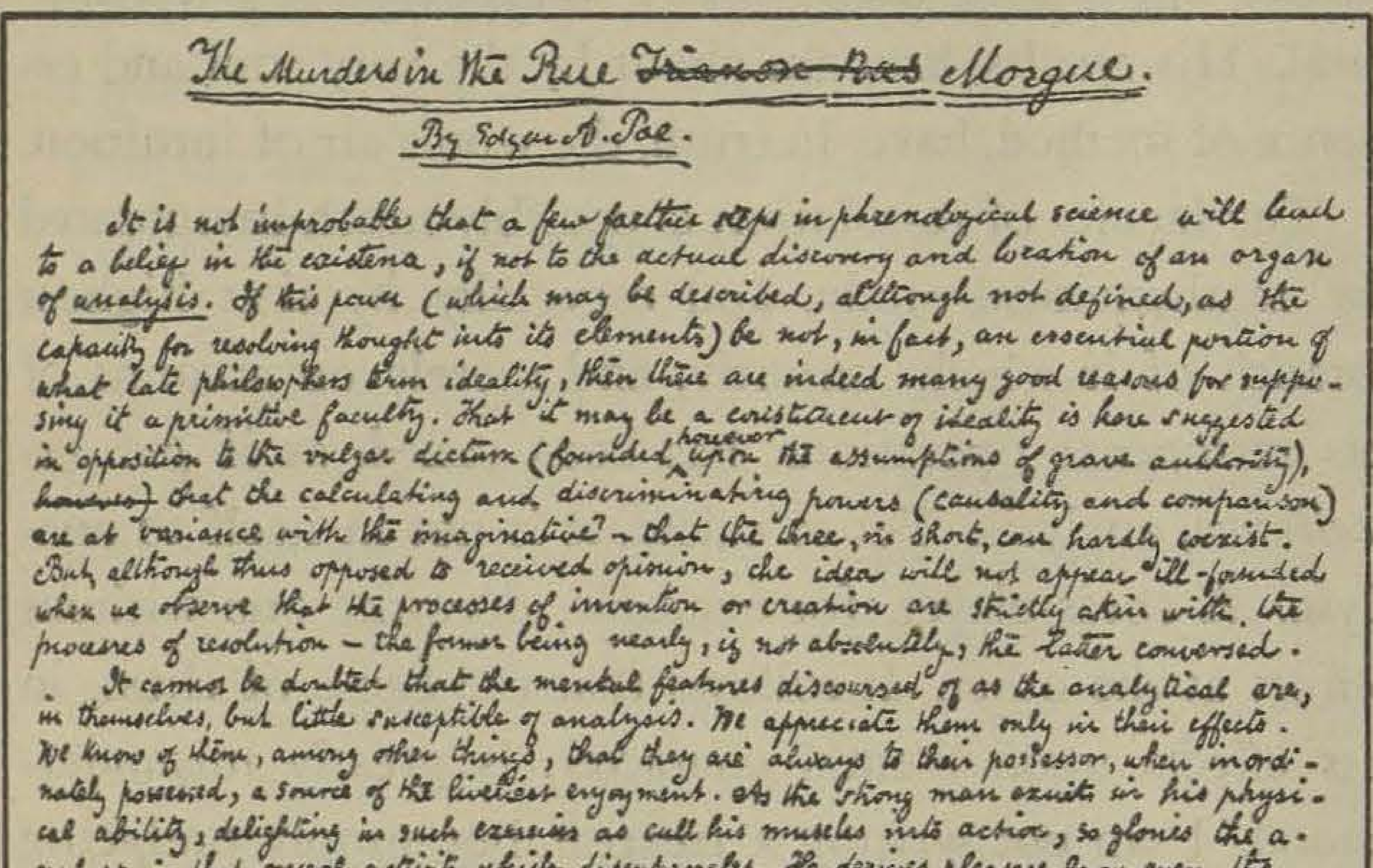
The mental features discoursed of as the analytical, are, in themselves, but little susceptible of analysis. We appreciate them only in their effects. We know of them, among other things, that they are always to their possessor, when inordinately possessed, a source of the liveliest enjoyment. As the strong man exults in his physical ability, delighting in such exercises as call his muscles into action, so glories the analyst in that moral activity which *disentangles.* He derives pleasure from even the most trivial occupations bringing his talent into play. He is fond of enigmas, of conundrums, of hieroglyphics; exhibiting in his solutions of each a degree of *acumen* which appears to the ordinary apprehension præternatural. His results, brought about by the very soul and essence of method, have, in truth, the whole air of intuition.

The faculty of re-solution is possibly much invigorated by mathematical study, and especially by that highest branch of it which, unjustly, and merely on account of its retrograde operations, has been called, as if *par excellence,* analysis. Yet to calculate is not in itself to analyse. A chess-player, for example, does the one without effort at the other. It follows that the game of chess, in its effects upon mental character, is greatly misunderstood. I am not writing a treatise, but simply prefacing a somewhat peculiar narrative by observations very much at random; I will, therefore, take occasion to assert that the higher powers of the reflective intellect are more decidedly and more usefully tasked by the unostentatious game of draughts than by all the elaborate frivolity of chess. In this latter, where the pieces have different and *bizarre* motions, with various and variable values, what is only complex is mistaken (a not unusual error) for what is profound. The *attention* is here called powerfully into play. If it flag for an instant, an oversight is committed, resulting in injury or defeat. The possible moves being not only manifold but involute, the chances of such oversights are multiplied; and in nine cases out of ten it is the more concentrative rather than the more acute player who conquers. In draughts, on the contrary, where the movers are *unique* and have but little variation, the probabilities of inadvertence are diminished, and the mere attention being left comparatively unemployed, what advantages are obtained by either party are obtained by superior *acumen.* To be less abstract—Let us suppose a game of draughts where the pieces are reduced to four kings, and where, of course, no oversight

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What song. . . The quotation is from Chap. 5 of **Hydriotaphia**, or **Urn-Burial** (1658) • 19 **par excellence,** preëminently

is to be expected. It is obvious that here the victory can be decided (the players being at all equal) only by some *recherche* movement, the result of some strong exertion of the intellect. Deprived of ordinary resources, the analyst throws himself into the spirit of his opponent, identifies himself therewith, and not unfrequently sees thus, at a glance, the sole methods (sometimes indeed absurdly simple ones) by which he may seduce into error or hurry into miscalculation.



The Murders in the Rue ~~Trianon Bas~~ Morgue.

By Edgar A. Poe.

It is not improbable that a few farther steps in phrenological science will lead to a belief in the existence, if not to the actual discovery and location of an organ of analysis. If this power (which may be described, although not defined, as the capacity for resolving thought into its elements) be not, in fact, an essential portion of what late philosophers term ideality, then there are indeed many good reasons for supposing it a primitive faculty. That it may be a constituent of ideality is here suggested in opposition to the vulgar dictum (founded, however, upon the assumptions of grave authority), ~~however~~ that the calculating and discriminating powers (causality and comparison) are at variance with the imaginative — that the three, in short, can hardly coexist. But although thus opposed to received opinion, the idea will not appear ill-founded when we observe that the processes of invention or creation are strictly akin with the processes of resolution — the former being nearly, if not absolutely, the latter conversed.

It cannot be doubted that the mental features discoursed of as the analytical are, in themselves, but little susceptible of analysis. We appreciate them only in their effects. We know of them, among other things, that they are always to their possessor, when inordinately possessed, a source of the liveliest enjoyment. As the strong man exults in his physical ability, delighting in such exercises as call his muscles into action, so glories the analyst in that moral activity which disentangles. He derives pleasure from even the most trivial occupations bringing his talent into play. He is fond of enigmas, of conundrums, of hieroglyphics — exhibiting in his solutions of each and all a degree of acumen which appears to the ordinary apprehension praeternatural. His results, brought about by the very soul and essence of method, have, in truth, the whole air of intuition.

The faculty in question is possibly much invigorated by mathematical study, and especially by that highest branch of it which, unjustly, and merely on account of its retrograde operations, has been called, as if par excellence, analysis. Yet to calculate is not in itself to analyse. A chess-player, for example, does the one without effort at the other

Opening paragraphs of Poe's original manuscript.

Whist has long been noted for its influence upon what is termed the calculating power; and men of the highest order of intellect have been known to take an apparently unaccountable delight in it, while eschewing chess as frivolous. Beyond doubt there is nothing of a similar nature so greatly tasking the faculty of analysis. The best chess-player in Christendom *may* be little more than the best player of chess; but proficiency in whist implies capacity for success in all those more important undertakings where mind struggles with mind. When I say proficiency, I mean that perfection in the game which includes a comprehension of *all* the sources whence legitimate advantage may be derived. These are not only manifold but multiform, and lie frequently among recesses of thought altogether inaccessible to the ordinary understanding. To observe attentively is to remember distinctly; and, so far, the concentrative chess-player will do very well at whist; while the rules of Hoyle (themselves based upon the mere mechanism of the game) are sufficiently and generally comprehensible. Thus to have a retentive memory, and to proceed by "the book," are points commonly regarded as the sum total of good playing. But it is in matters beyond the limits of mere rule that the skill of the analyst is evinced. He makes, in silence, a host of observations and inferences. So, perhaps, do his companions; and the difference in the extent of the information obtained, lies not so much in the validity of the inference as in the quality of the observation. The necessary knowledge is that of *what* to observe. Our player confines himself not at all; nor, because the game is the object, does he reject deductions from things external to the game. He examines the countenance of his partner, comparing it carefully with that of each of his opponents. He considers the mode of assorting the cards in each hand; often counting trump by trump, and honor by honor, through the glances bestowed by their holders upon each. He notes every variation of face as the play progresses, gathering a fund of thought from the differences in the expression of certainty, of surprise, of triumph, or chagrin. From the manner of gathering up a trick he judges whether the person taking it can make another in the suit. He recognises what is played through feint, by the air with which it is thrown upon the table. A casual or inadvertent word; the accidental dropping or turning of a card, with the accompanying anxiety or carelessness in regard to its concealment; the counting of the tricks, with the order of their arrangement; embarrassment, hesitation, eagerness, or trepidation—all afford, to his apparently intuitive perception, indications of the true state of affairs. The first two or three rounds having been played, he is in full possession of the contents of each hand, and thenceforward puts down his cards with as absolute a precision of purpose as if the rest of the party had turned outward the faces of their own.

The analytical power should not be confounded with simple ingenuity; for while the analyst is necessarily ingenious, the ingenious man is often remarkably incapable of analysis. The constructive or combining power, by which ingenuity is usually manifested, and to which the phrenologists (I believe erroneously) have assigned a separate organ, supposing it a primitive faculty, has been so frequently seen in those whose intellect bordered otherwise upon idiocy, as to have attracted general ob-

servation among writers on morals. Between ingenuity and the analytic ability there exists a difference far greater indeed, than that between the fancy and the imagination, but of a character very strictly analogous. It will be found, in fact, that the ingenious are always fanciful, and the *truly* imaginative never otherwise than analytic.

The narrative which follows will appear to the reader somewhat in the light of a commentary upon the propositions just advanced.

Residing in Paris during the spring and part of the summer of 18—, I there became acquainted with a Monsieur C. Auguste Dupin. This young gentleman was of an excellent—indeed of an illustrious family, but, by a variety of untoward events, had been reduced to such poverty that the energy of his character succumbed beneath it, and he ceased to bestir himself in the world, or to care for the retrieval of his fortunes. By courtesy of his creditors, there still remained in his possession a small remnant of his patrimony; and, upon the income arising from this, he managed, by means of a rigorous economy, to procure the necessaries of life, without troubling himself about its superfluities. Books, indeed, were his sole luxuries, and in Paris these are easily obtained.

Our first meeting was at an obscure library in the Rue Montmartre, where the accident of our both being in search of the same very rare and very remarkable volume, brought us into closer communion. We saw each other again and again. I was deeply interested in the little family history which he detailed to me with all that candor which a Frenchman indulges whenever mere self is his theme. I was astonished, too, at the vast extent of his reading; and, above all, I felt my soul enkindled within me by the wild fervor, and the vivid freshness of his imagination. Seeking in Paris the objects I then sought, I felt that the society of such a man would be a treasure beyond price; and this feeling I frankly confided to him. It was at length arranged that we should live together during my stay in the city; and as my worldly circumstances were somewhat less embarrassed than his own, I was permitted to be at the expense of renting, and furnishing in a style which suited the rather fantastic gloom of our common temper, a time-eaten and grotesque mansion, long deserted through superstitions into which we did not inquire, and tottering to its fall in a retired and desolate portion of the Faubourg St. Germain.

Had the routine of our life at this place been known to the world, we should have been regarded as madmen —although, perhaps, as madmen of a harmless nature. Our seclusion was perfect. We admitted no visitors. Indeed the locality of our retirement had been carefully kept a secret from my own former associates; and it had been many years since Dupin had ceased to know or be known in Paris. We existed within ourselves alone.

It was a freak of fancy in my friend (for what else shall I call it?) to be enamored of the Night for her own sake; and into this *bizarrerie,* as into all his others, I quietly fell, giving myself up to his wild whims with a perfect *abandon.* The sable divinity would not herself dwell with us always; but we could counterfeit her presence. At the first dawn of the morning we closed all the massy shutters of our old building; lighting a couple of tapers which, strongly perfumed, threw out only the ghastliest and feeblest of rays. By the aid of these we then busied our souls in dreams—reading, writing, or conversing, until warned by the clock of the advent of the true Darkness. Then we sallied forth into the streets, arm in arm, continuing the topics of the day, or roaming far and wide until a late hour, seeking amid the wild lights and shadows of the populous city, that infinity of mental excitement which quiet observation can afford.

At such times I could not help remarking and admiring (although from his rich ideality I had been prepared to expect it) a peculiar analytic ability in Dupin. He seemed, too, to take an eager delight in its exercise—if not exactly in its display—and did not hesitate to confess the pleasure thus derived. He boasted to me, with a low chuckling laugh, that most men, in respect to himself, wore windows in their bosoms, and was wont to follow up such assertions by direct and very startling proofs of his intimate knowledge of my own. His manner at these moments was frigid and abstract; his eyes were vacant in expression; while his voice, usually a rich tenor, rose into a treble which would have sounded petulantly but for the deliberateness and entire distinctness of the enun-

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12 Dupin. There was in France at the time "an illustrious family" bearing this name. André Marie Jean Jacques Dupin, president of the Chamber of Deputies in 1840 and a writer on French criminal procedure, may have suggested the name to Poe • **45 Faubourg St. Germain,** a fashionable district on the south bank of the Seine

ciation. Observing him in these moods, I often dwelt meditatively upon the old philosophy of the Bi-Part Soul, and amused myself with the fancy of a double Dupin—the creative and the resolvent.

Let it not be supposed, from what I have just said, that I am detailing any mystery, or penning any romance. What I have described in the Frenchman, was merely the result of an excited, or perhaps of a diseased intelligence. But of the character of his remarks at the periods in question an example will best convey the idea.

We were strolling one night down a long dirty street, in the vicinity of the Palais Royal. Being both, apparently, occupied with thought, neither of us had spoken a syllable for fifteen minutes at least. All at once Dupin broke forth with these words:

"He is a very little fellow, that's true, and would do better for the *Théâtre des Variétés.*"

"There can be no doubt of that," I replied unwittingly and not at first observing (so much had I been absorbed in reflection) the extraordinary manner in which the speaker had chimed in with my meditations. In an instant afterward I recollected myself, and my astonishment was profound.

"Dupin," said I, gravely, "this is beyond my comprehension. I do not hesitate to say that I am amazed, and can scarcely credit my senses. How was it possible you should know I was thinking of—?" Here I paused, to ascertain beyond a doubt whether he really knew of whom I thought.

"—of Chantilly," said he, "why do you pause? You were remarking to yourself that his diminutive figure unfitted him for tragedy."

This was precisely what had formed the subject of my reflections. Chantilly was a *quondam* cobbler of the Rue St. Denis, who, becoming stage-mad, had attempted the *role* of Xerxes, in Crébillon's tragedy so called, and been notoriously Pasquinaded for his pains.

"Tell me, for Heaven's sake," I exclaimed, "the method —if method there is—by which you have been enabled to fathom my soul in this matter." In fact I was even more startled than I would have been willing to express.

"It was the fruiterer," replied my friend, "who brought you to the conclusion that the mender of soles was not of sufficient height for Xerxes *et id genus omne.*"

"The fruiterer!—you astonish me—I know no fruiterer whomsoever."

"The man who ran up against you as we entered the street—it may have been fifteen minutes ago."

I now remembered that, in fact, a fruiterer, carrying upon his head a large basket of apples, had nearly thrown me down, by accident, as we passed from the Rue C— into the thoroughfare where we stood; but what this had to do with Chantilly I could not possibly understand.

There was not a particle of *charlatanerie* about Dupin. "I will explain," he said, "and that you may comprehend all clearly, we will first retrace the course of your meditations, from the moment in which I spoke to you until that of the *rencontre* with the fruiterer in question. The larger links of the chain run thus—Chantilly, Orion, Dr. Nichols, Epicurus, Stereotomy, the street stones, the fruiterer."

There are few persons who have not, at some period of their lives, amused themselves in retracing the steps by which particular conclusions of their own minds have been attained. The occupation is often full of interest; and he who attempts it for the first time is astonished by the apparently illimitable distance and incoherence between the starting-point and the goal. What, then, must have been my amazement when I heard the Frenchman speak what he had just spoken, and when I could not help acknowledging that he had spoken the truth. He continued:

"We had been talking of horses, if I remember aright, just before leaving the Rue C—. This was the last subject we discussed. As we crossed into the street, a fruiterer, with a large basket upon his head, brushing quickly past us, thrust you upon a pile of paving-stones collected at a point where the causeway is undergoing repair. You stepped upon one of the loose fragments, slipped slightly, strained your ankle, appeared vexed or sulky, muttered a few words, turned to look at the pile, and then proceeded in silence. I was not particularly attentive to what you did; but observation has become with me, of late, a species of necessity.

"You kept your eyes upon the ground—glancing, with a petulant expression, at the holes and ruts in the

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17 Théâtre des Variétés, French vaudeville theater • 34 **Rue St. Denis**, a street in Paris • 36 **Crébillon**, Prosper Jolyot de Crébillon (1674-1762), a French tragic dramatist. His **Xerxes** was written in 1714 • 44 **et . . . omne**, and all of that sort • 59 **Orion**, a constellation • 60 **Epicurus**, Greek philosopher (342?-270 B.C.)

pavement (so that I saw you were still thinking of the stones), until we reached the little alley called Lamartine, which has been paved, by way of experiment, with the overlapping and riveted blocks. Here your countenance brightened up, and, perceiving your lips move, I could not doubt that you murmured the word 'stereotomy' a term very affectedly applied to this species of pavement. I knew that you could not say to yourself 'stereotomy' without being brought to think of atomies, and thus of the theories of Epicurus; and since, when we discussed this subject not very long ago, I mentioned to you how singularly, yet with how little notice, the vague guesses of that noble Greek had met with confirmation in the late nebular cosmogony, I felt that you could not avoid casting your eyes upward to the great *nebula* in Orion, and I certainly expected that you would do so. You did look up; and I was assured that I had correctly followed your steps. But in that bitter *tirade* upon Chantilly, which appeared in yesterday's '*Musee*,' the satirist, making some disgraceful allusions to the cobbler's change of name upon assuming the buskin, quoted a Latin line about which we have often conversed. I mean the line

Perdidit antiquum litera prima sonum.

I had told you that this was in reference to Orion, formerly written Urion; and from certain pungencies connected with this explanation, I was aware that you could not have forgotten it. It was clear, therefore, that you would not fail to combine the two ideas of Orion and Chantilly. That you did combine them I saw by the character of the smile which passed over your lips. You thought of the poor cobbler's immolation. So far you had been stooping in your gait; but now I saw you draw yourself up to your full height. I was then sure that you reflected upon the diminutive figure of Chantilly. At this point I interrupted your meditations to remark that as, in fact, he *was* a very little fellow—that Chantilly—he would do better at the *Théâtre des Variétés*."

Not long after this, we were looking over an evening edition of the *Gazette des Tribunaux*, when the following paragraphs arrested our attention.

"EXTRAORDINARY MURDERS.—This morning, about three o'clock, the inhabitants of the Quartier St. Roch were aroused from sleep by a succession of terrific shrieks, issuing, apparently, from the fourth story of a house in the Rue Morgue, known to be in the sole occupancy of one Madame L'Espanaye, and her daughter, Mademoiselle Camille L'Espanaye. After some delay, occasioned by a fruitless attempt to procure admission in the usual manner, the gateway was broken in with a crowbar, and eight or ten of the neighbors entered, accompanied by two *gendarmes*. By this time the cries had ceased; but, as the party rushed up the first flight of stairs, two or more rough voices, in angry contention, were distinguished, and seemed to proceed from the upper part of the house. As the second landing was reached, these sounds, also, had ceased, and everything remained perfectly quiet. The party spread themselves, and hurried from room to room. Upon arriving at a large back chamber in the fourth story (the door of which, being found locked, with the key inside, was forced open,) a spectacle presented itself which struck every one present not less with horror than with astonishment.

"The apartment was in the wildest disorder—the furniture broken and thrown about in all directions. There was only one bedstead; and from this the bed had been removed, and thrown into the middle of the floor. On a chair lay a razor, besmeared with blood. On the hearth were two or three long and thick tresses of grey human hair, also dabbled in blood, and seeming to have been pulled out by the roots. On the floor were found four Napoleons, an ear-ring of topaz, three large silver spoons, three smaller of *metal d'Alger,* and two bags, containing nearly four thousand francs in gold. The drawers of a *bureau,* which stood in one corner, were open, and had been, apparently, rifled, although many articles still remained in them. A small iron safe was discovered under the *bed* (not under the bedstead). It was open, with the key still in the door. It had no contents beyond a few old letters, and other papers of little consequence.

"Of Madame L'Espanaye no traces were here seen; but an unusual quantity of soot being observed in the fire-place, a search was made in the chimney, and (horrible to relate!) the corpse of the daughter, head downward, was dragged therefrom; it having been thus forced up the narrow aperture for a considerable distance. The body was quite warm. Upon examining it, many exco-

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24 **Perdidit . . . sonum.** The first letter destroys the antique sound • 73 **metal d'Alger,** an alloy used in imitation of silver

riations were perceived, no doubt occasioned by the violence with which it had been thrust up and disengaged. Upon the face were many severe scratches, and, upon the throat, dark bruises, and deep indentations of fingernails, as if the deceased had been throttled to death.

"After a thorough investigation of every portion of the house, without farther discovery, the party made its way into a small paved yard in the rear of the building, where lay the corpse of the old lady, with her throat so entirely cut that, upon an attempt to raise her, the head fell off. The body, as well as the head, was fearfully mutilated—the former so much so as scarcely to retain any semblance of humanity.

"To this horrible mystery there is not as yet, we believe, the slightest clew."

The next day's paper had these additional particulars.

"*The Tragedy in the Rue Morgue.* Many individuals have been examined in relation to this most extraordinary and frightful affair." [the word *'affaire'* has not yet, in France, that levity of import which it conveys with us], "but nothing whatever has transpired to throw light upon it. We give below all the material testimony elicited.

"*Pauline Dubourg,* laundress, deposes that she has known both the deceased for three years, having washed for them during that period. The old lady and her daughter seemed on good terms—very affectionate towards each other. They were excellent pay. Could not speak in regard to their mode or means of living. Believed that Madame L. told fortunes for means of living. Was reputed to have money put by. Never met any persons in the house when she called for the clothes or took them home. Was sure that they had no servant in employ. There appeared to be no furniture in any part of the building except in the fourth story.

"*Pierre Moreau,* tobacconist, deposes that he has been in the habit of selling small quantities of tobacco and snuff to Madame L'Espanaye for nearly four years. Was born in the neighborhood, and has always resided there. The deceased and her daughter had occupied the house in which the corpses were found, for more than six years. It was formerly occupied by a jeweller, who under-let the upper rooms to various persons. The house was the property of Madame L. She became dissatisfied with the abuse of the premises by her tenant, and moved into them herself, refusing to let any portion. The old lady was childish. Witness had seen the daughter some five or six times during the six years. The two lived an exceedingly retired life—were reputed to have money. Had heard it said among the neighbors that Madame L. told fortunes—did not believe it. Had never seen any person enter the door except the old lady and her daughter, a porter once or twice, and a physician some eight or ten times.

"Many other persons, neighbors, gave evidence to the same effect. No one was spoken of as frequenting the house. It was not known whether there were any living connexions of Madame L. and her daughter. The shutters of the front windows were seldom opened. Those in the rear were always closed, with the exception of the large back room, fourth story. The house was a good house—not very old.

"*Isidore Muset, gendarme,* deposes that he was called to the house about three o'clock in the morning, and found some twenty or thirty persons at the gateway, endeavoring to gain admittance. Forced it open, at length, with a bayonet—not with a crowbar. Had but little difficulty in getting it open, on account of its being a double or folding gate, and bolted neither at bottom nor top. The shrieks were continued until the gate was forced—and then suddenly ceased. They seemed to be screams of some person (or persons) in great agony—were loud and drawn out, not short and quick. Witness led the way upstairs. Upon reaching the first landing, heard two voices in loud and angry contention—the one a gruff voice, the other much shriller—a very strange voice. Could distinguish some words of the former, which was that of a Frenchman. Was positive that it was not a woman's voice. Could distinguish the words 'sacré' and 'diable.' The shrill voice was that of a foreigner. Could not be sure whether it was the voice of a man or of a woman. Could not make out what was said, but believed the language to be Spanish. The state of the room and of the bodies was described by this witness as we described them yesterday.

"*Henri Duval,* a neighbor, and by trade a silver-smith, deposes that he was one of the party who first entered the house. Corroborates the testimony of Muset in general. As soon as they forced an entrance, they reclosed the door, to keep out the crowd, which collected very fast, notwithstanding the lateness of the hour. The shrill voice, this witness thinks, was that of an Italian. Was certain it was not French. Could not be sure that it was

a man's voice. It might have been a woman's. Was not acquainted with the Italian language. Could not distinguish the words, but was convinced by the intonation that the speaker was an Italian. Knew Madame L. and her daughter. Had conversed with both frequently. Was sure that the shrill voice was not that of either of the deceased.

"——*Odenheimer, restaurateur.* This witness volunteered his testimony. Not speaking French, was examined through an interpreter. Is a native of Amsterdam. Was passing the house at the time of the shrieks. They lasted for several minutes—probably ten. They were long and loud—very awful and distressing. Was one of those who entered the building. Corroborated the previous evidence in every respect but one. Was sure that the shrill voice was that of a man—of a Frenchman. Could not distinguish the words uttered. They were loud and quick—unequal—spoken apparently in fear as well as in anger. The voice was harsh—not so shrill as harsh. Could not call it a shrill voice. The gruff voice said repeatedly 'sacré,' 'diable,' and once 'mon Dieu.'

"*Jules Mignaud,* banker, of the firm of Mignaud et Fils, Rue Deloraine. Is the elder Mignaud. Madame L'Espanaye had some property. Had opened an account with his banking house in the spring of the year—(eight years previously). Made frequent deposits in small sums. Had checked for nothing until the third day before her death, when she took out in person the sum of 4000 francs. This sum was paid in gold, and a clerk sent home with the money.

"*Adolphe Le Bon,* clerk to Mignaud et Fils, deposes that on the day in question, about noon, he accompanied Madame L'Espanaye to her residence with the 4000 francs, put up in two bags. Upon the door being opened, Mademoiselle L. appeared and took from his hands one of the bags, while the old lady relieved him of the other. He then bowed and departed. Did not see any person in the street at the time. It is a byestreet—very lonely.

"*William Bird,* tailor, deposes that he was one of the party who entered the house. Is an Englishman. Has lived in Paris two years. Was one of the first to ascend the stairs. Heard the voices in contention. The gruff voice was that of a Frenchman. Could make out several words, but cannot now remember all. Heard distinctly *'sacré,'* and *'mon Dieu.'* There was a sound at the moment as if of several persons struggling—a scraping and scuffling sound. The shrill voice was very loud—louder than the gruff one. Is sure that it was not the voice of an Englishman. Appeared to be that of a German. Might have been a woman's voice. Does not understand German.

"Four of the above-named witnesses, being recalled, deposed that the door of the chamber in which was found the body of Mademoiselle L. was locked on the inside when the party reached it. Every thing was perfectly silent—no groans or noises of any kind. Upon forcing the door no person was seen. The windows, both of the back and the front room, were down and firmly fastened from within. A door between the two rooms was closed, but not locked. The door leading from the front room into the passage was locked, with the key on the inside. A small room in the front of the house, on the fourth story, at the head of the passage, was open, the door being ajar. This room was crowded with old beds, boxes, and so forth. These were carefully removed and searched. There was not an inch of any portion of the house which was not carefully searched. Sweeps were sent up and down the chimneys. The house was a four story one, with garrets *(mansardes).* A trap-door on the roof was nailed down securely—did not appear to have been opened for years. The time elapsing between the hearing of the voices in contention and the breaking open of the room door, was variously stated by the witnesses. Some made it as short as three minutes—some as long as five. The door was opened with difficulty.

"*Alfonzo Garcio,* undertaker, deposes that he resides in the Rue Morgue. Is a native of Spain. Was one of the party who entered the house. Did not proceed up stairs. Is nervous, and was apprehensive of the consequences of agitation. Heard the voices in contention. The gruff voice was that of a Frenchman. Could not distinguish what was said. The shrill voice was that of an Englishman—is sure of this. Does not understand the English language, but judges by the intonation.

"*Alberto Montani,* confectioner, deposes that he was among the first to ascend the stairs. Heard the voices in question. The gruff voice was that of a Frenchman. Distinguished several words. The speaker appeared to be expostulating. Could not make out the words of the shrill voice. Spoke quick and unevenly. Thinks it the voice of a Russian. Corroborates the general testimony. Is an Italian. Never conversed with a native of Russia.

"Several witnesses, recalled, here testified that the chimneys of all the rooms on the fourth story were too narrow to admit the passage of a human being. By 'sweeps' were meant cylindrical sweeping-brushes, such as are employed by those who clean chimneys. These brushes were passed up and down every flue in the house. There is no back passage by which any one could have descended while the party proceeded upstairs. The body of Mademoiselle L'Espanaye was so firmly wedged in the chimney that it could not be got down until four or five of the party united their strength.

"*Paul Dumas,* physician, deposes that he was called to view the bodies about day-break. They were both then lying on the sacking of the bedstead in the chamber where Mademoiselle L. was found. The corpse of the young lady was much bruised and excoriated. The fact that it had been thrust up the chimney would sufficiently account for these appearances. The throat was greatly chafed. There were several deep scratches just below the chin, together with a series of livid spots which were evidently the impressions of fingers. The face was fearfully discolored and the eye-balls protruded. The tongue had been partially bitten through. A large bruise was discovered upon the pit of the stomach, produced, apparently, by the pressure of a knee. In the opinion of M. Dumas, Mademoiselle L'Espanaye had been throttled to death by some person or persons unknown. The corpse of the mother was horribly mutilated. All the bones of the right leg and arm were more or less shattered. The left *tibia* much splintered, as well as all the ribs of the left side. Whole body dreadfully bruised and discolored. It was not possible to say how the injuries had been inflicted. A heavy club of wood, or a broad bar of iron—a chair—any large, heavy, and obtuse weapon would have produced such results, if wielded by the hands of a very powerful man. No woman could have inflicted the blows with any weapon. The head of the deceased, when seen by witness, was entirely separated from the body, and was also greatly shattered. The throat had evidently been cut with some very sharp instrument,—probably with a razor.

"*Alexandre Etienne,* surgeon, was called with M. Dumas to view the bodies. Corroborated the testimony and opinions of M. Dumas.

"Nothing farther of importance was elicited, although several other persons were examined. A murder so mysterious, and so perplexing in all its particulars, was never before committed in Paris—if indeed a murder has been committed at all. The police are entirely at fault—an unusual occurrence in affairs of this nature. There is not, however, the shadow of a clew apparent."

The evening edition of the paper stated that the greatest excitement still continued in the Quartier St. Roch—that the premises in question had been carefully re-searched, and fresh examinations of witnesses instituted, but all to no purpose. A postscript, however, mentioned that Adolphe Le Bon had been arrested and imprisoned—although nothing appeared to criminate him, beyond the facts already detailed.

Dupin seemed singularly interested in the progress of this affair—at least so I judged from his manner, for he made no comments. It was only after the announcement that Le Bon had been imprisoned, that he asked me my opinion respecting the murders.

I could merely agree with all Paris in considering them an insoluble mystery. I saw no means by which it would be possible to trace the murderer.

"We must not judge of the means," said Dupin, "by this shell of an examination. The Parisian police, so much extolled for *acumen,* are cunning, but no more. There is no method in their proceedings, beyond the method of the moment. They make a vast parade of measures; but, not unfrequently, these are so ill adapted to the objects proposed, as to put us in mind of Monsieur Jourdain's calling for his *robe-de-chambre—pour mieux entendre la musique.* The results attained by them are not unfrequently surprising, but, for the most part, are brought about by simple diligence and activity. When these qualities are unavailing, their schemes fail. Vidocq, for example, was a good guesser and a persevering man. But, without educated thought, he erred continually by the very intensity of his investigations. He impaired his vision by holding the object too close. He might see, perhaps, one or two points with unusual clearness, but in so doing he, necessarily, lost sight of the

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74 **Monsieur Jourdain,** a naïve character in Molière's play, **Le bourgeois gentilhomme,** who, as the quotation indicates, calls for his dressing gown "in order that he may listen better to the music" • 80 **Vidocq,** Eugène François Vidocq (1775-1857), a French detective, whose picturesque **Mémoires** (1829) were doubtless of great value to Poe in suggesting methods of writing about crime

matter as a whole. Thus there is such a thing as being too profound. Truth is not always in a well. In fact, as regards the more important knowledge, I do believe that she is invariably superficial. The depth lies in the valleys where we seek her, and not upon the mountain-tops where she is found. The modes and sources of this kind of error are well typified in the contemplation of the heavenly bodies. To look at a star by glances—to view it in a side-long way, by turning toward it the exterior portions of the *retina* (more susceptible of feeble impressions of light than the interior), is to behold the star distinctly—is to have the best appreciation of its lustre—a lustre which grows dim just in proportion as we turn our vision *fully* upon it. A greater number of rays actually fall upon the eye in the latter case, but, in the former, there is the more refined capacity for comprehension. By undue profundity we perplex and enfeeble thought; and it is possible to make even Venus herself vanish from the firmament by a scrutiny too sustained, too concentrated, or too direct.

"As for these murders, let us enter into some examinations for ourselves, before we make up an opinion respecting them. An inquiry will afford us amusement" [I thought this an odd term, so applied, but said nothing], "and, besides, Le Bon once rendered me a service for which I am not ungrateful. We will go and see the premises with our own eyes. I know G—, the Prefect of Police, and shall have no difficulty in obtaining the necessary permission."

The permission was obtained, and we proceeded at once to the Rue Morgue. This is one of those miserable thoroughfares which intervene between the Rue Richelieu and the Rue St. Roch. It was late in the afternoon when we reached it; as this quarter is at a great distance from that in which we resided. The house was readily found; for there were still many persons gazing up at the closed shutters, with an objectless curiosity, from the opposite side of the way. It was an ordinary Parisian house, with a gateway, on one side of which was a glazed watchbox, with a sliding panel in the window, indicating a *loge de concierge.* Before going in we walked up the street, turned down an alley, and then, again turning, passed in the rear of the building—Dupin, meanwhile, examining the whole neighborhood, as well as the house, with a minuteness of attention for which I could see no possible object.

Retracing our steps, we came again to the front of the dwelling, rang, and, having shown our credentials, were admitted by the agents in charge. We went up stairs—into the chamber where the body of Mademoiselle L'Espanaye had been found, and where both the deceased still lay. I saw nothing beyond what had been stated in the *Gazette des Tribunaux.* Dupin scrutinized everything—not excepting the bodies of the victims. We then went into the other rooms, and into the yard; a *gendarme* accompanying us throughout. The examination occupied us until dark, when we took our departure. On our way home my companion stepped in for a moment at the office of one of the daily papers. I have said that the whims of my friend were manifold, and *Je les ménageais;*—for this phrase there is no English equivalent. It was his humor, now, to decline all conversation on the subject of the murder, until about noon the next day. He then asked me, suddenly, if I had observed anything *peculiar* at the scene of the atrocity.

There was something in his manner of emphasizing the word "peculiar," which caused me to shudder, without knowing why.

"No, nothing *peculiar,*" I said; "nothing more, at least, than we both saw stated in the paper."

"The *Gazette,*" he replied, "has not entered, I fear into the unusual horror of the thing. But dismiss the idle opinions of this print. It appears to me that this mystery is considered insoluble, for the very reason which should cause it to be regarded as easy of solution—I mean for the *outre* character of its features. The police are confounded by the seeming absence of motive—not for the murder itself—but for the atrocity of the murder. They are puzzled, too, by the seeming impossibility of reconciling the voices heard in contention, with the facts that no one was discovered upstairs but the assassinated Mademoiselle L'Espanaye, and that there was no means of egress without the notice of the party ascending. The wild disorder of the room; the corpse thrust, with the head downward, up the chimney; the frightful mutilation of the body of the old lady; these considerations, with those just mentioned, and others which I need not mention, have sufficed to paralyze the powers, by putting

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41 loge de concierge, janitor's lodge • 61 Je les ménageais, I humored them cautiously

completely at fault the boasted *acumen,* of the government agents. They have fallen into the gross but common error of confounding the unusual with the abstruse. But it is by these deviations from the plane of the ordinary, that reason feels its way, if at all, in its search for the true. In investigations such as we are now pursuing, it should not be so much asked 'what has occurred,' as 'what has occurred that has never occurred before.' In fact, the facility with which I shall arrive, or have arrived, at the solution of this mystery, is in the direct ratio of its apparent insolubility in the eyes of the police."

I stared at the speaker in mute astonishment.

"I am now awaiting," continued he, looking toward the door of our apartment—"I am now awaiting a person who, although perhaps not the perpetrator of these butcheries, must have been in some measure implicated in their perpetration. Of the worst portion of the crimes committed, it is probable that he is innocent. I hope that I am right in this supposition; for upon it I build my expectation of reading the entire riddle. I look for the man here—in this room—every moment. It is true that he may not arrive; but the probability is that he will. Should he come, it will be necessary to detain him. Here are pistols; and we both know how to use them when occasion demands their use."

I took the pistols, scarcely knowing what I did, or believing what I heard, while Dupin went on, very much as if in a soliloquy. I have already spoken of his abstract manner at such times. His discourse was addressed to myself; but his voice, although by no means loud, had that intonation which is commonly employed in speaking to some one at a great distance. His eyes, vacant in expression, regarded only the wall.

"That the voices heard in contention," he said, "by the party upon the stairs, were not the voices of the women themselves, was fully proved by the evidence. This relieves us of all doubt upon the question whether the old lady could have first destroyed the daughter, and afterward have committed suicide. I speak of this point chiefly for the sake of method; for the strength of Madame L'Espanaye would have been utterly unequal to the task of thrusting her daughter's corpse up the chimney as it was found; and the nature of the wounds upon her own person entirely preclude the idea of self-destruction. Murder, then, has been committed by some third party; and the voices of this third party were those heard in contention. Let me now advert—not to the whole testimony respecting these voices—but to what was *peculiar* in that testimony. Did you observe any thing peculiar about it?"

I remarked that, while all the witnesses agreed in supposing the gruff voice to be that of a Frenchman, there was much disagreement in regard to the shrill, or, as one individual termed it, the harsh voice.

"That was evidence itself," said Dupin, "but it was not the peculiarity of the evidence. You have observed nothing distinctive. Yet there *was* something to be observed. The witnesses, as you remark, agreed about the gruff voice; they were here unanimous. But in regard to the shrill voice, the peculiarity is—not that they disagreed—but that, while an Italian, an Englishman, a Spaniard, a Hollander, and a Frenchman attempted to describe it, each one spoke of it as that *of a foreigner.* Each is sure that it was not the voice of one of his own countrymen. Each likens it—not to the voice of an individual of any nation with whose language he is conversant—but the converse. The Frenchman supposes it the voice of a Spaniard, and might have distinguished some words *'had he been acquainted with the Spanish.'* The Dutchman maintains it to have been that of a Frenchman; but we find it stated that *'not understanding French this witness was examined through an interpreter.'* The Englishman thinks it is the voice of a German, and *'does not understand German.'* The Spaniard 'is sure' that it was that of an Englishman, but 'judges by the intonation' altogether, *'as he has no knowledge of the English.'* The Italian believes it the voice of a Russian, but *'has never conversed with a native of Russia.'* A second Frenchman differs, moreover with the first, and is positive that the voice was that of an Italian; but, *not being cognizant of that tongue,* is, like the Spaniard, 'convinced by the intonation.' Now, how strangely unusual must that voice have really been, about which such testimony as this *could* have been elicited!—in whose tones, even, denizens of the five great divisions of Europe could recognize nothing familiar! You will say that it might have been the voice of an Asiatic—of an African. Neither Asiatics nor Africans abound in Paris; but, without denying the inference, I will merely call your attention to three points. The voice is termed by one witness 'harsh rather than shrill.' It is represented by two others to have been 'quick and *unequal.*'

No words—no sound resembling words—were by any witness mentioned as distinguishable.

"I know not," continued Dupin, "what impression I may have made so far, upon your own understanding; but I do not hesitate to say that legitimate deductions even from this portion of the testimony—the portion respecting the gruff and shrill voices—are in themselves sufficient to engender a suspicion which should give direction to all farther progress in the investigation of the mystery. I said 'legitimate deductions;' but my meaning is not thus fully expressed. I designed to imply that the deductions are the *sole* proper ones, and that the suspicion arise *inevitably* from them as the single result. What the suspicion is, however, I will not say just yet. I merely wish you to bear in mind that, with myself, it was sufficiently forcible to give a definite form—a certain tendency—to my inquiries in the chamber.

"Let us now transport ourselves, in fancy, to this chamber. What shall we first seek here? The means of egress employed by the murderers. It is not too much to say that neither of us believe in præternatural events. Madame and Mademoiselle L'Espanaye were not destroyed by spirits. The doers of the deed were material, and escaped materially. Then how? Fortunately, there is but one mode of reasoning upon the point, and that mode *must* lead to a definite decision.—Let us examine, each by each, the possible means of egress. It is clear that the assassins were in the room where Mademoiselle L'Espanaye was found, or at least in the room adjoining, when the party ascended the stairs. It is then only from these two apartments that we have to seek issues. The police have laid bare the floors, the ceilings, and the masonry of the walls, in every direction. No *secret* issues could have escaped their vigilance. But not trusting to *their* eyes, I examined with my own. There were, then, *no* secret issues. Both doors leading from the rooms into the passage were securely locked, with the keys inside. Let us turn to the chimneys. These, although of ordinary width for some eight or ten feet above the hearths, will not admit, throughout their extent, the body of a large cat. The impossibility of egress, by means already stated, being thus absolute, we are reduced to the windows. Through those of the front room no one could have escaped without the notice of the crowd in the street. The murderers *must* have passed, then, through those of the back room. Now, brought to this conclusion in so unequivocal manner as we are, it is not our part as reasoners, to reject it on account of apparent impossibilities. It is only left for us to prove that these apparent 'impossibilities' are, in reality, not such.

"There are two windows in the chamber. One of them is unobstructed by furniture, and is wholly visible. The lower portion of the other is hidden from view by the head of the unwieldy bedstead which is thrust close up against it. The former was found securely fastened from within. It resisted the utmost force of those who endeavored to raise it. A large gimlet-hole had been pierced in its frame to the left, and a very stout nail was found fitted therein, nearly to the head. Upon examining the other window, a similar nail was seen similarly fitted in it; and a vigourous attempt to raise this sash, failed also. The police were now entirely satisfied that egress had not been in these directions. And, *therefore,* it was thought a matter of supererogation to withdraw the nails and open the windows.

"My own examination was somewhat more particular, and was so for the reason I have just given—because here it was, I knew, that all apparent impossibilities *must* be proved to be not such in reality.

"I proceeded to think thus—*a posteriori.* The murderers *did* escape from one of these windows. This being so, they could not have re-fastened the sashes from the inside, as they were found fastened;—the consideration which put a stop, through its obviousness, to the scrutiny of the police in this quarter. Yet the sashes *were* fastened. They *must,* then, have the power of fastening themselves. There was no escape from this conclusion. I stepped to the unobstructed casement, withdrew the nail with some difficulty, and attempted to raise the sash. It resisted all my efforts, as I had anticipated. A concealed spring must, I now knew, exist; and this corroboration of my idea convinced me that my premises, at least, were correct, however mysterious still appeared the circumstances attending the nails. A careful search soon brought to light the hidden spring. I pressed it, and satisfied with the discovery, forbore to upraise the sash.

"I now replaced the nail and regarded it attentively. A person passing out through this window might have reclosed it, and the spring would have caught—but the nail could not have been replaced. The conclusion was plain, and again narrowed in the field of my investiga-

tions. The assassins *must* have escaped through the other window. Supposing, then, the springs upon each sash to be the same, as was probable, there *must* be found a difference between the nails, or at least between the modes of their fixture. Getting upon the sacking of the bedstead, I looked over the head-board minutely at the second casement. Passing my hand down behind the board, I readily discovered and pressed the spring, which was, as I had supposed, identical in character with its neighbor. I now looked at the nail. It was as stout as the other, and apparently fitted in the same manner—driven in nearly up to the head.

"You will say that I was puzzled; but, if you think so, you must have misunderstood the nature of the inductions. To use a sporting phrase, I had not been once 'at fault.' The scent had never for an instant been lost. There was no flaw in any link of the chain. I had traced the secret to its ultimate result,—and that result was *the nail.* It had, I say, in every respect, the appearance of its fellow in the other window; but this fact was an absolute nullity (conclusive as it might seem to be) when compared with the consideration that here, at this point, terminated the clew. 'There *must* be something wrong,' I said, 'about the nail.' I touched it; and the head, with about a quarter of an inch of the shank, came off in my fingers. The rest of the shank was in the gimlet-hole where it had been broken off. The fracture was an old one (for its edges were incrusted with rust), and had apparently been accomplished by the blow of a hammer, which had partially imbedded, in the top of the bottom sash, the head portion of the nail. I now carefully replaced this head portion in the indentation whence I had taken it, and the resemblance to a perfect nail was complete—the fissure was invisible. Pressing the spring, I gently raised the sash for a few inches; the head went up with it, remaining firm in its bed. I closed the window, and the semblance of the whole nail was again perfect.

"The riddle, so far, was now unriddled. The assassin had escaped through the window which looked upon the bed. Dropping of its own accord upon his exit (or perhaps purposely closed), it had become fastened by the spring; and it was the retention of this spring which had been mistaken by the police for that of the nail,—farther inquiry being thus considered unnecessary.

"The next question is that of the mode of descent. Upon this point I had been satisfied in my walk with you around the building. About five feet and a half from the casement in question there runs a lightning-rod. From this rod it would have been impossible for any one to reach the window itself, to say nothing of entering it. I observed, however, that the shutters of the fourth story were of the peculiar kind called by Parisian carpenters *ferrades*—a kind rarely employed at the present day, but frequently seen upon very old mansions at Lyons and Bordeaux. They are in the form of an ordinary door (a single, not a folding door), except that the upper half is latticed or worked in open trellis—thus affording an excellent hold for the hands. In the present instance these shutters are fully three feet and a half broad. When we saw them from the rear of the house, they were both about half open—that is to say, they stood off at right angles from the wall. It is probable that the police, as well as myself, examined the back of the tenement; but, if so, in looking at these *ferrades* in the line of their breadth, (as they must have done), they did not perceive this great breadth itself, or, at all events, failed to take it into due consideration. In fact, having once satisfied themselves that no egress could have been made in this quarter, they would naturally bestow here a very cursory examination. It was clear to me, however, that the shutter belonging to the window at the head of the bed, would, if swung fully back to the wall, reach to within two feet of the lightning-rod. It was also evident that, by exertion of a very unusual degree of activity and courage, an entrance into the window, from the rod, might have been thus effected.—By reaching to the distance of two feet and a half (we now suppose the shutter open to its whole extent) a robber might have taken a firm grasp upon the trellis-work. Letting go, then, his hold upon the rod, placing his feet securely against the wall, and springing boldly from it, he might have swung the shutter so as to close it, and, if we imagine the window open at the time, might even have swung himself into the room.

"I wish you to bear especially in mind that I have spoken of a *very* unusual degree of activity as requisite to success in so hazardous and so difficult a feat. It is my design to show you, first, that the thing might possibly have been accomplished:—but, secondly and *chiefly*, I wish to impress upon your understanding the *very extraordinary*—the almost præternatural character of that agility which could have accomplished it.

"You will say, no doubt, using the language of the law, that 'to make out my case' I should rather undervalue, than insist upon a full estimation of the activity required in this matter. This may be the practice in law, but it is not the usage of reason. My ultimate object is only the truth. My immediate purpose is to lead you to place in juxta-position that *very unusual* activity of which I have just spoken, with that *very peculiar* shrill (or harsh) and *unequal* voice, about whose nationality no two persons could be found to agree, and in whose utterance no syllabification could be detected."

At these words a vague and half-formed conception of the meaning of Dupin flitted over my mind. I seemed to be upon the verge of comprehension, without power to comprehend—as men, at times, find themselves upon the brink of remembrance, without being able, in the end, to remember. My friend went on with his discourse.

"You will see," he said, "that I have shifted the question from the mode of egress to that of ingress. It was my design to suggest that both were effected in the same manner, at the same point. Let us now revert to the interior of the room. Let us survey the appearances here. The drawer of the bureau, it is said, had been rifled, although many articles of apparel still remained in them. The conclusion here is absurd. It is a mere guess—a very silly one—and no more. How are we to know that the articles found in the drawers were not all these drawers had originally contained? Madame L'Espanaye and her daughter lived an exceedingly retired life—saw no company—seldom went out—had little use for numerous changes of habiliment. Those found were at least of as good quality as any likely to be possessed by these ladies. If a thief had taken any, why did he not take the best, why did he not take all? In a word, why did he abandon four thousand francs in gold to encumber himself with a bundle of linen? The gold *was* abandoned. Nearly the whole sum mentioned by Monsieur Mignaud, the banker, was discovered, in bags, upon the floor. I wish you, therefore, to discard from your thoughts the blundering idea of *motive,* engendered in the brains of the police by that portion of the evidence which speaks of money delivered at the door of the house. Coincidences ten times as remarkable as this (the delivery of the money, and the murder committed within three days upon the party receiving it), happen to all of us every hour of our lives, without attracting even momentary notice. Coincidences, in general, are great stumbling-blocks in the way of that class of thinkers who have been educated to know nothing of the theory of probabilities—that theory to which most of the most glorious objects of human research are indebted for the most glorious of illustration. In the present instance, had the gold been gone, the fact of its delivery three days before would have formed something more than a coincidence. It would have been corroborative of this idea of motive. But, under the real circumstances of the case, if we are to suppose gold the motive of this outrage, we must also imagine the perpetrator so vacillating an idiot as to have abandoned his gold and his motive together.

"Keeping now steadily in mind the points to which I have drawn your attention—that peculiar voice, that unusual agility, and that startling absence of motive in a murder so singularly atrocious as this—let us glance at the butchery itself. Here is a woman strangled to death by manual strength, and thrust up a chimney, head downward. Ordinary assassins employ no such modes of murder such as this. Least of all, do they thus dispose of the murdered. In the manner of thrusting the corpse up the chimney, you will admit that there was something *excessively outre*—something altogether irreconcilable with our common notions of human action, even when we suppose the actors the most depraved of men. Think, too, how great must have been that strength which could have thrust the body *up* such an aperture so forcibly that the united vigor of several persons was found barely sufficient to drag it *down!*

"Turn, now, to other indications of the employment of a vigor most marvellous. On the hearth were thick tresses—very thick tresses—of grey human hair. These had been torn out by the roots. You are aware of the great force necessary in tearing thus from the head even twenty or thirty hairs together. You saw the locks in question as well as myself. Their roots (a hideous sight!) were clotted with fragments of the flesh of the scalp—sure token of the prodigious power which had been exerted in uprooting perhaps half a million of hairs at a time. The throat of the old lady was not merely cut, but the head absolutely severed from the body; the instrument was a mere razor. I wish you also to look at the *brutal* ferocity of these deeds. Of the

bruises upon the body of Madame L'Espanaye I do not speak. Monsieur Dumas, and his worthy coadjutor Monsieur Etienne, have pronounced that they were inflicted by some obtuse instrument; and so far these gentlemen are very correct. The obtuse instrument was clearly the stone pavement in the yard, upon which the victim had fallen from the window which looked in upon the bed. This idea, however simple it may seem, escaped the police for the same reason that the breadth of the shutters escaped them—because, by the affair of the nails, their perceptions had been hermetically sealed against the possibility of the windows having ever been opened at all.

"If now, in addition to all these things, you have properly reflected upon the odd disorder of the chamber, we have gone so far as to combine the ideas of an agility astounding, a strength super-human, a ferocity brutal, a butchery without a motive, a *grotesquerie* in horror absolutely alien from humanity, and a voice foreign in tone to the ears of men of many nations, and devoid of all distinct or intelligible syllabification. What result, then, has ensued? What impression have I made upon your fancy?"

I felt a creeping of the flesh as Dupin asked me the question. "A madman," I said, "has done this deed—some raving maniac, escaped from a neighboring *Maison de Sante.*"

"In some respects," he replied, "your idea is not irrelevant. But the voices of madmen, even in their wildest paroxysms, are never found to tally with that peculiar voice heard upon the stairs. Madmen are of some nation, and their language, however incoherent in its words, has always the coherence of syllabification. Besides, the hair of a madman is not such as I now hold in my hand. I disentangled this little tuft from the rigidly clutched fingers of Madame L'Espanaye. Tell me what you can make of it."

"Dupin!" I said, completely unnerved; "this hair is most unusual—this is no *human* hair."

"I have not asserted that it is," said he; "but, before we decide this point, I wish you to glance at the little sketch I have here traced upon this paper. It is a *fac-simile* drawing of what has been described in one portion of the testimony as 'dark bruises, and deep indentations of finger nails,' upon the throat of Mademoiselle L'Espanaye, and in another (by Messrs. Dumas and Etienne), as a 'series of livid spots, evidently the impression of fingers.'

"You will perceive," continued my friend, spreading out the paper upon the table before us, "that this drawing gives the idea of a firm and fixed hold. There is no *slipping* apparent. Each finger has retained—possibly until the death of the victim—the fearful grasp by which it originally imbedded itself. Attempt, now, to place all your fingers, at the same time, in the respective impressions as you see them."

I made the attempt in vain.

"We are possibly not giving this matter a fair trial," he said. "The paper is spread out upon a plane surface; but the human throat is cylindrical. Here is a billet of wood, the circumference of which is about that of the throat. Wrap the drawing around it and try the experiment again."

I did so; but the difficulty was even more obvious than before.

"This," I said, "is the mark of no human hand."

"Read now," replied Dupin, "this passage from Cuvier."

It was a minute anatomical and generally descriptive account of the large fulvous Ourang-Outang of the East Indian Islands. The gigantic stature, the prodigious strength and activity, the wild ferocity, and the imitative propensities of these mammalia are sufficiently well known to all. I understood the full horrors of the murder at once.

"The description of the digits," said I, as I made an end of reading, "is in exact accordance with this drawing. I see that no animal but an Ourang-Outang, of the species here mentioned, could have impressed the indentations as you have traced them. This tuft of tawny hair, too, is identical in character with that of the beast of Cuvier. But I cannot possibly comprehend the particulars of this frightful mystery. Besides, there were *two* voices heard in contention, and one of them was unquestionably the voice of a Frenchman."

"True; and you will remember an expression attributed almost unanimously, by the evidence, to this voice,—the expression, '*mon Dieu!*' This, under the circum-

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68 Cuvier, Georges Léopold Chrétien Frédéric Dagobert Cuvier (1769-1832), French naturalist

stances, has been justly characterized by one of the witnesses (Montani, the confectioner), as an expression of remonstrance or expostulation. Upon these two words, therefore, I have mainly built my hopes of a full solution of the riddle. A Frenchman was cognizant of the murder. It is possible—indeed it is far more than probable—that he was innocent of all participation in the bloody transactions which took place. The Ourang-Outang may have escaped from him. He may have traced it to the chamber; but, under the agitating circumstances which ensued, he could never have re-captured it. It is still at large. I will not pursue these guesses—for I have no right to call them more—since the shades of reflection upon which they are based are scarcely of sufficient depth to be appreciable by my own intellect, and since I could not pretend to make them intelligible to the understanding of another. If the Frenchman in question is indeed, as I suppose, innocent of this atrocity, this advertisement, which I left last night, upon our return home, at the office of *Le Monde* (a paper devoted to the shipping interest, and much sought by sailors), will bring him to our residence."

He handed me a paper, and I read thus:

CAUGHT—*In the Bois de Boulogne, early this morning of the* — *inst.* (the morning of the murder), *a very large, tawny Ourang-Outang of the Bornese species. The owner (who is ascertained to be a sailor, belonging to a Maltese vessel), may have the animal again, upon identifying it satisfactorily and paying a few charges arising from its capture and keeping. Call at No. —, Rue —, Faubourg, St. Germain — au troisieme.*

"How was it possible," I asked, "that you should know the man to be a sailor, and belonging to a Maltese vessel?"

"I do *not* know it," said Dupin. "I am not *sure* of it. Here, however, is a small piece of ribbon, which from its form, and from its greasy appearance, has evidently been used in tying the hair in one of those long *queues* of which sailors are so fond. Moreover, this knot is one which few besides sailors can tie, and is peculiar to the Maltese. I picked the ribbon up at the foot of the lightning-rod. It could not have belonged to either of the deceased. Now if, after all, I am wrong in my induction from this ribbon, that the Frenchman was a sailor belonging to a Maltese vessel, still I can have done no harm in saying what I did in the advertisement. If I am in error, he will merely suppose that I have been misled by some circumstance into which he will not take the trouble to inquire. But if I am right, a great point is gained. Cognizant although innocent of the murder, the Frenchman will naturally hesitate about replying to the advertisement—about demanding the Ourang-Outang. He will reason thus:—'I am innocent; I am poor; my Ourang-Outang is of great value—to one in my circumstances a fortune of itself—why should I lose it through idle apprehensions of danger? Here it is, within my grasp. It was found in the Bois de Boulogne—at a vast distance from the scene of that butchery. How can it ever be suspected that a brute beast should have done the deed? The police are at fault—they have failed to procure the slightest clew. Should they even trace the animal, it would be impossible to prove me cognizant of the murder, or to implicate me in guilt on account of that cognizance. Above all, *I am known.* The advertiser designates me as the possessor of the beast. I am not sure to what limit his knowledge may extend. Should I avoid claiming a property of so great value, which it is known that I possess, I will render the animal, at least, liable to suspicion. It is not my policy to attract attention either to myself or to the beast. I will answer the advertisement, get the Ourang-Outang, and keep it close until this matter has blown over.' "

At this moment we heard a step upon the stairs.

"Be ready," said Dupin, "with your pistols, but neither use them nor show them until at a signal from myself."

The front door of the house had been left open, and the visitor had entered, without ringing, and advanced several steps upon the staircase. Now, however, he seemed to hesitate. Presently we heard him descending. Dupin was moving quickly to the door, when we again heard him coming up. He did not turn back a second time, but stepped up with decision, and rapped at the door of our chamber.

"Come in," said Dupin, in a cheerful and hearty tone.

A man entered. He was a sailor, evidently,—a tall, stout, and muscular-looking person, with a certain dare-devil expression of countenance, not altogether unprepossessing. His face, greatly sunburnt, was more than half hidden by whisker and *mustachio.* He had with him a huge oaken cudgel, but appeared to be

otherwise unarmed. He bowed awkwardly, and bade us "good evening," in French accents, which, although somewhat Neufchatelish, were still sufficiently indicative of a Parisian origin.

"Sit down, my friend," said Dupin. "I suppose you have called about the Ourang-Outang. Upon my word, I almost envy you the possession of him; a remarkably fine, and no doubt a very valuable animal. How old do you suppose him to be?"

The sailor drew a long breath, with the air of a man relieved of some intolerable burden, and then replied, in an assured tone:

"I have no way of telling—but he can't be more than four or five years old. Have you got him here?"

"Oh no; we had no conveniences for keeping him here. He is at a livery stable in the Rue Dubourg, just by. You can get him in the morning. Of course you are prepared to identify the property?"

"To be sure I am, sir."

"I shall be sorry to part with him," said Dupin.

"I don't mean that you should be at all this trouble for nothing, sir," said the man. "Couldn't expect it. Am very willing to pay a reward for the finding of the animal—that is to say, anything in reason."

"Well," replied my friend, "that is all very fair, to be sure. Let me think!—what shall I have? Oh! I will tell you. My reward shall be this. You shall give me all the information in your power about these murders in the Rue Morgue."

Dupin said the last words in a very low tone, and very quietly. Just as quietly, too, he walked toward the door, locked it, and put the key in his pocket. He then drew a pistol from his bosom and placed it, without the least flurry, upon the table.

The sailor's face flushed up as if he were struggling with suffocation. He started to his feet and grasped his cudgel; but the next moment he fell back into his seat, trembling violently, and with the countenance of death itself. He spoke not a word. I pitied him from the bottom of my heart.

"My friend," said Dupin, in a kind tone, "you are alarming yourself unnecessarily—you are indeed. We mean you no harm whatever. I pledge you the honor of a gentleman and of a Frenchman, that we intend you no injury. I perfectly well know that you are innocent of the atrocities in the Rue Morgue. It will not do, however, to deny that you are in some measure implicated in them. From what I have already said, you must know that I have had means of information about this matter—means of which you could never have dreamed. Now the thing stands thus. You have done nothing which you could have avoided—nothing, certainly, which renders you culpable. You were not even guilty of robbery, when you might have robbed with impunity. You have nothing to conceal. You have no reason for concealment. On the other hand, you are bound by every principle of honor to confess all you know. An innocent man is now imprisoned, charged with that crime of which you can point out the perpetrator."

The sailor had recovered his presence of mind, in a great measure, while Dupin uttered these words; but his original boldness of bearing was all gone.

"So help me God," said he, after a brief pause, "I *will* tell you all I know about this affair;—but I do not expect you to believe one half I say—I would be a fool indeed if I did. Still, I *am* innocent, and I will make a clean breast if I die for it."

What he stated was, in substance, this. He had lately made a voyage to the Indian Archipelago. A party, of which he formed one, landed at Borneo, and passed into the interior on an excursion of pleasure. Himself and a companion had captured the Ourang-Outang. This companion dying, the animal fell into his own exclusive possession. After great trouble, occasioned by the intractable ferocity of his captive during the home voyage, he at length succeeded in lodging it safely at his own residence in Paris, where, not to attract toward himself the unpleasant curiosity of his neighbors, he kept it carefully secluded, until such time as it should recover from a wound in the foot, received from a splinter on board ship. His ultimate design was to sell it.

Returning home from some sailors' frolic on the night, or rather in the morning of the murder, he found the beast occupying his own bed-room, into which it had broken from a closet adjoining, where it had been, as was thought, securely confined. Razor in hand, and fully lathered, it was sitting before a looking-glass, attempting the operation of shaving, in which it had no

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3 **Neufchatelish,** characteristic of Neufchâtel, a city in northern France

doubt previously watched its master through the keyhole of the closet. Terrified at the sight of so dangerous a weapon in the possession of an animal so ferocious, and so well able to use it, the man, for some moments, was at a loss what to do. He had been accustomed however, to quiet the creature, even in its fiercest moods, by the use of a whip, and to this he now resorted. Upon sight of it, the Ourang-Outang sprang at once through the door of the chamber, down the stairs, and thence, through a window, unfortunately open, into the street.

The Frenchman followed in despair; the ape, razor still in hand, occasionally stopping to look back and gesticulate at its pursuer, until the latter had nearly come up with it. It then again made off. In this manner the chase continued for a long time. The streets were profoundly quiet, as it was nearly three o'clock in the morning. In passing down an alley in the rear of the Rue Morgue, the fugitive's attention was arrested by a light gleaming from the open window of Madame L'Espanaye's chamber, in the fourth story of her house. Rushing to the building, it perceived the lightning-rod, clambered up with inconceivable agility, grasped the shutter, which was thrown fully back against the wall, and, by its means, swung itself directly upon the headboard of the bed. The whole feat did not occupy a minute. The shutter was kicked open again by the Ourang-Outang as it entered the room.

The sailor, in the meantime, was both rejoiced and perplexed. He had strong hopes of now recapturing the brute, as it could scarcely escape from the trap into which it had ventured, except by the rod, where it might be intercepted as it came down. On the other hand, there was much cause for anxiety as to what it might do in the house. This latter reflection urged the man still to follow the fugitive. A lightning-rod is ascended without difficulty, especially by a sailor; but, when he had arrived as high as the window, which lay far to his left, his career was stopped; the most that he could accomplish was to reach over so as to obtain a glimpse of the interior of the room. At this glimpse he nearly fell from his hold through excess of horror. Now it was that those hideous shrieks arose upon the night, which had startled from slumber the inmates of the Rue Morgue. Madame L'Espanaye and her daughter, habited in their night clothes, had apparently been occupied in arranging some papers in the iron chest already mentioned, which had been wheeled into the middle of the room. It was open, and its contents lay beside it on the floor. The victims must have been sitting with their backs toward the window; and, from the time elapsing between the ingress of the beast and the screams, it seems probable that it was not immediately perceived. The flapping-to of the shutter would naturally have been attributed to the wind.

As the sailor looked in, the gigantic animal had seized Madame L'Espanaye by the hair (which was loose, as she had been combing it), and was flourishing the razor about her face, in imitation of the motions of a barber. The daughter lay prostrate and motionless; she had swooned. The screams and struggles of the old lady (during which the hair was torn from her head) had the effect of changing the probably pacific purposes of the Ourang-Outang into those of wrath. With one determined sweep of its muscular arm it nearly severed her head from her body. The sight of blood inflamed its anger into phrenzy. Gnashing its teeth, and flashing fire from its eyes, it flew upon the body of the girl, and imbedded its fearful talons in her throat, retaining its grasp until she expired. Its wandering and wild glances fell at this moment upon the head of the bed, over which the face of its master, rigid with horror, was just discernible. The fury of the beast, who no doubt bore still in mind the dreaded whip, was instantly converted into fear. Conscious of having deserved punishment, it seemed desirous of concealing its bloody deeds, and skipped about the chamber in an agony of nervous agitation; throwing down and breaking the furniture as it moved, and dragging the bed from the bedstead. In conclusion, it seized first the corpse of the daughter, and thrust it up the chimney, as it was found; then that of the old lady, which it immediately hurled through the window headlong.

As the ape approached the casement with its mutilated burden, the sailor shrank aghast to the rod, and, rather gliding than clambering down it, hurried at once home—dreading the consequences of the butchery, and gladly abandoning, in his terror, all solicitude about the fate of the Ourang-Outang. The words heard by the party upon the staircase were the Frenchman's exclamations of horror and affright, commingled with the fiendish jabberings of the brute.

I have scarcely anything to add. The Ourang-Outang

must have escaped from the chamber, by the rod, just before the breaking of the door. It must have closed the window as it passed through it. It was subsequently caught by the owner himself, who obtained for it a very large sum at the *Jardin des Plantes.* Le Bon was instantly released, upon our narration of the circumstances (with some comments from Dupin) at the *bureau* of the Prefect of Police. This functionary, however well disposed to my friend, could not altogether conceal his chagrin at the turn which affairs had taken, and was fain to indulge in a sarcasm or two, about the propriety of every person minding his own business.

"Let him talk," said Dupin, who had not thought it necessary to reply. "Let him discourse; it will ease his conscience. I am satisfied with having defeated him in his own castle. Nevertheless, that he failed in the solution of this mystery, is by no means that matter for wonder which he supposes it; for, in truth, our friend the Prefect is somewhat too cunning to be profound. In his wisdom is no *stamen.* It is all head and no body, like the pictures of the Goddess Laverna,—or, at best, all head and shoulders, like a codfish. But he is a good creature after all. I like him especially for one master stroke of cant by which he has attained his reputation for ingenuity. I mean the way he has *'de nier ce qui est, et d'expliquer ce qui n'est pas.'*" 1841

5 **Jardin des Plantes,** French zoölogical gardens • 25 **de nier . . . ,** of denying what is and explaining what is not. Poe, in a footnote, attributes the phrase to Rousseau's **Nouvelle Héloïse**

The Masque of the Red Death

Once the exposition has been presented in the opening three paragraphs, this story of the masque so orders its happenings as to make them increasingly horrifying. The prince and his associates are given only enough characteristics to show increasingly contagious reactions of terror. The account of the ball falls into three climactically arranged parts, each terrifying in its own peculiar way—paragraphs four and five, then paragraphs six and seven, and then the remainder of the tale. The "tone" is handled to give different emotional significance to each of these sections. The tone, by repeating symbols of death and of fleeting time, also adds to allegorical implications concerning the inevitable triumph of death over mankind.

The "Red Death" had long devastated the country. No pestilence had ever been so fatal, or so hideous. Blood was its avatar and its seal—the redness and the horror of blood. There were sharp pains, and sudden dizziness, and then profuse bleeding at the pores, with dissolution. The scarlet stains upon the body, and especially upon the face, of the victim were the pest ban which shut him out from the aid and from the sympathy of his fellow men. And the whole seizure, progress, and termination of the disease were the incidents of half an hour.

But the Prince Prospero was happy and dauntless and sagacious. When his dominions were half depopulated he summoned to his presence a thousand hale and light-hearted friends from among the knights and dames of his court, and with these retired to the deep seclusion of one of his castellated abbeys. This was an extensive and magnificent structure, the creation of the prince's own eccentric yet august taste. A strong and lofty wall girdled it in. This wall had gates of iron. The courtiers, having entered, brought furnaces and massy hammers, and welded the bolts. They resolved to leave means neither of ingress or egress to the sudden impulses of despair or of frenzy from within. The abbey was amply provisioned. With such precautions the courtiers might bid defiance to contagion. The external world could take care of itself. In the meantime it was folly to grieve, or to think. The prince had provided all the appliances

Text: the Broadway Journal, July 19, 1845

of pleasure. There were buffoons, there were improvisatori, there were ballet-dancers, there were musicians, there was Beauty, there was wine. All these and security were within. Without was the Red Death.

It was toward the close of the fifth or sixth month of his seclusion, and while the pestilence raged most furiously abroad, that the Prince Prospero entertained his thousand friends at a masked ball of the most unusual magnificence.

It was a voluptuous scene, that masquerade. But first let me tell of the rooms in which it was held. There were seven—an imperial suite. In many palaces, however, such suites form a long and straight vista, while the sliding doors slide back nearly to the walls on either hand, so that the view of the whole extent is scarcely impeded. Here the case was very different, as might have been expected from the prince's love of the bizarre. The apartments were so irregularly disposed that the vision embraced but little more than one at a time. There was a sharp turn at every twenty or thirty yards, and at each turn a novel effect. To the right and left, in the middle of each wall, a tall and narrow Gothic window looked out upon a closed corridor which pursued the windings of the suite. These windows were of stained glass, whose color varied in accordance with the prevailing hue of the decorations of the chamber into which it opened. That at the eastern extremity was hung, for example, in blue—and vividly blue were its windows. The second chamber was purple in its ornaments and tapestries, and here the panes were purple. The third was green throughout, and so were the casements. The fourth was furnished and lighted with orange, the fifth with white, the sixth with violet. The seventh apartment was closely shrouded in black velvet tapestries that hung all over the ceiling and down the walls, falling in heavy folds upon a carpet of the same material and hue. But, in this chamber only, the color of the windows failed to correspond with the decorations. The panes here were scarlet—a deep blood-color. Now in no one of the seven apartments was there any lamp or candelabrum, amid the profusion of golden ornaments that lay scattered to and fro or depended from the roof. There was no light of any kind emanating from lamp or candle within the suite of chambers. But in the corridors that followed the suite there stood, opposite to each window, a heavy tripod, bearing a brazier of fire, that projected its rays through the tinted glass and so glaringly illumined the room. And thus were produced a multitude of gaudy and fantastic appearances. But in the western or black chamber the effect of the firelight that streamed upon the dark hanging through the blood-tinted panes was ghastly in the extreme, and produced so wild a look upon the countenances of those who entered that there were few of the company bold enough to set foot within its precincts at all.

It was in this apartment, also, that there stood against the western wall a gigantic clock of ebony. Its pendulum swung to and fro with a dull, heavy, monotonous clang; and when the minute hand made the circuit of the face, and the hour was to be stricken, there came from the brazen lungs of the clock a sound which was clear and loud and deep and exceedingly musical, but of so peculiar a note and emphasis that, at each lapse of an hour, the musicians of the orchestra were constrained to pause, momentarily, in their performance, to hearken to the sound; and thus the waltzers perforce ceased their evolutions; and there was a brief disconcert of the whole gay company; and, while the chimes of the clock yet rang, it was observed that the giddiest grew pale, and the more aged and sedate passed their hands over their brows as if in confused revery or meditation. But when the echoes had fully ceased, a light laughter at once pervaded the assembly; the musicians looked at each other and smiled as if at their own nervousness and folly, and made whispering vows, each to the other, that the next chiming of the clock should produce in them no similar emotion and then, after the lapse of sixty minutes (which embrace three thousand and six hundred seconds of the Time that flies) there came yet another chiming of the clock, and then were the same disconcert and tremulousness and meditation as before.

But, in spite of these things, it was a gay and magnificent revel. The tastes of the prince were peculiar. He had a fine eye for colors and effects. He disregarded the *decora* of mere fashion. His plans were bold and fiery, and his conceptions glowed with barbaric luster. There are some who would have thought him mad. His fol-

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1 **improvisatori**, composers and singers of extemporary songs • 18 **irregularly disposed.** The arrangement of the rooms is of a sort to distress anyone with a tendency toward claustrophobia

lowers felt that he was not. It was necessary to hear and see and touch him to be *sure* that he was not.

He had directed, in great part, the movable embellishments of the seven chambers, upon occasion of this great fete; and it was his own guiding taste which had given character to the masqueraders. Be sure they were grotesque. There were much glare and glitter and piquancy and phantasm—much of what has been since seen in *Hernani.* There were arabesque figures with unsuited limbs and appointments. There were delirious fancies such as the madman fashions. There was much of the beautiful, much of the wanton, much of the bizarre, something of the terrible, and not a little of that which might have excited disgust. To and fro in the seven chambers there stalked, in fact, a multitude of dreams. And these—the dreams—writhed in and about, taking hue from the rooms, and causing the wild music of the orchestra to seem as the echo of their steps. And, anon, there strikes the ebony clock which stands in the hall of the velvet. And then, for a moment, all is still, and all is silent save the voice of the clock. The dreams are stiff frozen as they stand. But the echoes of the chime die away—they have endured but an instant—and a light, half-subdued laughter floats after them as they depart. And now again the music swells, and the dreams live, and writhe to and fro more merrily than ever, taking hue from the many-tinted windows through which stream the rays from the tripods. But to the chamber which lies most westwardly of the seven, there are now none of the maskers who venture; for the night is waning away, and there flows a ruddier light through the blood-colored panes; and the blackness of the sable drapery appals; and to him whose foot falls upon the sable carpet, there comes from the near clock of ebony a muffled peal more solemnly emphatic than any which reaches their ears who indulge in the more remote gaieties of the other apartments.

But these other apartments were densely crowded, and in them beat feverishly the heart of life. And the revel went whirlingly on, until at length there commenced the sounding of midnight upon the clock. And then the music ceased, as I have told; and the evolutions of the waltzers were quieted; and there was an uneasy cessation of all things as before. But now there were twelve strokes to be sounded by the bell of the clock; and thus it happened, perhaps, that before the last echoes of the last chime had utterly sunk into silence, there were many individuals in the crowd who had found leisure to become aware of the presence of a masked figure which had arrested the attention of no single individual before. And the rumor of this new presence having spread itself whisperingly around, there arose at length from the whole company a buzz, or murmur, expressive of disapprobation and surprise—then, finally, of terror, of horror, and of disgust.

In an assembly of phantasms such as I have painted, it may well be supposed that no ordinary appearance could have excited such sensation. In truth the masquerade license of the night was nearly unlimited; but the figure in question had outHeroded Herod, and gone beyond the bound of even the prince's indefinite decorum. There are chords in the hearts of the most reckless which cannot be touched without emotion. Even with the utterly lost, to whom life and death are equally jests, there are matters of which no jest can be made. The whole company, indeed, seemed now deeply to feel that in the costume and bearing of the stranger neither wit nor propriety existed. The figure was tall and gaunt, and shrouded from head to foot in the habiliments of the grave. The mask which concealed the visage was made so nearly to resemble the countenance of a stiffened corpse that the closest scrutiny must have had difficulty in detecting the cheat. And yet all this might have been endured, if not approved, by the mad revelers around. But the mummer had gone so far as to assume the type of the Red Death. His vesture was dabbled in *blood*—and his broad brow, with all the features of the face, was besprinkled with the scarlet horror.

When the eyes of Prince Prospero fell upon this spectral image (which with a slow and solemn movement, as if more fully to sustain its role, stalked to and fro among the waltzers) he was seen to be convulsed, in the first moment, with a strong shudder either of terror or distaste; but, in the next, his brow reddened with rage.

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9 **Hernani** (1830), a lavishly costumed, romantic play by Victor Hugo • 43 **the waltzers.** It is important to know that, since in 1842 many considered the waltz an immoral dance, mention of waltzers adds to the depiction of revelry • 60 **had outHeroded Herod,** a quotation from Hamlet's speech to the players, meaning, in this context, "had gone beyond the extremes of this orgy"

"Who dares?" he demanded hoarsely of the courtiers who stood near him—"who dares insult us with this blasphemous mockery? Seize him and unmask him—that we may know whom we have to hang at sunrise, from the battlements!"

It was in the eastern or blue chamber in which stood the Prince Prospero as he uttered these words. They rang throughout the seven rooms loudly and clearly—for the prince was a bold and robust man, and the music had become hushed at the waving of his hand.

It was in the blue room where stood the prince, with a group of pale courtiers by his side. At first, as he spoke, there was a slight rushing movement of this group in the direction of the intruder, who at the moment was also near at hand, and now, with deliberate and stately step, made closer approach to the speaker. But from a certain nameless awe with which the mad assumptions of the mummer had inspired the whole party, there were found none who put forth hand to seize him; so that, unimpeded, he passed within a yard of the prince's person; and while the vast assembly as if with one impulse, shrank from the centers of the rooms to the walls, he made his way uninterruptedly, but with the same solemn and measured step which had distinguished him from the first, through the blue chamber to the purple—through the purple to the green—through the green to the orange—through this again to the white—and even thence to the violet, ere a decided movement had been made to arrest him. It was then, however, that the Prince Prospero, maddening with rage and the shame of his own momentary cowardice, rushed hurriedly through the six chambers, while none followed him on account of a deadly terror that had seized upon all. He bore aloft a drawn dagger, and had approached, in rapid impetuosity, to within three or four feet of the retreating figure, when the latter, having attained the extremity of the velvet apartment, turned suddenly and confronted his pursuer. There was a sharp cry—and the dagger dropped gleaming upon the sable carpet, upon which, instantly afterwards, fell prostrate in death the Prince Prospero. Then, summoning the wild courage of despair, a throng of the revelers at once threw themselves into the black apartment, and, seizing the mummer, whose tall figure stood erect and motionless within the shadow of the ebony clock, gasped in unutterable horror at finding the grave cerements and corpselike mask, which they handled with so violent a rudeness, untenanted by any tangible form.

And now was acknowledged the presence of the Red Death. He had come like a thief in the night. And one by one dropped the revelers in the blood-bedewed halls of their revel, and died each in the despairing posture of his fall. And the life of the ebony clock went out with that of the last of the gay. And the flames of the tripods expired. And Darkness and Decay and the Red Death held illimitable dominion over all.

1842

The Cask of Amontillado

The thousand injuries of Fortunato I had borne as I best could; but when he ventured upon insult, I vowed revenge. You, who so well know the nature of my soul, will not suppose, however, that I gave utterance to a threat. *At length* I would be avenged; this was a point definitively settled—but the very definitiveness with which it was resolved precluded the idea of risk. I must not only punish, but punish with impunity. A wrong is unredressed when retribution overtakes its redresser. It is equally unredressed when the avenger fails to make himself felt as such to him who has done the wrong.

It must be understood that neither by word nor deed had I given Fortunato cause to doubt my good will. I continued, as was my wont, to smile in his face, and he did not perceive that my smile *now* was at the thought of his immolation.

He had a weak point—this Fortunato—although in

other regards he was a man to be respected and even feared. He prided himself on his connoisseurship in wine. Few Italians have the true virtuoso spirit. For the most part their enthusiasm is adopted to suit the time and opportunity—to practice imposture upon the British and Austrian millionaires. In painting and gemmary, Fortunato, like his countrymen, was a quack—but in the matter of old wines he was sincere. In this respect I did not differ from him materially: I was skillful in the Italian vintages myself, and bought largely whenever I could.

It was about dusk, one evening during the supreme madness of the carnival season, that I encountered my friend. He accosted me with excessive warmth, for he had been drinking much. The man wore motley. He had on a tight-fitting parti-striped dress, and his head was surmounted by the conical cap and bells. I was so pleased to see him that I thought I should never have done wringing his hand.

I said to him, "My dear Fortunato, you are luckily met. How remarkably well you are looking today! But I have received a pipe of what passes for Amontillado, and I have my doubts."

"How?" said he. "Amontillado? A pipe? Impossible! And in the middle of the carnival!"

"I have my doubts," I replied; "and I was silly enough to pay the full Amontillado price without consulting you in the matter. You were not to be found, and I was fearful of losing a bargain."

"Amontillado!"

"I have my doubts."

"Amontillado!"

"And I must satisfy them."

"Amontillado!"

"As you are engaged, I am on my way to Luchresi. If any one has a critical turn, it is he. He will tell me—"

"Luchresi cannot tell Amontillado from Sherry."

"And yet some fools will have it that his taste is a match for your own."

"Come, let us go."

"Whither?"

"To your vaults."

"My friend, no; I will not impose upon your good nature. I perceive you have an engagement. Luchresi—"

"I have no engagement;—come."

"My friend, no. It is not the engagement, but the severe cold with which I perceive you are afflicted. The vaults are insufferably damp. They are incrusted with niter."

"Let us go, nevertheless. The cold is merely nothing. Amontillado! You have been imposed upon. And as for Luchresi, he cannot distinguish Sherry from Amontillado."

Thus speaking, Fortunato possessed himself of my arm. Putting on a mask of black silk, and drawing a *roquelaire* closely about my person, I suffered him to hurry me to my palazzo.

There were no attendants at home; they had absconded to make merry in honor of the time. I had told them that I should not return until the morning, and had given them explicit orders not to stir from the house. These orders were sufficient, I well knew, to insure their immediate disappearance, one and all, as soon as my back was turned.

I took from their sconces two flambeaus, and giving one to Fortunato, bowed him through several suites of rooms to the archway that led into the vaults. I passed down a long and winding staircase, requesting him to be cautious as he followed. We came at length to the foot of the descent, and stood together on the damp ground of the catacombs of the Montresors.

The gait of my friend was unsteady, and the bells upon his cap jingled as he strode.

"The pipe," said he.

"It is farther on," said I; "but observe the white webwork which gleams from these cavern walls."

He turned towards me, and looked into my eyes with two filmy orbs that distilled the rheum of intoxication.

"Niter?" he asked at length.

"Niter," I replied. "How long have you had that cough?"

"Ugh! ugh! ugh!—ugh! ugh! ugh!—ugh! ugh! ugh! —ugh! ugh! ugh!—ugh! ugh! ugh!"

My poor friend found it impossible to reply for many minutes.

"It is nothing," he said, at last.

"Come," I said, with decision, "we will go back; your health is precious. You are rich, respected, admired, beloved; you are happy, as once I was. You are a man to be missed. For me it is no matter. We will go back;

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7 **gemmary**, knowledge of precious gems • 22 **pipe**, large barrel • 22 **Amontillado**, a Spanish sherry • 56 **roquelaire**, a knee-length cloak

you will be ill, and I cannot be responsible. Besides, there is Luchresi—"

"Enough," he said; "the cough is a mere nothing; it will not kill me. I shall not die of a cough."

"True—true," I replied; "and, indeed, I had no intention of alarming you unnecessarily—but you should use all proper caution. A draught of this Medoc will defend us from the damps."

Here I knocked off the neck of a bottle which I drew from a long row of its fellows that lay upon the mold.

"Drink," I said, presenting him the wine.

He raised it to his lips with a leer. He paused and nodded to me familiarly, while his bells jingled.

"I drink," he said, "to the buried that repose around us."

"And I to your long life."

He again took my arm, and we proceeded.

"These vaults," he said, "are extensive."

"The Montresors," I replied, "were a great and numerous family."

"I forget your arms."

"A huge human foot d'or, in a field azure; the foot crushes a serpent rampant whose fangs are embedded in the heel."

"And the motto?"

"Nemo me impune lacessit."

"Good!" he said.

The wine sparkled in his eyes and the bells jingled. My own fancy grew warm with the Medoc. We had passed through long walls of piled skeletons, with casks and puncheons intermingling, into the inmost recesses of the catacombs. I paused again, and this time I made bold to seize Fortunato by an arm above the elbow.

"The niter!" I said; "see, it increases. It hangs like moss upon the vaults. We are below the river's bed. The drops of moisture trickle among the bones. Come, we will go back ere it is too late. Your cough—"

"It is nothing," he said; "let us go on. But first, another draught of the Medoc."

I broke and reached him a flagon of De Grâve. He emptied it at a breath. His eyes flashed with a fierce light. He laughed and threw the bottle upwards with a gesticulation I did not understand.

I looked at him in surprise. He repeated the movement—a grotesque one.

"You do not comprehend?" he said.

"Not I," I replied.

"Then you are not of the brotherhood."

"How?"

"You are not of the masons."

"Yes, yes," I said, "yes, yes."

"You? Impossible! A mason?"

"A mason," I replied.

"A sign," he said, "a sign."

"It is this," I answered, producing from beneath the folds of my *roquelaire,* a trowel.

"You jest," he exclaimed, recoiling a few paces. "But let us proceed to the Amontillado."

"Be it so," I said, replacing the tool beneath the cloak, and again offering him my arm. He leaned upon it heavily. We continued our route in search of the Amontillado. We passed through a range of low arches, descended, passed on, and, descending again, arrived at a deep crypt, in which the foulness of the air caused our flambeaus rather to glow than flame.

At the most remote end of the crypt there appeared another less spacious. Its walls had been lined with human remains, piled to the vault overhead, in the fashion of the great catacombs of Paris. Three sides of this interior crypt were still ornamented in this manner. From the fourth the bones had been thrown down, and lay promiscuously upon the earth, forming at one point a mound of some size. Within the wall thus exposed by the displacing of the bones, we perceived a still interior recess, in depth about four feet, in width three, in height six or seven. It seemed to have been constructed for no especial use within itself, but formed merely the interval between two of the colossal supports of the roof of the catacombs, and was backed by one of their circumscribing walls of solid granite.

It was in vain that Fortunato, uplifting his dull torch, endeavored to pry into the depth of the recess. Its termination the feeble light did not enable us to see.

"Proceed," I said; "herein is the Amontillado. As for Luchresi—"

"He is an ignoramus," interrupted my friend, as

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7 **Medoc,** wine from a particular region in France • 21 **arms,** coat of arms. The coat of arms described by the narrator—a golden foot on a blue field, crushing a serpent—is symbolic, from his point of view, of the action of his story • 26 **Nemo . . . lacessit.** No one attacks me with impunity—a reiteration of the vengeful attitude of the narrator • 41 **De Grâve,** more accurately, Grâves, a Bordeaux wine

he stepped unsteadily forward, while I followed immediately at his heels. In an instant he had reached the extremity of the niche, and finding his progress arrested by the rock stood stupidly bewildered. A moment more and I had fettered him to the granite. In its surface were two iron staples, distant from each other about two feet, horizontally. From one of these depended a short chain, from the other a padlock. Throwing the links about his waist, it was but the work of a few seconds to secure it. He was too much astounded to resist. Withdrawing the key, I stepped back from the recess.

"Pass your hand," I said, "over the wall; you cannot help feeling the niter. Indeed it is *very* damp. Once more let me *implore* you to return. No? Then I must positively leave you. But I must first render you all the little attentions in my power."

"The Amontillado!" ejaculated my friend, not yet recovered from his astonishment.

"True," I replied; "the Amontillado."

As I said these words I busied myself among the pile of bones of which I have before spoken. Throwing them aside, I soon uncovered a quantity of building stone and mortar. With these materials and with the aid of my trowel, I began vigorously to wall up the entrance of the niche.

I had scarcely laid the first tier of the masonry when I discovered that the intoxication of Fortunato had in a great measure worn off. The earliest indication I had of this was a low moaning cry from the depth of the recess. It was *not* the cry of a drunken man. There was then a long and obstinate silence. I laid the second tier, and the third, and the fourth; and then I heard the furious vibrations of the chain. The noise lasted for several minutes, during which, that I might hearken to it with the more satisfaction, I ceased my labors and sat down upon the bones. When at last the clanking subsided, I resumed the trowel, and finished without interruption the fifth, the sixth, and the seventh tier. The wall was now nearly upon a level with my breast. I again paused, and holding the flambeaus over the mason work, threw a few feeble rays upon the figure within.

A succession of loud and shrill screams, bursting suddenly from the throat of the chained form, seemed to thrust me violently back. For a brief moment I hesitated—I trembled. Unsheathing my rapier, I began to grope with it about the recess; but the thought of an instant reassured me. I placed my hand upon the solid fabric of the catacombs, and felt satisfied. I reapproached the wall. I replied to the yells of him who clamored. I re-echoed—I aided—I surpassed them in volume and in strength. I did this, and the clamorer grew still.

It was now midnight, and my task was drawing to a close. I had completed the eighth, the ninth, and the tenth tier. I had finished a portion of the last and the eleventh; there remained but a single stone to be fitted and plastered in. I struggled with its weight; I placed it partially in its destined position. But now there came from out the niche a low laugh that erected the hairs upon my head. It was succeeded by a sad voice, which I had difficulty in recognizing as that of the noble Fortunato. The voice said—

"Ha! ha! ha!—he! he! he!—a very good joke indeed—an excellent jest. We will have many a rich laugh about it at the palazzo—he! he! he!—over our wine—he! he! he!"

"The Amontillado!" I said.

"He! he! he!—he! he! he!—yes, the Amontillado. But is it not getting late? Will not they be awaiting us at the palazzo,—the Lady Fortunato and the rest? Let us be gone."

"Yes," I said, "let us be gone."

"For the love of God, Montresor!"

"Yes," I said, "for the love of God!"

But to these words I hearkened in vain for a reply. I grew impatient. I called aloud—

"Fortunato!"

No answer. I called again—

"Fortunato!"

No answer still. I thrust a torch through the remaining aperture and let it fall within. There came forth in return only a jingling of the bells. My heart grew sick—on account of the dampness of the catacombs. I hastened to make an end of my labor. I forced the last stone into its position; I plastered it up. Against the new masonry I re-erected the old rampart of bones. For the half of a century no mortal has disturbed them. *In pace requiescat.*

1846

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88 **In pace requiescat.** In peace may he rest

First published in 1829, this poem, like many by Poe, underwent a great deal of revision. In 1831 it was extended to about three times its original length; then, in later versions (1843, 1845), it returned to approximately its first form. Professor Killis Campbell says that the passages added in 1831 "are largely personal in nature—a fact which probably explains their omission in subsequent editions." Equally important, perhaps, is the fact that they were unduly repetitious. In a letter to John Neal, Poe characterized this poem as the "best thing," in every respect save "sound," in the 1829 volume. He was "certain," he said, that the five opening lines of the second stanza had "never been surpassed." The theme is much like that of Byron's "To Romance": in each poem the author renounces romance and swears allegiance to truth.

Romance, who loves to nod and sing,
With drowsy head and folded wing,
Among the green leaves as they shake
Far down within some shadowy lake,
To me a painted paroquet
Hath been—a most familiar bird—
Taught me my alphabet to say,
To lisp my very earliest word,
While in the wild wood I did lie,
A child—with a most knowing eye.

Of late, eternal Condor years
So shake the very Heaven on high
With tumult as they thunder by,
I have no time for idle cares
Through gazing on the unquiet sky.
And when an hour with calmer wings
Its down upon my spirit flings—
That little time with lyre and rhyme
To while away—forbidden things!
My heart would feel to be a crime
Unless it trembled with the strings.

1829

Sonnet—To Science

Probably composed in the spring or summer of 1829, "Sonnet—To Science" echoes ideas of John Keats and Samuel Taylor Coleridge. "Do not all charms fly," asked Keats, in "Lamia," "at the merest touch of cold philosophy?" The opening lines of "Lamia" show some interesting parallels to lines 9-14 of this poem. Similarly, in Chapter XIV of his **Biographia Literaria**, Coleridge had discoursed on science versus poetry.

Science! true daughter of Old Time thou art!
Who alterest all things with thy peering eyes,
Why preyest thou thus upon the poet's heart,
Vulture, whose wings are dull realities?
How should he love thee? or how deem thee wise,
Who wouldst not leave him in his wandering
To seek for treasure in the jewelled skies,
Albeit he soared with an undaunted wing?
Hast thou not dragged Diana from her car?
And driven the Hamadryad from the wood
To seek a shelter in some happier star?
Hast thou not torn the Naiad from her flood,
The Elfin from the green grass, and from me
The summer dream beneath the tamarind tree?

1829

To Helen

Although Poe tacitly sanctioned the claim that this poem was written when he was only fourteen, it seems more likely that it was produced between 1829 and the year when it was published, 1831. It is, nevertheless, a tribute to Poe's boyhood idol, Mrs. Jane Stith Stanard of Richmond, who died in 1824, and whom he called "the first pure ideal love of my soul." As the notes suggest, some lines were felicitously revised in the 1845 edition, here reproduced.

The unity of this poem derives from both its feeling and its metaphorical expression. The imagery not only makes its heroine a haven for a desperate wanderer in darkness; it also increasingly associates Helen's type of classical beauty with the immortal splendor of Greece and Rome. In the first stanza, Helen's beauty is like "barks of yore," which carried the wanderer to his homeland, and the words "Nicean," "perfumed," and "weary, wayworn wanderer" (Ulysses) vaguely connote classical associations. In stanza two the classical quality of Helen's beauty is more clearly suggested, and "home" becomes "the glory that was Greece and the grandeur that was Rome." These opening stanzas hark back to the past; the third stanza, in the present tense, likens Helen to a statue standing in a lighted window-niche, thus attributing to her not only physical beauty but also immortal beauty of soul.

Helen, thy beauty is to me
  Like those Nicean barks of yore,
That gently, o'er a perfumed sea,
  The weary, wayworn wanderer bore
  To his own native shore.

On desperate seas long wont to roam,
  Thy hyacinth hair, thy classic face,
Thy Naiad airs, have brought me home
  To the Glory that was Greece
And the grandeur that was Rome.

Lo! in yon brilliant window-niche
  How statue-like I see thee stand,
  The agate lamp within thy hand!
Ah, Pysche, from the regions which
  Are Holy Land!

1829?-1831

The City in the Sea

Lo! Death has reared himself a throne
In a strange city lying alone
Far down within the dim West,
Where the good and the bad and the worst
  and the best
Have gone to their eternal rest.
There shrines and palaces and towers
(Time-eaten towers that tremble not)
Resemble nothing that is ours.
Around, by lifting winds forgot,
Resignedly beneath the sky
The melancholy waters lie.

No rays from the holy heaven come down
On the long night-time of that town;
But light from out the lurid sea
Streams up the turrets silently,
Gleams up the pinnacles far and free:
Up domes, up spires, up kingly halls;
Up fanes, up Babylon-like walls,
Up shadowy long-forgotten bowers
Of sculptured ivy and stone flowers,
Up many and many a marvelous shrine
Whose wreathed friezes intertwine
The viol, the violet, and the vine.

Resignedly beneath the sky
The melancholy waters lie.
So blend the turrets and shadows there
That all seem pendulous in air,
While from a proud tower in the town
Death looks gigantically down.

There open fanes and gaping graves
Yawn level with the luminous waves;
But not the riches there that lie
In each idol's diamond eye,—
Not the gayly-jewelled dead,
Tempt the waters from their bed;
For no ripples curl, alas,

To Helen • 2 **Nicean,** a word about which there has been much scholarly argument. The suggestion of Mr. J. J. Jones that it is derived from the Latin poetry of Catullus seems likely • 7 **hyacinth** harks back to "Hyacinthine," a Homeric epithet for hair, probably meaning "golden" • 9 **To the Glory . . . Rome,** read, in the 1831 version, "To the beauty of fair Greece, and the grandeur of old Rome" • 11 **brilliant window-niche,** in the original version, was "that little window-niche." The change set off the heroine in light from the poet in darkness • 13 **agate lamp,** in the original, was "golden scroll." The lamp gives more of an impression of permanence and adds to the light associated with the figure of the woman

Along that wilderness of glass;
No swellings tell that winds may be
Upon some far-off happier sea;
No heavings hint that winds have been
On seas less hideously serene!

But lo, a stir is in the air!
The wave—there is a movement there!
As if the towers had thrust aside,
In slightly sinking, the dull tide;
As if their tops had feebly given
A void within the filmy Heaven!
The waves have now a redder glow,
The hours are breathing faint and low;
And when, amid no earthly moans,
Down, down that town shall settle hence,
Hell, rising from a thousand thrones,
Shall do it reverence.

1831

Israfel

Poe, in the motto, took a few liberties with the description of Israfel in Sale's "Preliminary Discourse" on the Koran, thereby making the phrases of the motto more appropriate than the original phrases had been. The words added in this revision, "whose heart-strings are a lute," were probably suggested by a passage in a poem by Béranger, also used as a motto for "The Fall of the House of Usher."

The song embodies some of Poe's theories about poetry—that a true poet writes from his heart, that his song is melodious and inspiring. The final stanzas voice despair concerning a poet's hampering environment.

And the angel Israfel, whose heart-strings are a lute, and who has the sweetest voice of all God's creatures.—KORAN

In Heaven a spirit doth dwell
"Whose heart-strings are a lute;"
None sing so wildly well
As the angel Israfel,
And the giddy stars (so legends tell)
Ceasing their hymns, attend the spell
Of his voice, all mute.

Tottering above
In her highest noon,
The enamoured moon
Blushes with love,
While, to listen, the red levin
(With the rapid Pleiads, even,
Which were seven,)
Pauses in Heaven.

And they say (the starry choir
And the other listening things)
That Israfeli's fire
Is owing to that lyre
By which he sits and sings—
The trembling living wire
Of those unusual strings.

But the skies that angel trod,
Where deep thoughts are a duty—
Where Love's a grown-up God—
Where the Houri glances are
Imbued with all the beauty
Which we worship in a star.

Therefore, thou art not wrong,
Israfeli, who despisest
An unimpassioned song;
To thee the laurels belong,
Best bard, because the wisest!
Merrily live, and long!

The ecstasies above
With thy burning measures suit—
Thy grief, thy joy, thy hate, thy love,
With the fervour of thy lute—
Well may the stars be mute!

Yes, Heaven is thine; but this
Is a world of sweets and sours;

Israfel • Text: the 1845 volume

Our flowers are merely—flowers,
And the shadow of thy perfect bliss
Is the sunshine of ours.

If I could dwell
Where Israfel
Hath dwelt, and he where I,
He might not sing so wildly well
A mortal melody,
While a bolder note than this might swell
From my lyre within the sky.

1831

The Coliseum

This poem, which was at one time a soliloquy of the hero of Poe's drama, Politian, was first published in The Visiter in 1833. It is interesting in two ways: as evidence of Byron's influence on Poe and as the earliest known example of Poe's use of blank verse. The first two stanzas announce the spell to be worked by the ancient ruin; the second two show the "silence, desolation, and dim night" with a series of appropriate images; and the final stanza evokes the light and the melody which give the scene immortal power.

Type of the antique Rome! Rich reliquary
Of lofty contemplation left to Time
By buried centuries of pomp and power!
At length—at length—after so many days
Of weary pilgrimage and burning thirst
(Thirst for the springs of lore that in thee lie),
I kneel, an altered and an humble man,
Amid thy shadows, and so drink within
My very soul thy grandeur, gloom, and glory!

Vastness! and Age! and Memories of Eld!
Silence! and Desolation! and dim Night!
I feel ye now—I feel ye in your strength—
O spells more sure than e'er Judaen king
Taught in the gardens of Gethsemane!
O charms more potent than the rapt Chaldee
Ever drew down from out the quiet stars!

Here, where a hero fell, a column falls!
Here, where the mimic eagle glared in gold,
A midnight vigil holds the swarthy bat!
Here, where the dames of Rome their gilded hair
Waved to the wind, now wave the reed and thistle!
Here, where on golden throne the monarch lolled,
Glides, spectre-like, unto his marble home,
Lit by the wan light of the horned moon,
The swift and silent lizard of the stones!

But stay! these walls—these ivy-clad arcades—
These mouldering plinths—these sad and blackened shafts—
These vague entablatures—this crumbling frieze—
These shattered cornices—this wreck—this ruin—
These stones—alas! these gray stones—are they all—
All of the famed and the colossal left
By the corrosive Hours to Fate and me?

"Not all"—the Echoes answer me—"not all!
Prophetic sounds and loud, arise forever
From us, and from all Ruin, unto the wise,
As melody from Memnon to the Sun.
We rule the hearts of mightiest men—we rule
With a despotic sway all giant minds.
We are not impotent—we pallid stones.
Not all our power is gone—not all our fame—
Not all the magic of our high renown—
Not all the wonder that encircles us—
Not all the mysteries that in us lie—
Not all the memories that hang upon
And cling around about us as a garment,
Clothing us in a robe of more than glory."

1833

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1 **Type,** emblem • 13 **Judaen king,** Christ • 14 **Gethsemane,** the garden near Jerusalem which was the scene of the agony and arrest of Christ, as recorded in Matthew 26:36 • 15 **Chaldee** refers to the fame of the Chaldeans as astrologers and wizards • 18 **mimic eagle,** the standard of the Roman legions • 20 **gilded hair** refers to the gilt wigs worn by fashionable Roman ladies, and continues the association of departed gold with the vanished folk of the ancient world • 36 **Memnon.** See note, p. 504. His statue was reputed to give forth a harplike sound when touched by the rays of the rising sun

To One in Paradise

This song first appeared, without title, in a story published in January 1834. After numerous revisions, it appeared in 1845 with the present text and title. The most fortunate revision discarded this final stanza which had reduced a melodious and moving poem to the level of sentimentality:

Alas! for that accursed time
  They bore thee o'er the billow,
From Love to titled age and crime,
  And an unholy pillow—
From me, and from our misty clime,
  Where weeps the silver willow!

Thou wast all that to me, love,
  For which my soul did pine:
A green isle in the sea, love,
  A fountain and a shrine,
All wreathed with fairy fruits and flowers,
  And all the flowers were mine.

Ah, dream too bright to last!
  Ah, starry Hope, that didst arise
But to be overcast!
  A voice from out the Future cries,
"On! on!"—but o'er the Past
  (Dim gulf!) my spirit hovering lies
Mute, motionless, aghast!

For, alas! alas! with me
  The light of Life is o'er!
  No more—no more—no more—
(Such language holds the solemn sea
  To the sands upon the shore)
Shall bloom the thunder-blasted tree,
  Or the stricken eagle soar!

And all my days are trances,
  And all my nightly dreams
Are where thy gray eye glances,
  And where thy footstep gleams—
In what ethereal dances,
  By what eternal streams.

1833·1834

Sonnet—Silence

About the phrase "the corporate Silence" in line 10 of this irregular sonnet, Professor Campbell wrote this illuminating note: "That is, I take it, the physical death, the death which we can perceive with the senses. His shadow (l. 13), incorporate Silence, is, then, to be construed as the tyrant that rules in the nether world, in which the spirits of the unrighteous remain till the Day of Judgment."

There are some qualities—some incorporate things,
  That have a double life, which thus is made
A type of that twin entity which springs
  From matter and light, evinced in solid and shade.
There is a two-fold *Silence*—sea and shore—
  Body and soul. One dwells in lonely places,
  Newly with grass o'ergrown; some solemn graces,
Some human memories and tearful lore,
Render him terrorless: his name's "No More."
He is the corporate Silence: dread him not!
  No power hath he of evil in himself;
But should some urgent fate (untimely lot!)
  Bring thee to meet his shadow (nameless elf,
That haunteth the lone regions where hath trod
No foot of man), commend thyself to God!

1840

Dream-Land

In this poem, published in Graham's Magazine, June 1, 1844, Poe hit upon what critics called his later manner—the repetitive and rhythmic style of such lyrical works as "The Raven" and "Ulalume." The romantic depiction of a land "out of space, out of time" is representative of many

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Sonnet—Silence • Text: the 1845 volume

of Poe's poetic descriptions. The identification of the land as the kingdom of death adds a touch highly characteristic of the author.

By a route obscure and lonely,
Haunted by ill angels only,
Where an Eidolon, named NIGHT,
On a black throne reigns upright,
I have reached these lands but newly
From an ultimate dim Thule—
From a wild weird clime that lieth, sublime,
Out of SPACE—out of TIME.



Bottomless vales and boundless floods,
And chasms, and caves, and Titan woods,
With forms that no man can discover
For the tears that drip all over;
Mountains toppling evermore
Into seas without a shore;
Seas that restlessly aspire,
Surging, unto skies of fire;
Lakes that endlessly outspread
Their lone waters, lone and dead,—
Their still waters, still and chilly
With the snows of the lolling lily.

By the lakes that thus outspread
Their lone waters, lone and dead,—
Their sad waters, sad and chilly
With the snows of the lolling lily,—
By the mountains—near the river
Murmuring lowly, murmuring ever,—
By the grey woods,—by the swamp
Where the toad and the newt encamp,—
By the dismal tarns and pools
Where dwell the Ghouls,—
By each spot the most unholy—
In each nook most melancholy,—
There the traveller meets, aghast,
Sheeted Memories of the Past—
Shrouded forms that start and sigh
As they pass the wanderer by—
White-robed forms of friends long given,
In agony, to the Earth—and Heaven.

For the heart whose woes are legion
'Tis a peaceful, soothing region—
For the spirit that walks in shadow
'Tis—oh, 'tis an Eldorado!
But the traveller, travelling through it,
May not—dare not openly view it;
Never its mysteries are exposed
To the weak human eye unclosed;
So wills its King, who hath forbid
The uplifting of the fringed lid;
And thus the sad Soul that here passes
Beholds it but through darkened glasses.

By a route obscure and lonely,
Haunted by ill angels only,
Where an Eidolon, named NIGHT,
On a black throne reigns upright,
I have wandered home but newly
From this ultimate dim Thule.

1844

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3 **Eidolon,** phantom • 3 **Night,** here personified, as in many poems by Poe and others, as Death • 6 **ultimate dim Thule,** from Latin ultima Thule, the farthest land • 10 **Titan,** gigantic and ancient • 30 **Ghouls,** demons which rob graves and feed upon corpses • 42 **Eldorado,** a legendary place abounding in gold

The Raven

When, in 1841, Poe reviewed Dickens' **Barnaby Rudge**, he said: "The raven [in this novel], too, intensely amusing as it is, might have been made, more than we now see it, a portion of the conception of the fantastic Barnaby. Its croakings might have been prophetically heard in the course of the drama. Its character might have performed, in regard to that of the idiot, much the same part as does, in music, the accompaniment in respect to the air." This passage has led to the suggestion that, as early as 1841, Poe had some inklings of the sort of story told in his most famous poem. The best deduction from contradictory data regarding the time he composed the poem, however, sets the date of beginning composition not earlier than 1842 and the date of completion not before the middle of 1844.

"The Philosophy of Composition," regardless of its literal accuracy as an account of the writing of the poem, offers most illuminating suggestions about the structure and the thought.

Once upon a midnight dreary, while I pondered, weak and weary,
Over many a quaint and curious volume of forgotten lore—
While I nodded, nearly napping, suddenly there came a tapping,
As of some one gently rapping, rapping at my chamber door.
"'Tis some visitor," I muttered, "tapping at my chamber door—
Only this and nothing more."

Ah, distinctly I remember it was in the bleak December;
And each separate dying ember wrought its ghost upon the floor.
Eagerly I wished the morrow;—vainly I had sought to borrow
From my books surcease of sorrow—sorrow for the lost Lenore—
For the rare and radiant maiden whom the angels named Lenore—
Nameless *here* for evermore.

And the silken, sad, uncertain rustling of each purple curtain
Thrilled me—filled me with fantastic terrors never felt before;
So that now, to still the beating of my heart, I stood repeating
"'Tis some visitor entreating entrance at my chamber door,
Some late visitor entreating entrance at my chamber door:
This it is and nothing more."

Presently my soul grew stronger; hesitating then no longer,
"Sir," said I, "or Madam, truly your forgiveness I implore:
But the fact is I was napping, and so gently you came rapping,
And so faintly you came tapping, tapping at my chamber door,
That I scarce was sure I heard you"—here I opened wide the door;—
Darkness there and nothing more.

Deep into that darkness peering, long I stood there wondering, fearing,
Doubting, dreaming dreams no mortals ever dared to dream before:
But the silence was unbroken, and the stillness gave no token,
And the only word there spoken was the whispered word, "Lenore?"
This I whispered, and an echo murmured back the word, "Lenore!"
Merely this and nothing more.

Back into the chamber turning, all my soul within me burning,
Soon again I heard a tapping somewhat louder than before.

Text: the 1845 version as corrected by the author in his personal copy

"Surely," said I, "surely that is something at my window lattice;
Let me see, then, what thereat is, and this mystery explore;
Let my heart be still a moment and this mystery explore:
'Tis the wind and nothing more!"

Open here I flung the shutter, when, with many a flirt and flutter,
In there stepped a stately Raven of the saintly days of yore;
Not the least obeisance made he; not a minute stopped or stayed he;
But with mien of lord or lady, perched above my chamber door,
Perched upon a bust of Pallas just above my chamber door:
Perched, and sat, and nothing more.

Then this ebon bird beguiling all my fancy into smiling
By the grave and stern decorum of the countenance it wore,
"Though thy crest be shorn and shaven, thou," I said, "art sure no craven,
Ghastly grim and ancient Raven wandering from the Nightly shore—
Tell me what thy lordly name is on the Night's Plutonian shore!"
Quoth the Raven "Nevermore."

Much I marveled this ungainly fowl to hear discourse so plainly,
Though its answer little meaning—little relevancy bore;
For we cannot help agreeing that no living human being
Ever yet was blessed with seeing bird above his chamber door,
Bird or beast upon the sculptured bust above his chamber door,
With such name as "Nevermore."

But the Raven, sitting lonely on the placid bust, spoke only
That one word, as if his soul in that one word he did outpour,
Nothing further then he uttered, not a feather then he fluttered,
Till I scarcely more than muttered,—"Other friends have flown before;
On the morrow *he* will leave me, as my Hopes have flown before."
Then the bird said "Nevermore."

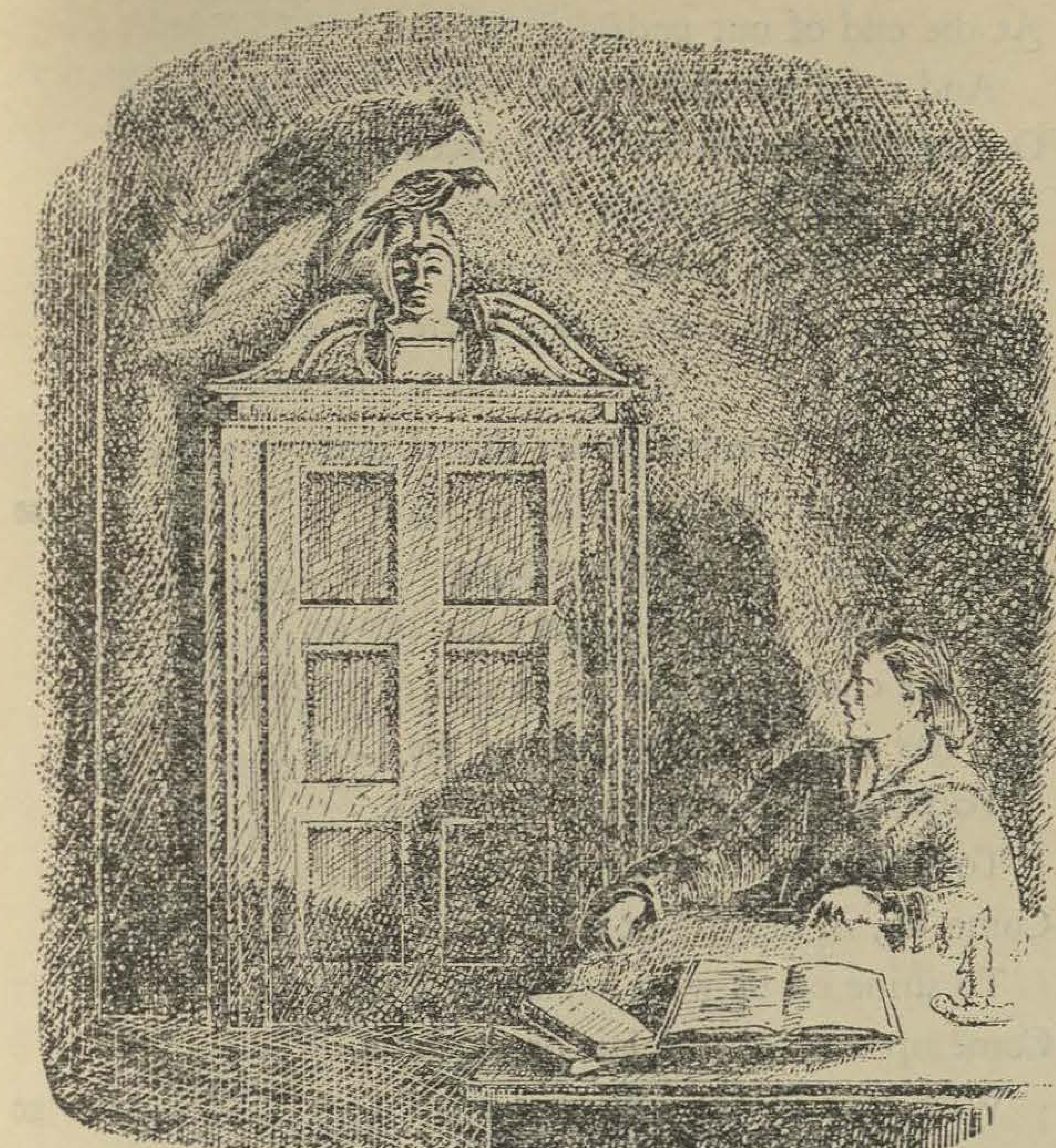
Startled at the stillness broken by reply so aptly spoken,
"Doubtless," said I, "what it utters is its only stock and store,
Caught from some unhappy master whom unmerciful Disaster
Followed fast and followed faster till his songs one burden bore—
Till the dirges of his Hope that melancholy burden bore
Of 'Never—nevermore.'"

But the Raven still beguiling all my fancy into smiling,
Straight I wheeled a cushioned seat in front of bird and bust and door;
Then, upon the velvet sinking, I betook myself to linking
Fancy unto fancy, thinking what this ominous bird of yore,
What this grim, ungainly, ghastly, gaunt, and ominous bird of yore
Meant in croaking "Nevermore."

This I sat engaged in guessing, but no syllable expressing
To the fowl whose fiery eyes now burned into my bosom's core;
This and more I sat divining, with my head at ease reclining
On the cushion's velvet lining that the lamp-light gloated o'er,
But whose velvet violet lining with the lamp-light gloating o'er
She shall press, ah, nevermore!

Then, methought, the air grew denser, perfumed from an unseen censer
Swung by Seraphim whose foot-falls tinkled on the tufted floor.

41 **Pallas,** Pallas Athene, the goddess of wisdom • 43 **all my fancy,** substituted for the "all my sad soul" of an earlier version • 76 **gloated.** "Gloat" has as one of its unusual meanings, "to refract light" • 80 **Seraphim whose foot-falls,** a correction from "angels whose faint foot-falls" • 80 **tinkled,** defended by Poe as a word description of foot-falls, "because I saw that it had . . . been suggested to my mind by the sense of the supernatural with which it was, at the moment, filled"



"Wretch," I cried, "thy God hath lent thee—by these angels he hath sent thee
Respite—respite and nepenthe, from thy memories of Lenore,
Quaff, oh quaff this kind nepenthe and forget this lost Lenore!"
Quoth the Raven "Nevermore."

"Prophet!" said I, "thing of evil! prophet still, if bird or devil!
Whether Tempter sent, or whether tempest tossed thee here ashore,
Desolate yet all undaunted, on this desert land enchanted—
On this home by Horror haunted—tell me truly, I implore:
Is there—*is* there balm in Gilead?—tell me—tell me, I implore!"
Quoth the Raven "Nevermore."

"Prophet!" said I, "thing of evil—prophet still, if bird or devil!
By that Heaven that bends above us, by that God we both adore,
Tell this soul with sorrow laden if, within the distant Aidenn,
It shall clasp a sainted maiden whom the angels name Lenore—
Clasp a rare and radiant maiden whom the angels name Lenore!"
Quoth the Raven "Nevermore."

"Be that word our sign of parting, bird or fiend!" I shrieked, up-starting:
"Get thee back into the tempest and the Night's Plutonian shore!
Leave no black plume as a token of that lie thy soul hath spoken!
Leave my loneliness unbroken! quit the bust above my door!
Take thy beak from out my heart, and take thy form from off my door!"
Quoth the Raven "Nevermore."

And the Raven, never flitting, still is sitting, *still* is sitting
On the pallid bust of Pallas just above my chamber door;
And his eyes have all the seeming of a demon's that is dreaming,
And the lamplight o'er him streaming throws his shadow on the floor;
And my soul from out that shadow that lies floating on the floor
Shall be lifted—nevermore!

1845

Ulalume

For a time after the first publication of "Ulalume" (American Whig Review, December 1847), Poe liked the poem best without the tenth stanza. In his final published version of the poem, however, the last ten lines were included, and they therefore appear in this text.

The first nine stanzas build up admirably the tale of a growing uneasiness, and a growing perception of the

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89 **balm in Gilead.** See Jeremiah 8:22 • 93 **Aidenn,** a place of pleasure—variant of Eden or Aden • 106 **shadow,** justified by Poe thus: "For the purposes of poetry it is quite sufficient that a thing is possible, or at least that the improbability be not offensively glaring. It is true that in several ways, . . . the lamp might have thrown the bird's shadow on the floor. My conception was that of the bracket candelabrum affixed against the wall, high up above the door and bust. . ."

cause of that uneasiness, on the part of the narrator. Then comes a stanza which, so far as a large number of readers are concerned, hovers so close to the ridiculous as to spoil the effect. Perhaps Poe added the final stanza, as he said he did the final stanzas of "The Raven," to avoid repelling "the artistical eye" with "a certain hardness and nakedness." Whatever his reason for writing the last stanza, many will feel that his impulse to drop it was sounder than his final impulse.

The skies they were ashen and sober;
  The leaves they were crisped and sere,
  The leaves they were withering and sere;
It was night in the lonesome October
  Of my most immemorial year;
It was hard by the dim lake of Auber,
  In the misty mid region of Weir:
It was down by the dank tarn of Auber,
  In the ghoul-haunted woodland of Weir.

Here once, through an alley Titanic
  Of cypress, I roamed with my Soul—
  Of cypress, with Psyche, my Soul.
These were days when my heart was volcanic
  As the scoriac rivers that roll,
  As the lavas that restlessly roll
Their sulphurous currents down Yaanek
  In the ultimate climes of the Pole,
That groan as they roll down Mount Yaanek
  In the realms of the Boreal Pole.

Our talk had been serious and sober,
  But our thoughts they were palsied and sere,
  Our memories were treacherous and sere,
For we knew not the month was October,
  And we marked not the night of the year,
  (Ah, night of all nights in the year!)
We noted not the dim lake of Auber
  (Though once we had journeyed down here),
Remembered not the dank tarn of Auber,
  Nor the ghoul-haunted woodland of Weir.

And now, as the night was senescent
  And star-dials pointed to morn,
  As the star-dials hinted of morn,
At the end of our path a liquescent
  And nebulous lustre was born,
Out of which a miraculous crescent
  Arose, with a duplicate horn,
Astarte's bediamonded crescent
  Distinct with its duplicate horn.

And I said—"She is warmer than Dian:
  She rolls through an ether of sighs,
  She revels in a region of sighs:
She has seen that the tears are not dry on
  These cheeks, where the worm never dies,
And has come past the stars of the Lion
  To point us the path to the skies,
  To the Lethean peace of the skies:
Come up, in despite of the Lion,
  To shine on us with her bright eyes:
Come up through the lair of the Lion,
  With love in her luminous eyes."

But Psyche, uplifting her finger,
  Said—"Sadly this star I mistrust,
  Her pallor I strangely mistrust:
Oh, hasten!—oh, let us not linger!
  Oh, fly!—let us fly!—for we must."
In terror she spoke, letting sink her
  Wings till they trailed in the dust;
In agony sobbed, letting sink her
  Plumes till they trailed in the dust,
  Till they sorrowfully trailed in the dust.

I replied—"This is nothing but dreaming:
  Let us on by this tremulous light!
  Let us bathe in this crystalline light!

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6 **Auber,** a geographic name, like Weir and Yaanek in the lines which follow, evidently invented by Poe • 11 **cypress,** a species of tree often planted about tombs. The occurrence of an alley of such trees anticipates the narrator's grim discovery • 14 **scoriac,** volcanic, a word harking back to "ashen," "crisped," and "sere" in the first stanza, words suggestive of burning • 19 **Boreal,** northern, combining the suggestion of the blighting cold of October with the burning brightness of the aurora borealis • 37 **Astarte,** or Ashtoreth, Phoenician goddess associated with earthly love. See note, p. 667 • 39 **Dian,** Diana, goddess of the moon; with the Romans, the chaste huntress typifying pure love • 43 **where . . . dies.** See Isaiah 66:24 • 44 **the Lion,** constellation of Leo, here used to signify danger • 52 **I mistrust.** This phrase of Psyche forecasts the distressing discovery at the end of the poem

Its sibyllic splendor is beaming
  With hope and in beauty tonight:
  See, it flickers up the sky through the night!
Ah, we safely may trust to its gleaming,
  And be sure it will lead us aright:
We safely may trust to a gleaming
  That cannot but guide us aright,
  Since it flickers up to Heaven through the night."

Thus I pacified Psyche and kissed her,
  And tempted her out of her gloom,
  And conquered her scruples and gloom;
And we passed to the end of the vista,
  But were stopped by the door of a tomb,
  By the door of a legended tomb;
And I said—"What is written, sweet sister,
  On the door of this legended tomb?"
  She replied—"Ulalume—Ulalume—
  'Tis the vault of thy lost Ulalume!"

Then my heart it grew ashen and sober
  As the leaves that were crisped and sere,
  As the leaves that were withering and sere,
And I cried—"It was surely October
  On this very night of last year
  That I journeyed—I journeyed down here!—
  That I brought a dread burden down here—
  On this night of all nights in the year,
  Ah, what demon has tempted me here?
Well I know, now, this dim lake of Auber,
  This misty mid region of Weir:
Well I know, now, this dank tarn of Auber,
  This ghoul-haunted woodland of Weir.

Said we, then—the two, then: "Ah can it
  Have been that the woodlandish ghouls—
  The pitiful, the merciful ghouls—
To bar up our way and to ban it
  From the secret that lies in these wolds—
  From the thing that lies hidden in these wolds—
Have drawn up the spectre of a planet
  From the limbo of lunary souls—
This sinfully scintillant planet
  From the Hell of the planetary souls?"

1847

Eldorado

Written in the late winter or early spring of 1849, this poem was first published in **Flag of Our Union**, April 21, 1849. Eldorado was a fabulously rich city which early explorers of the Western world vainly sought. In 1849 the name was frequently applied to California gold fields.

  Gayly bedight,
  A gallant knight,
In sunshine and in shadow,
  Had journeyed long,
  Singing a song,
In search of Eldorado.

  But he grew old,
  This knight so bold,
And o'er his heart a shadow
  Fell as he found
  No spot of ground
That looked like Eldorado.

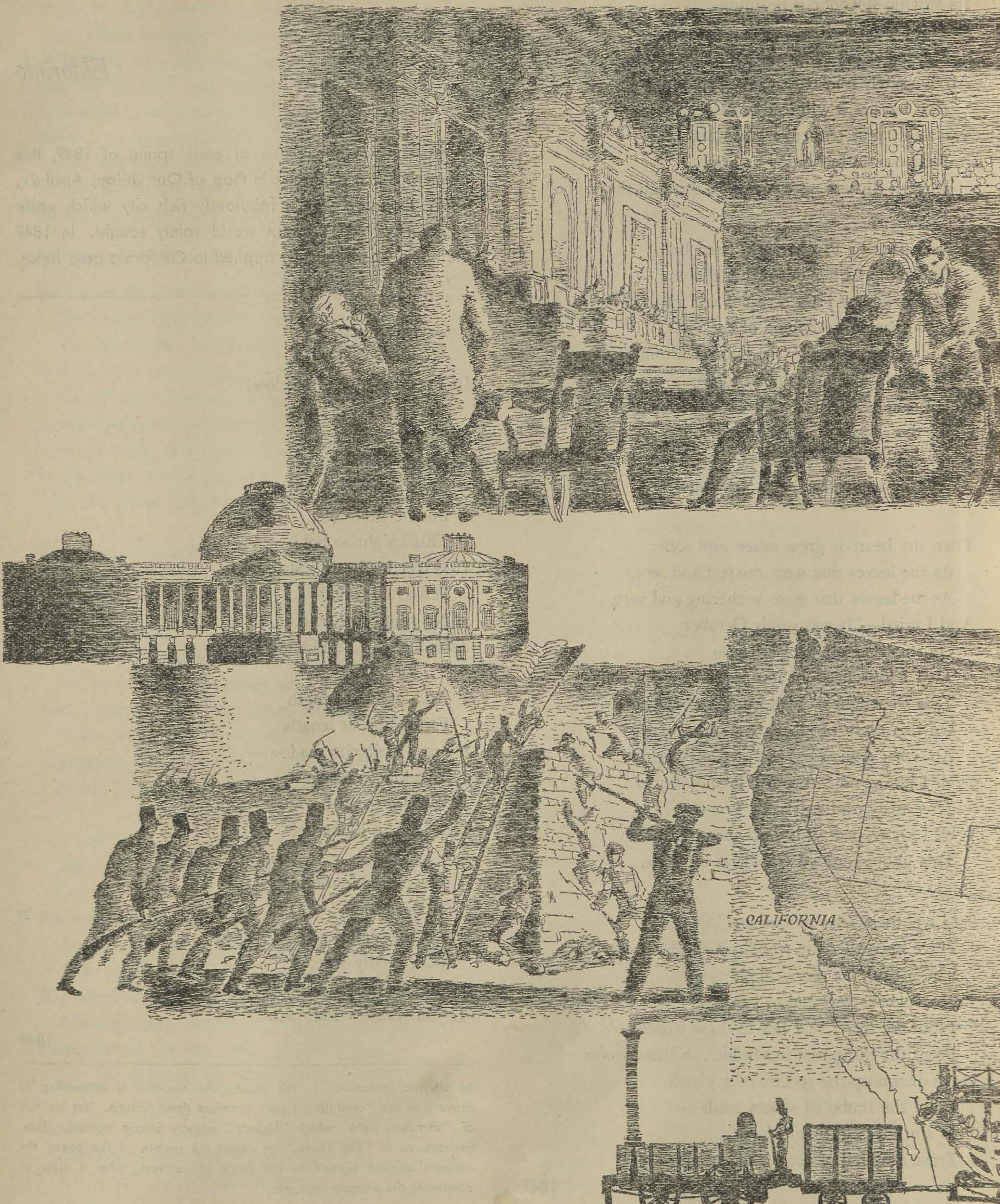
  And, as his strength
  Failed him at length,
He met a pilgrim shadow—
  "Shadow," said he,
  "Where can it be,
This land of Eldorado?"

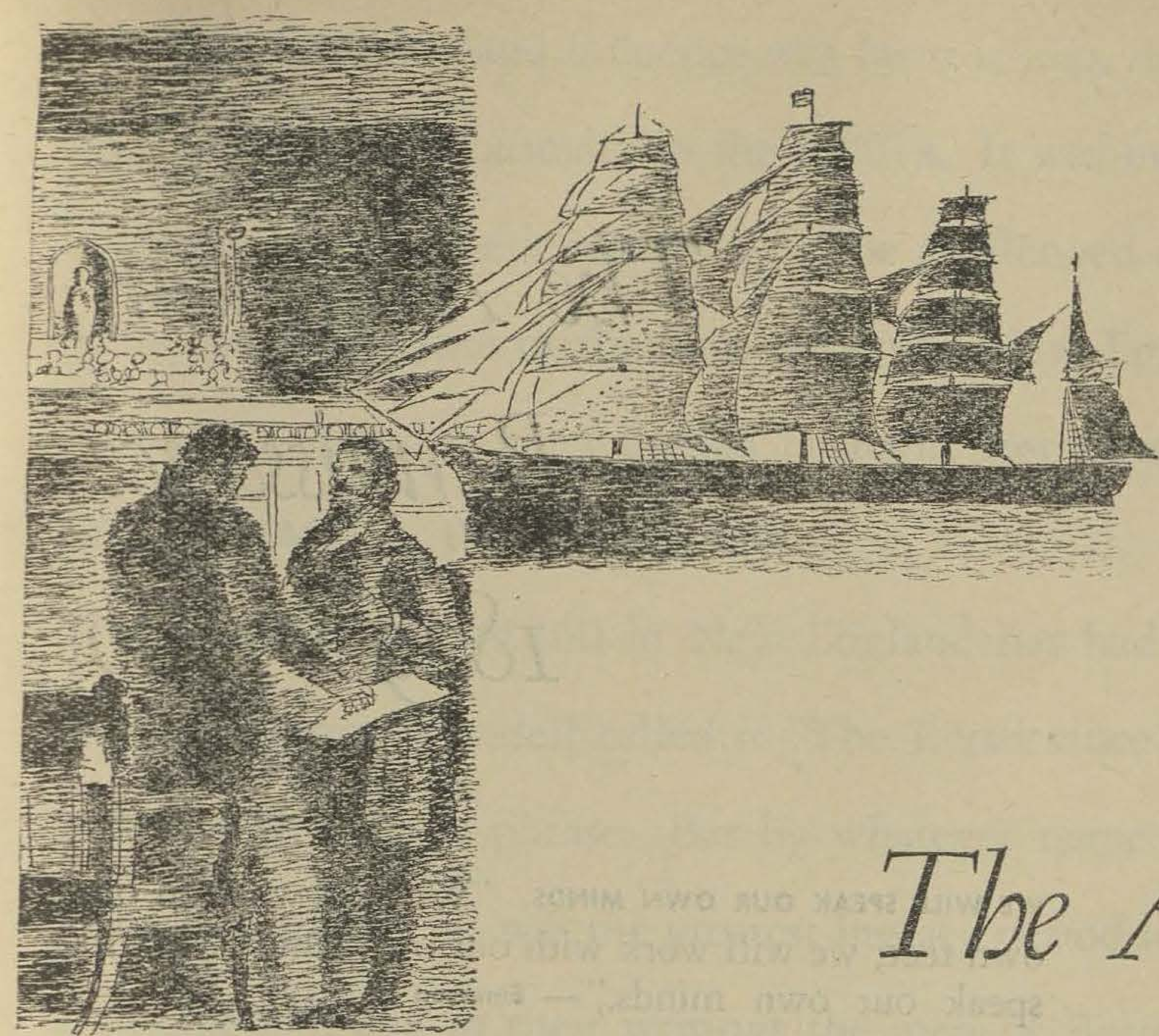
  "Over the Mountains
  Of the Moon,
Down the Valley of the Shadow,
  Ride, boldly ride,"
  The shade replied,
"If you seek for Eldorado!"

1849

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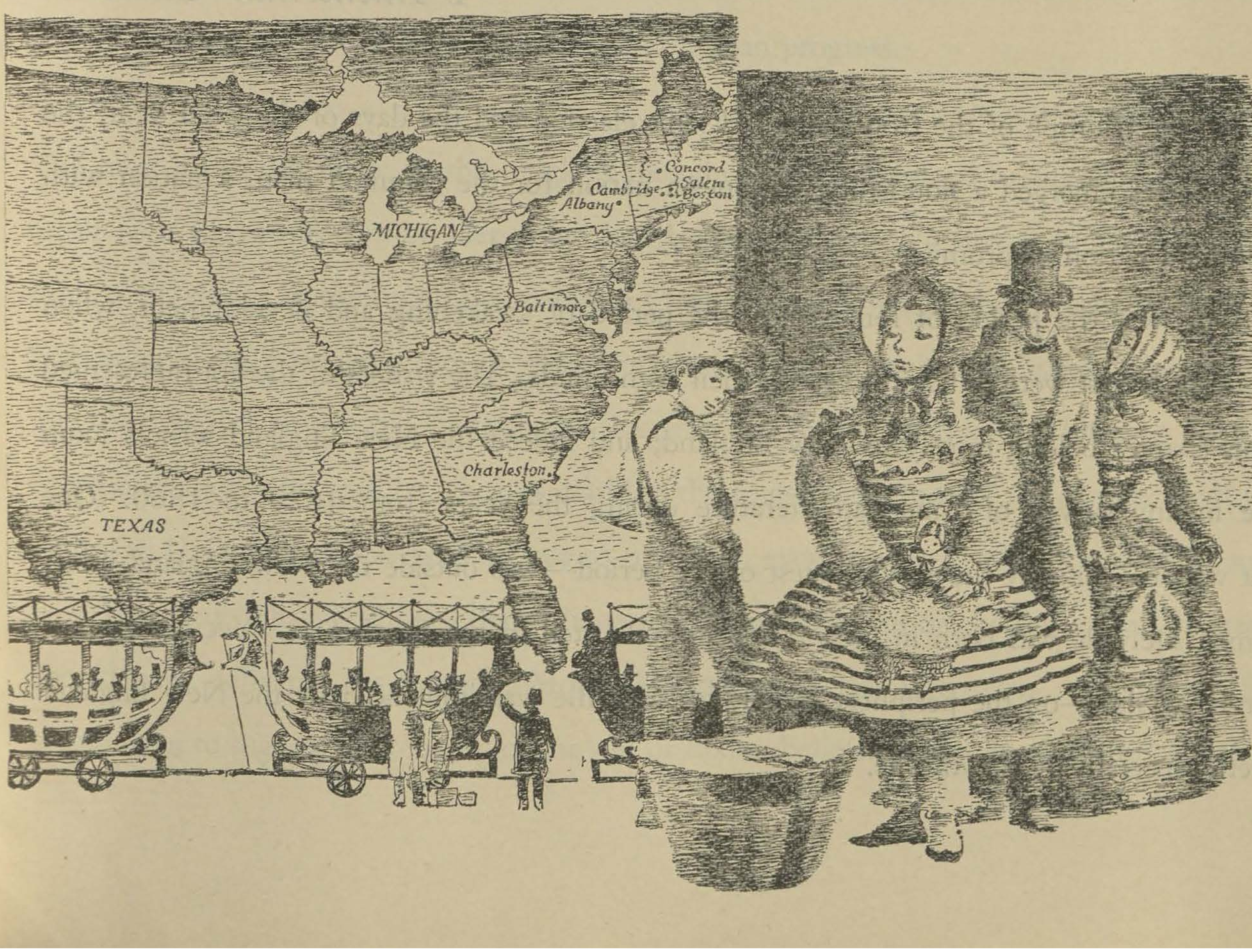
64 **sibyllic**, oracular. In this stanza the narrator is attempting to prove that this "crystalline light" promises good fortune. Yet his talk of "tremulous light" which "flickers" actually admits distrust. Here, perhaps, as in "The Raven," at about the middle of the poem, the author "availed himself of the force of contrast, with a view of deepening the ultimate impression"


CALIFORNIA



Chapter Three

The American Renaissance



Chapter **3**

The American Renaissance 1829 · 1860

WE WILL SPEAK OUR OWN MINDS. "We will walk on our own feet; we will work with our own hands; we will speak our own minds." — **Emerson**

I. Intellectual Currents

Between the triumph of the frontier in Jackson's election and the days of the Civil War, the United States emerged a flourishing nation—a nation for the common man, a nation with a culture, a nation of promises.

This was the period of renaissance, the period of awakening and development, when Americans at last were to begin to speak their own minds. The writers of the era represented in this chapter belong mostly to New England; and indeed the New England writers loom large in any survey of American literature during the years from 1829 to 1860. One great writer—possibly the very greatest of the period—was outside the New England orbit: Herman Melville was born in New York and educated in the South Seas. Yet he was not entirely outside—on the periphery rather, for Melville was influenced by the New England writers, especially by Hawthorne.

The New England influence was far-reaching. It extended into the Middle West, where Emerson lectured repeatedly in the 1850's. It was evident even in the South, though largely in opposition. Aesthetic writers like Poe challenged the vogue of moral literature, defenders of the social structure of the South opposed New England abolitionism, and lusty raconteurs on plantation and frontier flouted puritanic restraints.

NEW ENGLAND in ITS GOLDEN DAY

The period of 1829-1860 in New England has had applied to it a variety of happy designations: Barrett Wendell called it "The Renaissance of New England." "The Golden Day" is Lewis Mumford's phrase. But by whatever name it is known—whether by one of these or by some other—it was the greatest literary period in the history of New England. This was a rich period, and in their writings the men of Boston and Cambridge, Concord and Salem set forth their all-embracing ideas and attitudes—ideas and attitudes on religion and the conception of human nature, democracy and the common man, industry and the expanding frontier, slavery and the Civil War, science and human progress.

Changing Concepts of God and Man

The most important factor in the religious thought of New England in this period was the break with Calvinism. Boston clergymen had become increasingly liberal in the eighteenth century (as shown in the opposition between Chauncy and Edwards), but it was not until the beginning of the nineteenth century that Unitarianism was strongly established. The appointment in 1805 of an avowed Unitarian to the chair of Divinity at Harvard, hitherto occupied by staunch Calvinists, may be taken as marking the transition. And yet the change from Calvinism to Unitarianism was perhaps not so complete, even in eastern Massachusetts, as some have supposed. That William Ellery Channing, the most influential of the early Unitarians, should have delivered his famous "Moral Argument Against Calvinism" as late as 1820 would seem to suggest the tenacity of the old orthodox beliefs. Preaching from his Unitarian

pulpit in 1831, Emerson designated the Calvinistic and Unitarian groups as the "rigid" and the "liberal" parties, respectively, and urged his hearers to "borrow something of eternal truth from both of these opinions."

The chief points of difference between Calvinism and Unitarianism as expounded by Channing and his successors can be summarized briefly: (1) The two beliefs differed in their conceptions of the Deity. Calvinism emphasized God's inexorable justice; Unitarianism stressed His benevolence. The Unitarians questioned the justice of the doctrine of election: a God who says (according to Wigglesworth) "I do save none but mine own elect" seemed arbitrary and capricious. (2) The two beliefs differed in their conceptions of Christ. According to Calvinism, Christ is literally the Son of God, the second member of the Holy Trinity. According to Unitarianism, Christ is divine only in the sense in which all men are divine or have an element, however small, of divinity in their nature. The difference between Christ and ordinary mortals becomes one of degree, not of kind. (3) The two beliefs differed in their conceptions of man. Calvinism asserted the innate depravity of man, his predestination, and the necessity of his salvation through the atoning death of Christ. Unitarianism insisted upon man's innate goodness and his spiritual freedom. The Atonement became unnecessary to Unitarians, who preferred to point to Christ's life as an example to be emulated by men already potentially good.

As a young man Channing lived for two years in Virginia, where he presumably absorbed French romantic philosophy. From Rousseau and writers of his school, Channing probably derived, and imported into the Boston of the early 1800's, the ideas of the excellence of human nature and its infinite perfectibility. The inscription on the base of Channing's statue in Boston aptly summarizes his contribution to the religious thought of New England: "He breathed into theology a humane spirit and proclaimed anew the divinity of man." In his *Flowering of New England* Van Wyck Brooks declares justly, "By raising the general estimate of human nature,

which the old religion had despised, Channing gave a prodigious impulse to the creative life."

By 1820 Channing could say, "Calvinism is giving place to better views. We think the decline of Calvinism one of the most encouraging facts in our passing history." Unitarianism became the religion particularly of the fashionable and the well-to-do in and around Boston. "Whoever clung to the older faith," remarks Barrett Wendell, "did so at his social peril." Unitarianism, however, did not conquer the whole of New England. There were scattered Unitarian outposts, such as the parish of Sylvester Judd in Augusta, Maine, but the older faith continued dominant in the regions west and north of Boston.

Apart from both Calvinists and Unitarians, the Quakers were a comparatively small but important group. In early New England, Quakers were apt to be obstreperously fanatical (witness the Quakeress in Hawthorne's "Gentle Boy," p. 982); but by the time of John Woolman (1720-1772) their fanaticism had diminished, and in nineteenth-century New England they were, in the words of one historian, "inconspicuous and inoffensive."

Like the Calvinists, the Quakers believed in the divinity of Christ and in the Bible as the inspired word of God. Like the Calvinists, too, they insisted upon the essential sinfulness of man: "Too dark ye cannot paint the sin," Whittier, their chief representative in literature, said in "The Eternal Goodness," his best poetical statement of the Quaker belief. But Whittier in the poem objects to the "iron creeds" of the Calvinists and to their emphasis upon God's wrath; he prefers to think of "our Lord's beatitudes." The Quakers emphasized the "inner light," which God, they believed, gave to all human beings and which afforded an infallible guide to a righteous life. Quakerism was more benevolent and humanitarian than Calvinism, and more pietistic than Unitarianism. A mere layman might experience some difficulty in distinguishing between the doctrine of the inner light and the Emersonian doctrine of intuition.

After less than three years in the Unitarian ministry, Emerson resigned his pulpit in 1832 because of a growing dissatisfaction with the official rôle of the clergyman and the formalities

of the church. Unitarianism, he felt, was good as far as it went; but it did not go far enough toward the rehabilitation of the individual. The new doctrine of which Emerson became the chief interpreter is known as Transcendentalism. Emerson's *Nature,* published in 1836, was the bible of the early Transcendentalists. The "Transcendental Club" was, from 1836 until about 1844, a center of activity. Another focus was a quarterly magazine, *The Dial* (edited by Margaret Fuller, 1840-1842, and by Emerson, 1842-1844), which published many contributions by Transcendentalists during its lifetime of four years. The group as a whole was greatly influenced by the idealistic philosophies of other lands and ages: by Plato and the Neo-Platonists, by the Oriental Scriptures, by Kant and other German idealists—particularly as interpreted by Coleridge and Carlyle.

Transcendentalism has been defined philosophically as "the recognition in man of the capacity of knowing truth intuitively, or of attaining knowledge transcending the reach of the senses." It has been defined historically as follows: "New England Transcendentalism was produced by the importing of German idealism into American Unitarianism." The last definition indicates an important relation between Transcendentalism and Unitarianism and requires a consideration of the similarities and differences between the two.

Unitarianism prepared the way for Transcendentalism by insisting that man is essentially good and that man may trust his own perceptions of religious truth. Channing spoke of "the confidence which is due to our rational and moral faculties in religion" and said that "the ultimate reliance of a human being is and must be on his own mind." But it is important to observe two points of difference: (1) Channing, the Unitarian, expressed confidence in "our *rational* faculties." Emerson, the Transcendentalist, drew a sharp distinction between the "Understanding," by which he meant the rational faculty, and the "Reason," by which he meant the supra-rational or intuitive faculty; and he regarded the "Reason" as much more authoritative in spiritual matters than the "Understanding." (2) The Transcendentalists carried this reliance upon

the intuitive perceptions of the individual much further than conventional Unitarianism would warrant—carried it so far as to set aside even the authority of the Christian Bible. "Make your own Bible," said Emerson. "Select and collect all the words and sentences that in all your reading have been to you like the blast of a trumpet, out of Shakespeare, Seneca, Moses, John, and Paul." Emerson would renounce all authority, all standards and laws externally imposed: "Nothing is at last sacred but the integrity of your own mind." He proclaimed this glorification of intuition and the repudiation of all external religious authority to a Unitarian audience at Harvard in 1838: "Thank God for these good men [meaning the Saints and the Prophets] but say 'I also am a man.' " The result was a storm of protest. Emerson's Transcendentalism had gone far beyond the bounds of even liberal Unitarianism.

Transcendental thought in the abstract can be best studied in Emerson. His disciples, of whom there were many, were usually interested more in practice than in theory and attempted to apply Emerson's individualistic doctrines in various practical ways. George Ripley, for example, organized the famous utopian community at Brook Farm. Theodore Parker militantly espoused reforms in church and state. Margaret Fuller advocated the emancipation of women. Henry Thoreau made a famous experiment in living at Walden Pond.

Many passages in Thoreau seem echoes of Emerson, though Thoreau's expression of the thought is always more concrete than Emerson's. "The fact is," Thoreau wrote in his journal in 1853, "I am a mystic, a transcendentalist, and a natural philosopher to boot"—meaning by "natural philosopher" a scientific student of nature. The emphasis in the statement is significant. Mystical, transcendental passages abound in Thoreau, especially in his earlier writings, as they abound everywhere in Emerson. But as Thoreau grew older, his interest in the observation and description of the world of nature became more and more absorbing. He became—as his journals of the 1850's attest—more of the natural philosopher and somewhat less of the Transcendentalist.

Transcendental ideas scarcely touched the writers of Boston and Cambridge. Influenced by his medical studies, Dr. Holmes approached religious problems from the scientific point of view. He objected to the Calvinistic condemnation of sinners because he believed that wrong-doing is often the result of an unfortunate heredity. Bad men, he thought, should be treated as if they were insane. On the positive side, he had no transcendental ardor, but rather a rationalistic belief in the ability of the soul, in favorable circumstances, to "build more stately mansions." Longfellow's religious thought—such as it was—was mildly Unitarian, pleasantly optimistic about life and death. And although Lowell could write appreciatively of the stimulating effect of Emerson (". . . he made us conscious of the supreme and everlasting originality of whatever bit of soul might be in any of us"), he was not a disciple; nor was he in sympathy with Transcendental ideas. "The word 'transcendental,' " he declared in the unsympathetic essay on Thoreau, "was the maid of all work for those who could not think." The men of Boston and Cambridge found the Concord air too rarefied for their mundane needs.

The chief spokesman of the opposition to Transcendentalism, however, was Hawthorne, who returned, in part at least, to the Calvinist position. He satirized utopian reforms on the ground that superficial reform measures avail nothing so long as the human heart, which is innately sinful, remains unregenerated. "Purify that inward sphere," he advised in "Earth's Holocaust," "and the many shapes of evil that haunt the outward will vanish of their own accord." He satirized Unitarianism and Transcendentalism in "The Celestial Railroad" (p. 1004); Bunyan's arduous pilgrimage seemed to him still the best way of reaching the Celestial City. In stories and novels he showed that evil is an ever-present reality, not an illusion to be brushed aside, and that self-reliant individualism alone does not save man from disaster. Hawthorne is a striking example of the persistence of the Puritan point of view in an age of liberalism and progressivism.

But it would be a mistake to suppose that the Puritan inheritance affected Hawthorne

alone. It was everywhere present, giving native roots and indigenous strength to New England's flowering. The religious emphasis was a Puritan trait, as was the emphasis on books and reading. The Transcendental pursuit of perfection was the old Puritan pursuit of perfection in a new guise and on different terms. The diaries of Emerson, Thoreau, and Hawthorne continued an old Puritan practice; and the searchings of soul in Emerson and Thoreau recall passages in Cotton Mather and Jonathan Edwards. When Emerson said that the poet "must drink water out of a wooden bowl," he was quoting the austerest of English Puritans, John Milton. The austerity of Emerson and Thoreau, and of Hawthorne, too, was of the essence of Puritanism. If the Puritan essence was considerably diluted in the other writers of the period, it nevertheless made itself felt. It came out in the ethical earnestness of Longfellow and Lowell and in their native attachments. In sum, the great period of New England literature would have been impossible without the two centuries of Puritan inheritance. It is hardly an accident that the three New England writers of the period whose works seem most likely to endure—Emerson, Thoreau, and Hawthorne—are the writers whose roots were deepest in New England's Puritan past.

DEMOCRACY, INDUSTRIALISM, EXPANSION

From 1829 to 1860 the two major political parties in the United States were known as the Whigs and the Democrats. Conservative men of property in New England were likely to be Whigs; liberals and men of little or no property were likely to be Democrats.

The election of Andrew Jackson of Tennessee by the Democrats in 1828 is one of the great landmarks in the evolution of American democracy. The common man, whether backwoodsman, farmer, or small merchant, regarded Jackson, the conqueror of the Creek Indians and the hero of New Orleans, as a popular champion. Jackson's Whig opponent, the "aristocratic" John Quincy Adams, carried only New England and the North Atlantic states; the South and West went solidly for "Old Hickory." During the Jacksonian period, government in America became more democratic. The movement toward democracy, which had begun with the War of Inde-

pendence and which had been arrested somewhat in the 1790's owing to a certain apprehension caused among the more conservative citizenry by the excesses of the French Revolution, now resumed its onward course. State constitutions were liberalized. Religious tests and property qualifications for office were removed. Manhood suffrage was adopted generally.

New England Looks at the New Democracy

To many New Englanders Jackson and his supporters seemed the dregs of democracy. Emerson wrote to Carlyle, "A most unfit person in the Presidency has been doing the worst things; and the worse he grew, the more popular." But it would not be fair to Emerson to suppose that this snobbish statement represents his real attitude. Like most educated men, he doubted at times the wisdom of the uneducated masses. "The mass," he wrote in a skeptical moment, "are animal, in state of pupilage, and nearer the chimpanzee." But despite moments of skepticism, he held firmly to his faith in the ultimate wisdom of the people. The belief that "God is in every man" was to him "the highest revelation." And he said in another passage on the subject, "The great mass understand what's what." It should be remembered that Emerson took sharp issue with his friend Carlyle on the subject of democracy: when Carlyle advocated what we today should call a fascist doctrine, Emerson vigorously dissented. He could think of many benefits that might come from even the "rank rabble party, the Jacksonism of the country." For one thing, this new democracy of the West might cure America of its slavish dependence upon Old World literature and Old World traditions, might "root out the hollow dilettantism of our cultivation." And he came ultimately to an admiration of Jackson himself. Writing in 1862 of the truly memorable things which he associated with the national capital, he mentioned along with the eloquence of Webster and the "sublime behaviour" of John Quincy Adams "the fine military energy of Jackson in his presidency."

Jackson's fine military energy appealed also to James Russell Lowell, who wrote in his "Latest Views of Mr. Biglow":

Ole Hick'ry wouldn't ha' stood see-saw
'Bout doin' things till they wuz done with,—
H'd smashed the tables o' the Law
In time o' need to load his gun with;
He couldn't see but jest one side,—
Ef his, 'twuz God's, an' thet wuz plenty;
An' so his *'Forrards'* multiplied
An army's fightin' weight by twenty.

It must have required great effort for the New England mind to appreciate a man like Andrew Jackson; but the point is that the minds of Emerson and Lowell were capable of making such an accommodation. No violent adjustment was necessary, however, for a third New Englander, Nathaniel Hawthorne, for he alone among the major New England writers was a loyal member of the Democratic party and a staunch supporter of Jackson. Late in life he recorded in his journal the considered judgment, "Surely Jackson was a great man." But despite the personal challenge of Jackson himself, Emerson spoke for the generality of educated New Englanders when he said that the Whig party had the "best men"; the Democratic party, he added, had the "best cause."

The "best cause" became more and more pervasive in the literature of the period. An earlier democratic impetus had been supplied by the English Romantic Movement. When Emerson, in *The American Scholar* (p. 874), hailed as one of the "auspicious signs" the exploring and poetizing of "the near, the low, the common," he was thinking particularly of the English Romantic poets. And when Longfellow celebrated the village blacksmith, and Whittier, the barefoot boy, the inspiration was at least partly derived from Burns and Wordsworth. Thus initiated, the democratic movement in literature was broadened and deepened and made more American by the fresh impetus of Jacksonian Democracy. Lowell affords a good illus-

tration. With him the democratic attitude evolved from the romantic and literary to the realistic and American. His celebration of Lincoln in 1865 as "New birth of our new soil, the first American" is a landmark in the democratic evolution of the New England mind. His full development in this direction is seen in his famous address on "Democracy" (1884), in which he said:

> I recollect hearing a sagacious old gentleman say in 1840 that the doing away with the property qualification for suffrage twenty years before had been the ruin of the State of Massachusetts. . . . I lived to see that Commonwealth twenty odd years later paying the interest on her bonds in gold. . . . To the door of every generation there comes a knocking, and unless the household, like the Thane of Cawdor and his wife, have been doing some deed without a name, they need not shudder. It turns out at worst to be a poor relation who wishes to come in out of the cold.

Thus Lowell, the Brahmin, spoke for democracy and the forgotten man.

Another Brahmin, Oliver Wendell Holmes, was not visibly touched by the evolution of democratic thought in America. In *The Autocrat of the Breakfast-Table* (p. 816), he clung tenaciously to his aristocratic bias: "Self-made men?—Well, yes. Of course everybody likes and respects self-made men. It is a great deal better to be made in that way than not to be made at all. . . . But *other things being equal,* in most relations of life I prefer a man of family." His favorite subjects in poetry were aristocratic types ("Dorothy Q," "The Last Leaf," p. 812) and aristocratic heirlooms ("On Lending a Punch-Bowl"). It is not without significance in this connection that many of the writings of Dr. Holmes seem less vital and less important today than those of his more democratic contemporaries.

The Machine vs. Self-Reliance

The Jacksonian revolution affected the entire country; the industrial revolution was confined largely to the Northern states, and its effects became especially important in New England.

After the War of 1812, business capital and initiative in New England were diverted from commerce to manufacturing, and the abundance of water power and skilled labor guaranteed the success of the factory system. The most striking new feature of the New England landscape about 1820 was the factory village, built near some waterfall and consisting of mills and houses for the "operatives." Conditions were much more agreeable in the new factory villages of New England than in the older manufacturing centers of England. Workers in the New England factories were mostly farmers' daughters from the surrounding country. Hawthorne in one of his rambles about the countryside remarked on the bright, cheerful faces looking out through the factory windows. A notable instance was Lowell, Massachusetts (founded in 1822), where the factory girls dressed neatly, were properly chaperoned, and published a literary weekly. By 1840 there were some 1200 cotton factories in the United States, two thirds of which were in New England.

One result of the industrial revolution in New England was the accumulation of wealth, a good deal of which was used for cultural purposes. Many New Englanders studied in Europe. The colleges of New England grew in resources and prestige. Almost every town had its free public library and its Lyceum, where an instructive course of lectures was given during the winter. Emerson, and even Thoreau, lectured on many Lyceum platforms. In the cities, mechanics' institutes offered vocational training. The Lowell family might be cited as illustrating the happy marriage of wealth and culture: one uncle of James Russell Lowell founded the manufacturing city which bears his name; another uncle established the famous Lowell Institute in Boston, where lectures have been given for more than a century by distinguished scientists, scholars, and men of letters.

To most New England writers of the period the industrial revolution no doubt seemed more beneficent than otherwise. One major writer, however, spoke out, loud and bold, against the mechanization of American life. Thoreau's objection was based upon the fundamental prin-

ciple, Emerson's principle, of self-reliance. A man ought to do for himself the things which more and more were being done by machines: he ought to walk instead of riding on the train; he ought to build his own house, make his own clothes, bake his own bread. The machine brought on the division of labor which reduced men from integers to fractions. "Where is this division of labor to end?" Thoreau cried in *Walden,* and he added a statement the force of which is only today becoming apparent: "No doubt another *may* also think for me; but it is not therefore desirable that he should do so to the exclusion of my thinking for myself."

Compared with Thoreau's, the comments of other writers on the advancing machine age seem less decisive. Emerson entered a mild demurrer in *Self-Reliance* (p. 892), warning that "the harm of the improved machinery may compensate its good"; but, in the long run, he was willing to accept the machine as part of the "beneficent tendency." Hawthorne seems to have been apprehensive of evil results; to him, apparently, the machine was a malevolent monster. One finds in his journal the following note for a story: "A steam engine in a factory to be supposed to possess a malignant spirit; it catches one man's arm and pulls it off; seizes another by the coat-tails, and almost grapples him bodily; catches a girl by the hair, and scalps her; and finally draws a man and crushes him to death." Here was a conception out of which Hawthorne might have developed a tale of Gothic horror, and perhaps of social prophecy.

A conspicuous and characteristic product of the industrial revolution in America was the man of big business, the captain of industry. The subject received scant attention in the literature of the period. One passage, however, is of particular interest—a passage in Emerson's *Journals* which expresses the writer's great admiration of John M. Forbes, a builder of railroads in the West in the 1860's:

> Forbes is an American to be proud of. Never was such force, good meaning, good sense, good action, combined with such domestic lovely behaviour. . . . Wherever he moves, he is the benefactor. It is of course

> that he should shoot well, ride well, sail well, administer railroads well, carve well, keep house well, but he was the best talker also in the company. . . .

The type has suffered at the hands of later writers. Perhaps Emerson was naïve; or possibly the type deteriorated in the post-Civil War period; or, quite likely, the American businessman was given less than justice by the satirists and "debunkers" of the 1920's.

New England Looks West with Mixed Feelings

Thinking in New England along political, economic, and social lines was conditioned not only by Jacksonian Democracy and the industrial revolution; it was conditioned also by the Westward movement. Some of the details of the movement are reserved for a later chapter. Our concern here is with its effect upon New England attitudes.

In the early years of the century New Englanders had settled in western New York and Ohio; by the 1840's they not only had occupied Indiana, Illinois, and southern Michigan, but had ventured as far as Wisconsin, Minnesota, and Iowa. A popular song summed up the invitation to the West:

> Come all ye Yankee farmers who wish to change your lot,
> Who've spunk enough to travel beyond your native spot. . . .

The Westward migration gave an outlet to the discontented elements, to those who wished to change their lot.

Despite the ties between New England and the West, conservative New Englanders were inclined to deprecate the Westward migration. There were economic reasons for this attitude: the draining off of energetic young people tended to keep high the price of factory labor, and the revenue from the sale of public lands in the West furnished an argument to Southerners for lowering the tariff. There were moral reasons also. The appeal to "spunk" to leave "your native spot" in the song quoted above was reversible since one might argue

that more spunk was required to succeed in one's native place, particularly if that place was a New England farm. "The wise man stays at home," said Emerson. And possibly Whittier was thinking of those who were tempted by the West when he emphasized the noble austerity of life in New England:

> Then ask not why to these bleak hills
> I cling, as clings the tufted moss . . .
> Better with naked nerve to bear
> The needles of this goading air,
> Than, in the lap of sensual ease, forego
> The godlike power to do, the godlike aim to know.

By many high-minded New Englanders, migration to the West was regarded, no doubt, as a decline to a lower level. Some reformers, on the other hand, made the point that Westward migration might be checked if certain improvements were made at home. Sylvester Judd said of his fictional utopia, described in *Margaret: A Tale of the Real and Ideal* (1845), that "the mania for removing to the West, which prevails all over New England, has here subsided."

The Western theme does not bulk very large in the writings and memoirs of the authors of New England's Renaissance, but a few details may be of interest to suggest their views and attitudes.

Hawthorne was interested in the West, although his knowledge of the subject was not great. In the 1830's he traveled by stagecoach and canal boat as far as Niagara Falls and recorded his observations in a few slight but revealing sketches. While American consul at Liverpool, he met more Westerners than he had ever seen in Salem or Concord, some of whom he viewed with disapproval. A Mr. Lilley from Ohio, for example, he described in his notebooks as "a very unfavorable specimen of American manners—an outrageous tobacco chewer and atrocious spitter on carpets." But some years later in Concord he met young William Dean

Howells, an Ohioan, whose manners were irreproachable. Hawthorne was (as Howells recorded) "curious about the West, which he seemed to fancy much more purely American, and said he would like to see some part of the country on which the damned shadow of Europe had not fallen."

To Lowell, as to Hawthorne, the West seemed more purely American because it was freer from European influences. (The same point was to be made at the end of the century by the historian Frederick Jackson Turner.) When "Nature" made Lincoln, Lowell said in his "Commemoration Ode" (p. 865),

> For him her Old-World moulds aside she threw,
>
> And choosing sweet clay from the breast
>
> Of the unexhausted West,
>
> With stuff untainted shaped a hero new . . .
>
> Nothing of Europe here. . . .

The great Americans in the early history of the Republic—Franklin, Washington, Jefferson, and the rest—possessed a culture which was largely European; but the culture of Lincoln was "untainted" by the Old World. Lowell's appreciation of this fact is all the more remarkable because, as a lifelong student of the Romance languages and literatures, he himself was an embodiment of European culture. Such an insight into the significance of the West was beyond the reach of another devotee of European literature, Longfellow, whose conception of the subject, as revealed in *Hiawatha* and *Evangeline,* was literary and romantic.

Unlike Longfellow, Thoreau was a tough, realistic writer who was qualified by temperament and personal habits to appreciate the values of the Western frontier. From Thoreau's point of view, life in New England had become too sophisticated; he spoke repeatedly of "these degenerate days." "We need the tonic of wildness," he declared in *Walden* (p. 951); and in "Walking" (p. 961), he said, "The West is but another name for the Wild." He praised the

sturdy self-reliance of the pioneer. If the race is to retain its vigor, men must live "a primitive and frontier life." Such a life had been lived by the settlers of New England, and Thoreau liked to quote from the colonial historians, particularly from Edward Johnson, who told how the first inhabitants of Concord were forced to live in a cave and "cut their bread very thin." Such a Spartan existence was enjoyed also, he supposed, by the Western frontiersman. "Adam in Paradise," he declared, "was not so favorably situated on the whole as is the backwoodsman in America." The backwoodsman whom Thoreau envisaged, we may be sure, was not of the lawless or mercenary sort; rather he was the sober New Englander dedicated to plain living and high thinking on a farm in Michigan or Illinois. The gold rush to California was quite another matter. The greed and the gambling instinct therein displayed, he thought, were a "disgrace on mankind." The California spectacle of 1849, he said, made of God "a moneyed gentleman who scatters a handful of pennies in order to see mankind scramble for them."

If Thoreau praised the West for its primitive qualities, Emerson praised it for its astonishingly rapid acquisition of culture. He lectured many times throughout the Middle West in the 1850's. He went as far as Beloit, Wisconsin, where on January 9, 1856, he found an interested audience despite a temperature of thirty degrees below zero. The spread of culture on the frontier was to him indeed remarkable. Having heard piano music on one of his Western travels, he wrote:

> Witness the mute all hail
> The joyful traveller gives, when on the verge
> Of craggy Indian wilderness he hears
> From a log cabin stream Beethoven's notes
> On the piano, played with master's hand.

The college in Evanston blew down one night (Emerson recorded in his journal in 1857), but so great were the energy and progressivism of the founders of Northwestern that "they raised it

again the next day, or built another." To Emerson, the West seemed the country of the future. He warned his Eastern readers that some day the sturdy Westerner would "gather all their laurels in his strong hands." Emerson's treatment of the West (which one finds chiefly in his *Journals*) emphasizes his identification not only with New England but with America as well.

Slavery and Civil War

Still another influence on New England thought about political, economic, and social problems was the growing controversy over Negro slavery in the South and the tragic climax of the Civil War. The details of the antislavery movement and the rôle of Whittier as New England's chief abolitionist in literature are reserved for a later chapter, where the two sides —Northern and Southern—may more conveniently be brought together. Here we are concerned with the movement as a stimulus to thought and with the reactions of the major New England writers, Whittier excepted, to that stimulus.

Longfellow, as we might expect, was only mildly responsive. His sentiments were broadly and sincerely humanitarian; he believed that slavery was a great evil. But he was not active in reform; he disliked controversy, and he preferred to write his poems on other subjects. Longfellow did, however, compose a few poems on slavery, of which "The Slave's Dream" (p. 775) may be regarded as typical of his attitude and method of treatment. The slave in the poem falls asleep in a rice field and dreams of his former life in Africa, where he had been a king and had ridden a spirited horse bridled with golden reins. The description would be more applicable to a knight of medieval romance and it reflects Longfellow's preoccupation with European romantic literature. When the Union was threatened by the sectional dispute, he wrote the noble and justly famous poem "The Building of the Ship" (1849), which was a poetical plea—matching Webster's plea in prose—for the preservation of the Union:

Thou too sail on, O Ship of State!
Sail on, O Union, strong and great!

Lowell was much more vocal than his fellow Cantabrigian. He had pretty definite political convictions, and he enjoyed being in the thick of the fray. In the first series of the *Biglow Papers* (p. 841), he vigorously opposed the Mexican War, which Northern abolitionists unanimously regarded as having been precipitated by Southern strategists with the aim of extending slave territory in the Southwest:

> They jest want this Californy
> So's to lug new slave states in. . . .

He declared himself opposed to all war, "Ez fer war, I call it murder. . . ," and preferred the separation of the North and South to slavery:

> Ef I'd my way I hed ruther
> We should go to work an' part. . . .

In the second series of the *Biglow Papers* (p. 858), written in 1862 when the Army of the Potomac had met with ill success, he abandoned his early pacifism and argued for a more vigorous prosecution of the War by the North:

> Oh for three weeks o' Crommle an' the Lord!
> Up, Isr'el to your tents an' grind the sword!

After the Civil War, however, Lowell directed his best poetical efforts toward reunion. Writing in 1875 in commemoration of the one hundredth anniversary of Washington's taking command of the colonial army, he extended the hand of reconciliation from Massachusetts to Virginia:

> Virginia gave us this imperial man . . .
> She gave us this unblemished gentleman.
> What shall we give her back but love and praise
> As in the dear old unestrangèd days. . . .

Ever responsive to changing conditions, Lowell's attitudes show, it seems fair to say,

his flexibility, adaptability, and capacity for growth in his thinking on political questions.

It so happened that Lowell was usually on the side of the majority; Thoreau had a predilection for the side of the minority, often a minority of one. He had the rare personal courage to carry his convictions to their logical conclusion, even if that conclusion meant the defiance of civil law. He refused to pay taxes to a government which allowed slavery, and as a consequence spent a night in the Concord jail. The record of this episode is given in "Civil Disobedience" (p. 940). He records in his journal that, contrary to the Fugitive Slave Law, on at least one occasion he helped a slave escape into Canada. While John Brown was in prison awaiting execution, Thoreau made a speech in Brown's behalf at Concord, and again at Boston and at Worcester to unsympathetic audiences. In his famous "Plea for Captain John Brown" he said, "It was his peculiar doctrine that a man has a perfect right to interfere by force with the slave-holder, in order to rescue the slave. I agree with him." Thoreau is the best example in American literature of the extremely individualistic position: that a man must do what he believes to be right with utter disregard for the conventions of society and the laws of the state.

Emerson was as individualistic in theory, though in practice a good deal more amenable to laws and conventions. Nor did he have the crusading spirit of Thoreau. He was nevertheless an active opponent of slavery after 1850, and, like Thoreau, he spoke publicly in defense of John Brown. The high point in his participation in public affairs came on January 1, 1863, when he read the "Boston Hymn" at a meeting to celebrate the Emancipation Proclamation and was interrupted by the cheering crowd at the famous lines:

> Who is the owner? The slave is owner,
> And ever was. Pay *him.*

Alone among the great New England writers, Hawthorne did not give his approval to the antislavery movement. Possibly, from the Calvinistic point of view, chattel slavery seemed not

the greatest of evils: all mankind were victims of a worse bondage—the bondage of sin. He was distrustful of reforms and reformers: reformers were likely to be impractical fanatics; reforms were superficial and as often as not proposed remedies which were worse than the disease. After the manner of the old Puritans, he believed that an inscrutable Providence would bring about the needed reform "at some brighter period, when the world should have grown ripe for it." Furthermore, as a loyal member of the Democratic party of James K. Polk and Franklin Pierce, Hawthorne subscribed to the conventional party arguments that (1) slavery was entitled to recognition and protection under the Constitution; (2) the Union was threatened with disruption by the activities of the abolitionists; and (3) the welfare and happiness of the Negro himself would be jeopardized by his emancipation. During the Civil War he found his position as a Northern Democrat embarrassing; he was looked at askance by friends and neighbors. He did not, however, join those Northern Democrats, known as Copperheads, who opposed the prosecution of the War and advocated a return to the *status quo ante bellum.* "I always thought that the War should have been avoided," he wrote in 1863, "although since it has broken out, I have longed for military success as much as any man or woman of the North." Devoted as he was to the older Union established by the founding fathers, he felt in 1863 that the permanent separation of North and South was inevitable, and persuaded himself "to be content with half the soil that was once our broad inheritance." He did not live to see the end of the War.

SCIENCE and HUMAN PROGRESS

Natural science advanced with remarkable rapidity in the nineteenth century, and its effects became more and more pervasive. In England—to mention only two of many notable publications in the scientific field—Sir Charles Lyell's *Principles of Geology* (1830) established the antiquity of the earth and the gradual evolution of its surface, and Charles Darwin's *Origin of the Species* (1859) presented the theory of the evolution of man through a process of natural selection. In New England, as well as elsewhere in America, scientific activity in all of the fields kept pace

with developments in the Old World. Benjamin Silliman at Yale published his *Elements of Chemistry* in 1830; Asa Gray at Harvard brought out a notable *Survey of Botany in the Northern United States* in 1847; Louis Agassiz of Switzerland began in 1846 a distinguished career at Harvard in the field of comparative zoölogy. The Harvard Astronomical Observatory in 1846 was equipped with the world's largest telescope; and in 1847 the American Association for the Advancement of Science was organized in Boston in order "to promote intercourse between American scientists, to give a strong and more systematic impulse to research, and to procure for the labors of scientific men increased facilities and wider usefulness." New England writers were aware of scientific developments, and their writings reflect, in various ways and degrees, the influence of the new facts and the new theories of experimental science.

Emerson greeted the scientific movement with enthusiasm. "One of the distinctions of our century," he wrote, "has been the devotion of cultivated men to natural science; the benefits thence derived to the arts and to civilization are signal and immense." Late in life he declared, "If absolute leisure were offered me, I should run to the college or the scientific school which offered the best lectures on Geology, Chemistry, Minerals, and Botany." Although one cannot be sure that Emerson read all of the scientists to whom he refers in his writings, his scientific reading was remarkably wide and certainly included, among other things, the works of Newton, Linnæus, Buffon, Lamarck, Lyell, Gray, Agassiz, and Darwin. But Emerson was not himself a scientist, nor was he interested in science for its own sake. Science was of value to him for the moral and spiritual implications which scientific fact and theory suggested to his mind—a quite unscientific reason. He liked to draw illustrations of spiritual truth from physical phenomena ("The axioms of physics translate the law of ethics," he said), and his pages abound in analogies between natural and spiritual laws. He was delighted, furthermore, by the doctrine of evolution, particularly by the earlier evolutionary theory of Lamarck, which seemed to him to confirm his optimistic hope for mankind. Paraphrasing Lamarck, he wrote as a motto for *Nature*:

And striving to be man, the worm
Mounts through all the spires of form.

If the worm might become man, if the caterpillar might evolve into a philosopher, then the future of the constantly evolving human race became glorious to contemplate.

Thoreau's relation to science was much more intimate than Emerson's. Thoreau was interested in nature for its own sake quite as much as for its Transcendental meanings. A student of botany and zoölogy, he liked to use the Latin names of plants and animals when he wrote about them. He sent to Agassiz for identification specimens of fishes and turtles, some of which were unknown to the Harvard professor. Thoreau did not have, however, either the equipment or the temperament of the genuine scientist. He did not go beyond description of behavior and classification. He would not murder to dissect. A hawk could be best studied, he maintained, not as a "dead specimen," but free and soaring above the fields. In short, Thoreau was, to use the phrase of his friend Ellery Channing (a nephew of William Ellery Channing), "the *poet*-naturalist."

Among the Brahmins, Longfellow and Lowell gave little attention to science, though Longfellow shared the general faith in the contributions of science to human progress. Lowell, on one occasion, twitted the Darwinians upon their arrogant assumption that evolution had supplanted God in the modern world (see his "Credidimus Jovem Regnare"). A third Brahmin, however, achieved a real distinction in science. Oliver Wendell Holmes studied medicine in Paris. From 1847 to 1882 he was professor of anatomy and physiology in the Harvard Medical School. His most famous contribution to medical science was his essay on "The Contagiousness of Puerperal Fever" (1843), which materially aided the efforts of the medical profession to reduce the mortality of women in childbirth. Holmes' medical training gave him a scientific approach to his literary subjects. He became particularly interested in the problem of the bearing of heredity upon moral responsibility, which is the subject of his novel *Elsie Venner* (1861) and of other writings. He stated the problem as follows in the Preface to the novel:

> Was Elsie Venner, poisoned by the venom of a crotalus [rattlesnake] before she was born, morally responsible for the 'volitional' aberrations, which translated into acts become what is known as sin, and, it may be, what is punished as crime? If, on presentation of the evidence, she becomes by the verdict of the human conscience a proper object of divine pity and not of divine wrath, as a subject of moral poisoning, wherein lies the difference between her position at the bar of judgment, human or divine, and that of the unfortunate victim who received a moral poison from a remote ancestor before he drew his first breath?

Holmes anticipated by at least a generation the approach of modern neurology. The author of many volumes of novels, essays, and verse, he nevertheless considered his article on childbed fever his best title to fame.

Hawthorne, once again, is found perversely at odds with this self-confident, progressive, optimistic age. He discovered a danger in the new emphasis upon experimental science. In "Rappaccini's Daughter" (p. 1025), in "Ethan Brand," and elsewhere, he examined the scientist and discovered that the scientist had been dehumanized. Of Dr. Rappaccini, "as true a man of science as ever distilled his own heart in an alembic," Hawthorne wrote: "His patients are interesting to him only as subjects for some new experiment. He would sacrifice human life, his own among the rest, or whatever else was dearest to him, for the sake of adding so much as a grain of mustard seed to the great heap of his accumulated knowledge." Likewise, Ethan Brand, a scientist in the field of experimental psychology, became "a cold observer, looking on mankind as the subject of his experiment"; he "lost his hold of the magnetic chain of humanity"; he became "a fiend." Hawthorne seemed to think that the exclusive cultivation of the scientific faculty produces atrophy of soul, and creates and lets loose in the world an agent which is "fiendish" because utterly unmoral and irresponsible. The mid-nineteenth century did not take

the warning seriously, failed sometimes even to recognize it. Now, a hundred years later, Hawthorne's point becomes more plainly perceptible.

HERMAN MELVILLE: EXPLORER of the WORLD and ENIGMAS

After a boyhood in New York City and Albany, a voyage to Liverpool, three years in the South Seas, a brief second residence in New York City, and a journey to London and Paris, the much-traveled Herman Melville settled in 1850, at the age of thirty-one, at "Arrowhead" near Pittsfield, Massachusetts. Obviously he was not a product of Massachusetts or a part of the literary movement of New England. But his Massachusetts residence, which lasted, with interruptions for other travels, for more than twenty years, brought him within the sphere of influence of the New England Renaissance. He met in the Berkshires many of the New England writers and struck up a stimulating and sympathetic friendship with Hawthorne, who in 1850-1851 resided at near-by Lenox. It is significant that Melville wrote his greatest book, *Moby Dick,* during the months of his close association with Hawthorne and that he dedicated the book to Hawthorne.

For, like Hawthorne, Melville was concerned with the darker side of human fate. Both insisted upon the reality of evil in the world; both were skeptical of the optimism of Emerson and his benevolent theory of the Universe; both presented the tragedies of the mind and soul. Hawthorne agreed with Bunyan's *Pilgrim's Progress,* where man is represented as going through life weighed down by a burden of sin. Melville called Ecclesiastes "the truest of all books . . . the fine hammered steel of woe."

Melville dwelt much upon the evil in the world. He had seen at first hand the brutality of ship captains, the depravity of Old World cities, the vices brought to the South Sea islanders by "civilized" invaders. More than that, evil appeared triumphant (as in *Pierre*), even when man's motives were virtuous. Why, Melville asked, did a good God—if indeed He is good—permit evil in His world? Melville could not accept the Universe with as much resignation as his friend Hawthorne. He persisted in challenging the sphinx riddle, courageously, defiantly.

In *Moby Dick,* which is a compendium of Melville's metaphysical speculation, Captain Ahab relentlessly pursues the White Whale only to be destroyed in the end. The allegory is susceptible of many interpretations. To Ahab "all evil was visibly personified and made practically assailable in Moby Dick." Ahab, however, is not the embodiment of unmixed good: his conduct is irrational and foolhardy; it is contrary to the well-being of others; it is motivated by revenge. Elsewhere, Ahab (and perhaps Melville) saw in Moby Dick "outrageous strength with an inscrutable malice sinewing it," and he hated chiefly the *inscrutability* of the whale. The story perhaps represents man's hopeless but heroic attempt to search out the inscrutable, to know the unknowable; the tragedy of man becomes the tragedy of his limited comprehension. But whatever the interpretation—and each reader must make his own, for the allegory with its countless ramifications is too complex to admit of a simple, categorical definition—Melville's Ahab, like Ethan Brand and other characters of Hawthorne, becomes completely obsessed with this one pursuit and sacrifices everything else to it. If the tragedy of man is his inability to possess complete knowledge of himself and his destiny, Ahab's tragedy is his monomania, the narrow range of his interests.

Melville's chief concern was with the profound enigmas—the nature of God and man, the mystery of "Providence, Foreknowledge, Will and Fate"—and like Milton's philosophers he "found no end, in wandering mazes lost." He was not, however, indifferent to the more mundane problems of modern society, and scattered through his works one finds abundant evidence of his awareness of contemporary social questions.

His own observation of tyranny on shipboard and the exploitation of the native population on the Pacific islands had awakened in him a flaming passion for social justice in a truly democratic society. This passion expressed itself angrily in *White Jacket,* where he condemned the naval practice of flogging, and philosophically and satirically in *Mardi* (p. 1066), where he surveyed the governments, beliefs, and manners of much of the nineteenth-century world.

The latter book is of special importance for the student of Melville's social ideas with reference to his own country. He was critical of America's faults. "Vivenza [the United States] was a braggadocio": boastfulness was getting to be a national habit; after all, God should be given some credit for our mountains and rivers. The existence of slavery nullified our noble *Declaration of Independence.* The war against Mexico was foisted upon the nation by the imperialistic action of the President. The California of the gold rush was a "golden Hell." And speaking more radically, Melville pointed out the incompleteness of our freedom: political freedom alone was not enough, for "freedom is more social than political." But despite these and many other imperfections, the young American democracy inspired in Melville an ardent faith. The West was a source of fresh hope—Westerners "were a fine young tribe; like strong new wine they worked violently in becoming clear." "In its better aspect," he declared, "Vivenza was a noble land": "Like a young tropic tree she stood, laden down with greenness, myriad blossoms, and the ripened fruit thick-hanging from one bough. She was promising as the morning. Or Vivenza might be likened to St. John, feeding on locusts and wild honey, and with prophetic voice, crying to the nations from the wilderness. Or, childlike, standing among the old robed kings and emperors of the Archipelago, Vivenza seemed a young Messiah, to whose discourse the bearded Rabbis bowed."

Like Hawthorne, Melville was a philosophical pessimist and a political optimist. It was possible to believe in original sin and still be a democrat.

THE OLD SOUTH—in OPPOSITION

Religious questions were not nearly so vital in Southern literature as in the literature of New England and in the writings of Melville. Southern writers, in general, did not concern themselves with spiritual laws, like Emerson; or with the remorse for sin, like Hawthorne; or with metaphysical speculation, like Melville. Indeed, in religious matters the cultivated Southerner was likely to be tolerant to the point of indifference. John Pendleton Kennedy's

account of Frank Meriwether in *Swallow Barn* (p. 1116) may be regarded as fairly typical of the gentry of the Old South:

> If my worthy cousin be somewhat over-argumentative as a politician, he restores the equilibrium of his character by a considerate coolness in religious matters. He piques himself upon being a high-churchman, but is not the most diligent frequenter of places of worship, and very seldom permits himself to get into a dispute upon points of faith. If Mr. Chub, the Presbyterian tutor in the family, ever succeeds in drawing him into this field, as he occasionally has the address to do, Meriwether is sure to fly the course; he gets puzzled with scripture names, and makes some odd mistakes between Peter and Paul, and then generally turns the parson over to his wife, who, he says, has an astonishing memory.

Good form, however, required a decent respect for the outward observances of religion. Among the aristocracy, the Episcopal Church was the best form; the Presbyterian, though less good, was socially acceptable; the revivalistic evangelism of the Methodists and Baptists flourished on the frontiers west of Charleston and Richmond.

The Puritan, as in *The Yemassee,* was likely to be thought a disagreeable fellow—crabbed in temperament, morbid in the pursuit of virtue. William Gilmore Simms preferred the Cavalier type. If religious ideas became articulate in the Charleston of Simms or the Baltimore of Kennedy, they were likely to take on a rationalistic, eighteenth-century flavor. The following statement by Kennedy, written on his sixty-fifth birthday, might have come from Franklin or Jefferson: "I endeavor to avoid the uncharitableness of sectarian opinion, and maintain an equal mind toward the various forms in which an earnest piety shapes the divisions of the world of believers,—tolerating honest differences as the right of all sincere

thinkers, and looking only to the kindly nature of Christian principle as it influences the personal lives and conduct of men, as the substantial and true test of a sound religion."

Politics, however, were quite another matter. The Old South had a genius for politics, and nothing delighted the Charleston lawyer or the Virginia planter more than a political discussion. The hero of *Swallow Barn* was a Jeffersonian Democrat who supported the rights of the states against "the ambitious designs of the general government" and preferred the agrarianism of the South to the mercantilism and industrialism of the North. In early life Kennedy doubtless agreed with his hero; but he later opposed the new Jacksonian Democracy, satirizing it vigorously in *Quodlibet.* As a result of his growing connections with the business interests of Baltimore, he abandoned his early Jeffersonian principles, became a Whig advocate of the protective tariff for manufactures, and ended as a staunch Unionist and Republican.

Simms' political course was the reverse of Kennedy's. Whereas the latter began as a states' rights man and became a Unionist, Simms began as a Unionist and became an ardent champion of states' rights. New occasions teach new duties, Simms might have said. When he opposed nullification in South Carolina in 1832, he was supporting Old Hickory and the issue was the tariff. When he advocated nullification in South Carolina twenty years later, he was supporting Calhoun and the issue was slavery.

Although Simms was more democratic in his sympathies than Kennedy—possibly because of his youthful experiences on the Southwestern frontier, the Jackson country—the two men were agreed in the belief that the business of government belonged in the abler hands of the ruling class, which was ordinarily the planter aristocracy. Considerations of wisdom, prudence, and efficiency seemed to them to dictate such a view. As to the subject races—the Indian and the Negro—writers like Kennedy and Simms believed that their state of subjection argued their intrinsic inferiority to the whites and that the white superiors of the blacks should maintain them in humane tutelage until some distant time when emancipation might prove feasible.

Kennedy no doubt agreed with his Virginia planter who said in the 1820's, "The question of emancipation is exclusively our own, and every intermeddling with it from abroad will but mar its chance of success." He painted a disarming picture of the master-slave relationship at Swallow Barn, where he found "an air of contentment and good humor and kind family attachment." He looked forward to gradual emancipation and the possible success of colonizing experiments. Simms' view was substantially the same in 1835, as his treatment of the subject in *The Yemassee* suggests. His later violent championship of slavery as "a wisely devised institution of heaven" can be understood only in the light of the sectional controversy of the 1850's, the literature of which is deferred until the next chapter.

Despite democratic sympathies discoverable in the works of Emerson, Hawthorne, Melville, Simms, and other writers of the period, the complete champion of the common man, irrespective of race, does not appear in American literature before Whitman. R.S.

II. Literary Trends

FOREIGN and DOMESTIC IMPULSES

The period of 1829-1860 was rich not only in ideas but also in artistic expression. Although New England produced more than its share of great artists, other sections also nurtured authors of whom they might well have been proud. The South was represented notably by two fiction writers, John Pendleton Kennedy and William Gilmore Simms; the Southwest (as we shall see later) by a great group of humorists. Both the South and the East were the background for Edgar Allan Poe, who, though he has been considered in the preceding chapter as a transitional figure, flourished in the 1830's and 1840's. New York was represented by Herman Melville, whose best fiction ranks with the finest our country has produced, and also by a preëminent poet, Walt Whitman. The consideration of Whitman, whose no-

table career began near the end of this period, in 1855, and extended until 1892, we postpone until later.

In designating this period the American Renaissance, critics have had in mind, doubtless, certain similarities it had to the English Renaissance. The English period, which preceded the American by about two and a half centuries, had produced a host of great writers and literary masterpieces. In the literary productions, whether they were created by giants such as Marlowe, Spenser, and Shakespeare or by lesser men, two impulses had been operative, one foreign and the other native. The exciting discovery of foreign literary works, both old and new, had accounted in part for such works as Shakespeare's *Julius Caesar,* based upon the *Lives* by the Greek biographer-historian Plutarch (translated by North in 1579), and for his *Othello,* derived from an Italian *novella* by Cinthio which had first appeared during Shakespeare's lifetime. The patriotic enthusiasm of the day, which had soared during the reign of Queen Elizabeth, found expression in Shakespeare's historical plays such as *Henry IV* and *Henry V* as well as in many of his dramas with foreign settings.

Similarly, during the American Renaissance both foreign and domestic influences, old and new, were notable. Respectful study of ancient and contemporary foreign works and travel abroad, which acquainted authors with European culture, left their marks upon not only the stuff but also the form of our literature. At the same time, proud of their unique democratic system and of the vast nation whose beauty and strength they were coming to know, many authors recounted the history of their land and attempted to depict accurately native scenes and characters.

THE ESSAY—a STANDARD FORM TAKES ON NEW QUALITIES

In this period, as in the preceding one, the essay was an important literary form; but a combination of old and new influences, as well as the personal predilections of each author, gave the type distinctive qualities.

Of the famous Massachusetts men, perhaps the nearest to traditional essayists was James Russell Lowell. Yet the patterns he followed obviously were not those of abstract, relatively impersonal essays such as some British authors had written in the eighteenth century. What he wrote was, as a rule, quite personal. A large share of his prose, that which dealt with issues of the day—candidacies, governmental policies, political theories—might have appeared in newspapers and did appear in magazines which took stands on current affairs.

Such prose, however, though it served its purpose well in its time, has interest now for political rather than literary historians. The prose by Lowell most important as literature is critical or reminiscent—"Shakespeare," "Keats" (p. 849), "Emerson" (p. 853), or "A Good Word for Winter," "Cambridge Thirty Years Ago," and the like. In both critical and reminiscent essays an important factor is the revelation of Lowell's personality—his wit, his learning, his enthusiasm, his sensitivity, his novel way of putting things. One of his volumes bore a title which might have been used for many—"Fireside Travels." He wrote as if he were putting down on paper the sort of talk an informed professor, blessed with a good sense of humor, might deliver to an intelligent college student who had dropped in for an evening chat by the library fire in Elmwood. Lowell poured out enthusiasms, drove home points by unctuously quoting now and then from old books pulled down from towering tiers of shelves, frolicked with classical allusions or Latin quotations, rolled felicitous phrases over his tongue. In particular, Lowell was a master of the epigram—a condensation of his observation and judgment into witty or striking phrases and sentences. Despite some unevenness in his achievements, Lowell did admirable work in the field of the personal essay.

Holmes: Conversational, *Spectator*-like

Holmes, like Lowell, wrote much prose of a frankly utilitarian kind, in his case prose which made use of the doctor's scientific interests and training. (See "Mechanism in Thought and

Morals," p. 825.) Whatever such writing contributed to the thought of the period—and many believe that it contributed a great deal—the work in prose which showed Holmes at his inimitable best was more like the informal talk of a New England drawing room or boarding house than like a lecture delivered in the medical school. Such work took the unique form employed in the *Breakfast-Table* series (p. 816).

Literature which Holmes knew as a boy did its part to shape his essays. He was fond of remarking how much it had meant to him to have been born and reared "among books and those who knew what was in books," to have had a chance, as a youngster, to page through first editions of eighteenth-century classics in the large library which his forbears had collected. "All men are afraid of books," he claimed, "who have not handled them from infancy." The form of his essays had its parallels with those written in the period with which he felt a spiritual kinship—the eighteenth century. This had been the period of his boyhood idols, Addison and Steele, authors of *The Spectator,* which as *The New Yorker* of its day reviewed, laughed at, or philosophized about people and events of eighteenth-century London.

The Autocrat, the Professor, and the Poet of Holmes' series were Spectators commenting upon contemporary manners; and boarding-house society, like the club to which the Spectator had belonged, was "very luckily composed of such persons as were engaged in different ways of life, and deputed as it were out of the most conspicuous classes of mankind." Sketches introduced characters in such a way as to catch *Spectator*-like types—the landlady's daughter, for instance: "(Aet. 19+. Tender-eyed blonde. Long ringlets. Cameo pin. Gold pencil-case on a chain. Locket. Bracelet. Album. Autograph book. Accordeon. Reads Byron, Tupper, and Sylvanus Cobb, Junior, while her mother makes the puddings. Says 'Yes?' when you tell her anything.)" Essays in the form of conversation—dialogues—had been used frequently in the eighteenth century: by Shaftesbury to comment upon ethics; by Berkeley, on philosophy; by Hume, on natural religion; and by Franklin, on a variety of subjects. (See "Dialogue Between Franklin and the Gout," p. 280.) In a similar manner the *Autocrat* papers record

many conversations of the boarding-house members. James Boswell (1740-1795) had reported the sparkling talk and what Holmes called the "bow-wow manner" of autocratic Samuel Johnson; and Holmes acknowledged indebtedness to this model in the subtitle of the *Autocrat*—"Every Man His Own Boswell." In *Tristram Shandy* (1759) Laurence Sterne had recorded meandering talk interspersed with personal essays and punctuated with dashes in a manner foreshadowing Holmes' eccentric punctuation.

Nineteenth-century publications, nevertheless, probably suggested several devices which gave the *Autocrat* papers novelty. Possibly the magazine or the annual (which first achieved remarkable popularity in this period), with its alternation of story, essay, and poems, suggested a similar intermingling of types. The dramatic interplay of personalities common to fiction may have suggested the author's habit of giving his conversations a dramatic quality and of running a plot (like one in a magazine serial story) through his papers. Like Lowell, Holmes no doubt followed the example of nineteenth-century English essayists—such as Lamb and Hazlitt—in talking intimately of his life, his personal prejudices, his feelings. His Autocrat is, in effect, Holmes airing many of his own views to fellow boarders. "He was a well-behaved gentleman at table," testified the Autocrat's landlady, "only talked a good deal, and pretty loud sometimes, and had a way of turnin' up his nose when he didn't like what folks said. . . . Many's the time I've seen that gentleman keepin' two or three of the boarders settin' round the breakfast table after the rest had swallered their meal, and things was cleared off . . . and there the little man would set . . . a-talkin' and a-talkin',—and sometimes he would laugh, and sometimes the tears would come into his eyes. . . . He was a master hand to talk when he got a-goin'."

Thoreau and Emerson: Philosophical, Transcendental

A kind of discourse distantly related to informal talk left its imprint upon Thoreau's prose works, whether short pieces, such as "Walking" (p. 961), or longer ones in which numerous essays were linked, such as *Walden* (p. 951). For Thoreau kept a detailed journal in which, from day to day, he set down his experiences, observations, and thoughts; from this he drew

materials relevant to his essays, as needed. These diaries were written with artistic care, the passages in them were carefully integrated with other parts of essays in which they were used, and the sentences were scrupulously polished, so that in the end there was less improvisation than there perhaps appeared to be. In learning to shape sentences to his needs—by studying the metaphysical poets, by translating Greek dramas and passages from Greek poets, by aping English prose masters—Thoreau became indebted to earlier authors. "Every sentence," he wrote, with these models in mind, "is the result of long probation, and should be read as if its author, had he held a plough instead of a pen, could have drawn a furrow deep and straight to the end."

Since the conveying of rich personal experience and meaning by straight furrow expressions was, in Thoreau's opinion, the chief task of the writer, what shaped his prose style more than anything else was his philosophy. To see what Thoreau was trying to do, the reader must understand that, despite all his accumulations of scientific data in his journal, Thoreau's way of thinking led him to care little for strictly scientific writing. He attempted, instead, in his finished works, to write in the rôle of a philosopher. The scientist, according to Transcendental beliefs, recorded the workings of the mere intellect—the "Understanding." The great writer, the man of vision, by contrast, recorded the discoveries of a faculty above mind and more important—the "Imagination" or the "Reason," which intuitively perceived in natural objects the truth of which they were symbols. Said Thoreau:

> It is the subject of the vision, the truth alone, that concerns me. The philosopher for whom rainbows, etc., can be explained never saw them. With regard to such objects, I find that it is not they themselves (with which men of science deal) that concern me; the point of interest is somewhere *between* me and them (i.e., the objects). . . .

Seeing the inner meanings of natural phenomena, the great writer employed those phenomena, Thoreau believed, to communicate those meanings. "My thought," he explained, "is a part of

the meaning of the world, and hence I use a part of the world to express my thought."

When he filled his pages with vivid details, he attempted to present them so as to make them illuminating in the Transcendental sense: he wanted to see and set down particular instances of the universal law so that readers might find his own sense of "reality"—the higher kind—in them. His stay at Walden was a search for basic truths, "for the essential facts of life," and his circumstantial record of the stay (or more precisely of an ideal stay based upon sixteen years of records in his journal) was an attempt to convey his insights in meaningful symbols. And elsewhere than in *Walden* his constant practice was to show the eternally true in terms of the particular. "There was an excellent wisdom in him, proper to a rare class of men, which showed him the material world as a means and a symbol," wrote Emerson. "To him there was no such thing as size. The pond was a small ocean; the Atlantic, a large Walden Pond." Thus certain that the small stood for the large, Thoreau expounded higher meanings here and there in his writings by using paradoxes of philosophical generalizations, but for the most part he trusted minutely recorded concrete details on page after page to convey his meaning.

Emerson, though extraordinarily concrete for a philosopher, was more abstract than Thoreau. "In reading Thoreau," he said, "I find the same thought, the same spirit that is in me, but he takes a step beyond and illustrates by excellent images that which I should have conveyed in a sleepy generality." Trained in the composition of sermons and lectures, Emerson, in speeches such as "The Divinity School Address" and in essays often largely derived from his lectures, had the interest that preachers and lecturers frequently have in generalizing, in following lines of reasoning. Perhaps it is not inaccurate to say that while Thoreau's emphasis was particularly upon concrete things, Emerson's emphasis was upon philosophical relationships.

Emerson set forth what he conceived to be the task of the philosopher in his study of his idol Plato: it was to follow the natural course of the mind as it related the One which was the Oversoul to the Many, or as it related the Many to the One.

> The mind [he wrote] is urged to ask for one cause of many effects; then for the cause of that; and again the cause . . . self-assured that it will arrive at an absolute and sufficient one,—a one that shall be all . . . . Urged by an opposite necessity, the mind returns from the one to that which is not one, but . . . many; from cause to effect; and affirms the necessary existence of variety, the self-existence of both, as each is involved in the other. These strictly-blended elements it is the problem of thought to separate and reconcile.

Such was the idea Emerson had of the method of his essays, and a reader who has a great deal of patience and some skill in dialectic can, indeed, see that the essays are constructed according to this pattern.☆ Most readers, however, will not care to follow the involvements of his peculiar Transcendental structure. They will find that, though some of Emerson's essays have organizations such as they have seen in other compositions, most appear to lack coherence and unity. These readers will agree with Carlyle's remarks to Emerson in a letter about the *First Series of Essays:*

> The sentences . . . did not . . . always entirely cohere for me. Pure genuine Saxon; strong and simple; of a clearness, of a beauty—But they did not, sometimes, rightly stick to their foregoers and their followers: the paragraph not as a beaten *ingot,* but as a beautiful square *bag of duck-shot* held together by canvas!

For them, the virtue of the essays will be found chiefly in individual sentences—sentences excellent for their extraordinary proverbial quality, for their compact expression of profound thoughts. Even such small units as sentences, however, show that Emerson, like other essayists

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☆ For some analyses of Emerson's essays according to this principle, see W. T. Harris, "Ralph Waldo Emerson," Atlantic, 1882, CL, 238-252 • Walter Blair and Clarence Faust, "Emerson's Literary Method," Modern Philology, 1944, XLII, 79-95

of his day, combined old materials and methods with newly discovered ones which particularly appealed to him, thereby making his purposeful writing seem a new thing.

AMERICAN FICTION COMES into ITS OWN

When authors of the prewar period wrote fiction, they were inclined to consider carefully whether the setting of their narratives should be remote or near at hand in both time and space. Both kinds of settings were popular in the literature which was generally admired. German and British Gothic romances—or tales of terror—utilizing exotic backgrounds were extremely popular; so were Sir Walter Scott's historical novels, the last of which appeared in 1832. Across the ocean, in addition, flourished fiction which portrayed the manners and talk of common folk. This fiction had a large audience in the United States: England's Maria Edgeworth (1767-1849) and Charles Dickens (1812-1870), who wrote about common folk, were perhaps the most popular authors in this country—native authors included—during this period. When our authors told stories, they adapted both types of settings and characterizations to their own purposes.

Hawthorne: Romance and Allegory

Poe's aim, to create "a certain unique or single effect," led him, it will be recalled, to subordinate everything in the tale to the effect—setting, characterization, incidents, and tone or style. In so doing, he skillfully utilized characteristic backgrounds, characters, and incidents of Gothic romance. But Poe believed that the most soul-stirring effect could be achieved by blurred rather than precise details. Here, of course, he differed from Hawthorne, whom he greatly admired and at times rather badly misread—differed, as a matter of fact, from most New Englanders. In this period, one who saw a Yankee village from a distance noticed first of all the tidy white-spired churches which were an important and recurrent motif in the quiet green landscape—a motif which stood for a great force in the life of the section. Founded by zealots, New England for decades had produced moralizing literature, and it continued to produce it even when its authors

wrote fiction. For Hawthorne, preëminent among New England fictionists, the theme of the tale was tremendously important. Although the Gothic influence was almost as pronounced with Hawthorne as it was with Poe and though sentimental fiction and allegorical narrative shaped his fiction, these devices were subordinated to Hawthorne's own New England purpose.

As has frequently been noticed, paraphernalia of the tale of terror—animated ancestral portraits, fiendlike villains, men who sold their souls to the devil, witches, unnatural portents—figured notably in this author's tales and novels. The influence of sentimental fiction, too, is clear—even in such a masterpiece as *The Scarlet Letter.* The penalty of seduction, a chief stock-in-trade of the sentimentalists (see p. 488), is the chief substance of this great romance. A typical character of the fiction of sensibility—a child bringing sunshine into the home and gently leading parents to virtue—is little Pearl, an important character in the work. The misled feminist and the ministering angel popular in fourth-rate novels are combined in the portrayal of Hester. Calvinistic villainy common in sentimental fiction was bestowed upon Chillingworth. The sensibility of the minister and his dying glimpses of heavenly glory are hackneyed motifs in the sentimental pattern. And in the tales, as in the longer works, one familiar with the fiction of feeling will see its stuff used by Hawthorne.

From childhood, in addition, Hawthorne had read with much pleasure a type of fiction not of his own time so much as of the distant past—the allegorical narrative. When in 1843 he listed the authors he considered most notable, it is significant that along with such conventional choices as Homer, Cervantes, Shakespeare, and Milton he named masters of fable and allegory: Aesop, Ariosto, Spenser, and "Bunyan, moulded of homeliest clay, but instinct with celestial fire." Other influences in addition to his liking for these authors encouraged him to borrow from them. Like Emerson, he had philosophical ideas about the artist's duty to give meaning to natural objects when he depicts them. The artist, he felt, cannot exactly reproduce the grandeur of nature which itself suggested truth. His "only resource," he decided, was to substitute something "that may stand instead of and suggest the truth." His Preface to *The*

House of the Seven Gables (p. 1053) suggested that a great advantage of a Romance was that it "has fairly a right to present . . . truth under circumstances, to a great extent, of the author's own choosing or creation." This truth, moreover, might be the unifying element. "In all my stories, I think," he remarked, "there is one idea running through them like an iron rod, and to which all other ideas are referred and subordinate. . . ." Lowell's comment noted the same sort of ideational unity: "It is commonly true of Hawthorne's romances," he said, "that the interest centres in one strongly defined protagonist,—perhaps we should rather say a ruling Idea, of which all the characters are fragmentary embodiments."

Subtly adapted devices of allegorical fiction—for the portrayal of background, the depiction of character, and the selection of incidents—made possible Hawthorne's amalgamation of Gothic and sentimental elements in truly impressive fiction. Reminiscent of Spenser's Forest of Error or Bower of Bliss, in which many details of background are made to stand for the author's concepts, are Hawthorne's descriptions of the Pearson cottage in "The Gentle Boy" and of the exotic garden in "Rappaccini's Daughter" (p. 1025). Characters, too, are made embodiments of ideas according to allegorical formulas. Sometimes older allegorists, for instance, associated significant articles or details of dress with a character: in *Pilgrim's Progress* Christian always labors under his heavy burden; in *The Faerie Queene* the knight has his "bloudie crosse." In "The Minister's Black Veil" (p. 997) Hooper wears his puzzling but meaningful bit of crepe. Again, older allegorists at times showed physical deformities which betokened spiritual deformities, as in the cases of Bunyan's Giant Despair and Spenser's Malbecco. Similarly, Hawthorne made the boy who alone could not yield to the "gentle boy's" influence a twisted cripple. Hawthorne ingeniously conceived many other symbolic attributes of characters to signify their import: the gleaming smile of Minister Hooper and the perfume of Beatrice, to cite only two examples.

"The Artist of the Beautiful" (p. 1013) both embodies and expounds Hawthorne's critical theory. The story treats, as its author says, "the troubled life of those who strive to

create the beautiful," and the opening paragraph establishes a contrast—between the artist, working in bright light, and the thwarters of the artist, standing in darkness—which is important throughout the tale. Warland, who is given the attributes of the eternal artist, is the creator of a butterfly in the beauty of which is "represented the intellect, the sensibility, the soul" of such a creator. Each of the other characters is, in one way or another, a thwarter of the artist, and each is so presented as to signify one of the hostile forces which work against art. All the details, images, and happenings in the tale are richly fused with the meaning—and this fusion is highly typical of the unique art which Hawthorne discovered for himself.

Melville: Symbol and Actuality

In 1850 Hawthorne and Melville, living a few miles apart but not yet personally acquainted, read one another's writings and found them good. What each author said about the other indicates likenesses and differences. Melville admired Hawthorne for confronting the darker aspects of life. Hawthorne wrote: "I have read Melville's works with progressive appreciation of the author. No writer ever put reality before the reader more unflinchingly than he does in *Redburn* and *White Jacket*. *Mardi* is a rich book, with depths here and there that compel a man to swim for his life. It is so good that one scarcely pardons the writer for not having brooded long over it, so as to make it a good deal better."

Clearly there was a kinship between Melville and Hawthorne in artistry as well as in philosophy. Both thought that the theme of a fictional work—that which is more than surface meaning—was very important. Both thought that an author should manipulate imagery, characterization, and plot to convey his ideas. But Hawthorne indicated a difference when he complained that his neighbor had not "brooded" enough over his material. Melville's fiction, if we may employ Hawthorne's terms, did not subdue "the Actual." "He felt instinctively," as William Ellery Sedgwick asserts in *Herman Melville*, "that the effective use of a fact as symbol, having both inward and outward reference, depended on the preservation of its outward reality." Melville's aim—comparable with the way of writing which Hawthorne contrasted

with his own achievement in the Preface to *The Scarlet Letter*—was "to diffuse thought and imagination through the opaque substance of today, and thus to make it a bright transparency . . . to seek, resolutely, the true and indestructible value that lay hidden in the petty and wearisome incidents, and ordinary characters. . . ." Though Hawthorne could not write thus, could not thus simultaneously convey meaning and a sense of actuality, he could admire others who were able to, since he recognized that writing of this type achieved an objective similar to his own in a contrasting fashion.

Mardi is perhaps not the best illustration of Melville's typical procedure. Despite Hawthorne's criticism, this work is probably closer to the New Englander's conception of "the Romance" (p. 1053) than anything else Melville wrote. Romance though it is, it includes many more earthy details (see the description of Congress, p. 1067) than Hawthorne would ever have been likely to insert into a typical piece of fiction. And when one turns to other, more typical works by Melville—works in which he presents many particular and vivid details, based on fact and experience, representing the everyday lives of seamen—the contrast becomes very clear. His selection and presentation of such facts made them actual, near at hand rather than remote, and at the same time meaningful. "Benito Cereno" (p. 1076)—not only one of Melville's most typical stories but also one of his best—is a good example. Based as it is upon a first-hand account of Captain Delano's real experience, it loses little of its factuality when it is transformed into fiction. At the same time the changes in the nature of the details and in the structure of the narrative make possible the development of a significant theme.

Kennedy and Simms: Romance and Reality

The portrayal of real life without much philosophizing was the purpose of several fictionists contemporary with Melville. Some of these clearly patterned their work after Washington Irving and his school—notably Caroline Kirkland, a native of New York, in the sprightly letters of *A New Home* (p. 1150), and John Pendleton Kennedy of Baltimore, in *Swallow Barn.* Something like the romantic quality of Irving's picture of England entered,

however, into Kennedy's mellow depiction of the ante-bellum plantation. As F. P. Gaines asserts in *The Southern Plantation:* "He threw the glamour of romantic coloring over all: over the century old brick mansion with its ornate approaches, its wings, its doors, its great hall, its spacious rooms, its antique furniture; over the characters, their dress, conversations, points of view; over the meals . . . ; over the Negro quarters . . . ; over the whole conduct of life. . . ."

William Gilmore Simms, too, according to his own avowal, tried to adhere to "real life" in presenting "man in all his phases." Influenced by Cooper and Scott, however, in many of his novels he turned his attention to the past. Furthermore he unfortunately followed the example of his models in creating a number of colorless heroines and stuffy heroes. Nevertheless, in presenting the comic Porgy and a scattering of poor whites and in describing Southern scenes, he did manage to infuse a good deal of reality into his pages.

HORSE SENSE and HUMOR

Still it remained for the humorists of the day, both Northern and Southwestern, to get the largest amount of common life into their depictions. Their technique for showing scenes of ordinary life was, in important ways, the freshest of the period. So far did the humor of the Southwest move in the direction of realism, as a matter of fact, that the editors have placed it in Volume II, where its value in preparing for postwar realism may be clearly shown.

The ancestry of the New England humorists of the day, a notable group, is to be traced less directly to the eighteenth-century wits who inspired Holmes than to the portrayers of American character in almanacs, tales, and travel books of the nineteenth century. Scott's fiction, too, with its representation of low characters by the depiction of manners, dress, and speech, had some value as a model for these limners of folk indigenous to a particular part of the country.

Preachments figured in the writings of almost all the most notable Northern humorists. Seba Smith led the group to see the great possibilities of humorous writing with a purpose when, in 1830, he launched his creation, Jack Downing, upon a career destined to last (with some interruptions) until the eve of the Civil War. In letters which he wrote to the homefolk

or to newspaper editors, Smith's character Jack told of his adventures in politics, and now and then one of the family would write Jack news of how things were going back in Downingville. Since Jack purportedly spent a great deal of time with leading public men in Washington, on the battle front during the Mexican War, and in the European capitals, many interesting things about current controversies turned up in the letters.

So wide a following did Jack gain that C. A. Davis, a commercial man in New York, deliberately stole the character (simply renaming him J. Downing) and used him to help Financier Nicholas Biddle in the fight against Andrew Jackson's United States Bank policy. Davis' J. Downing had a brief career and fought a losing battle, but Biddle was sure that Downing had been a good fighter. And when, in the days of the Mexican War, James Russell Lowell was looking around for a way of preaching his views to a wide public, he, like Smith and Davis, hit upon the idea of letting one Hosea Biglow speak for him. The result was that this scion of a Brahmin family wrote some of the most memorable examples of this kind of humor.

Written to appeal chiefly to the relatively uneducated Yankee farmers and mechanics, humorous pieces had to dramatize the way of thinking prevalent in that class. According to that way of thinking the best person to point out the path to what was true and what was right was one with sound common sense—a person who had been born with a sound head, who had had experiences in the world of men rather than of books, and who arrived at his solutions of current problems on the basis of those experiences.

This philosophy, given new prestige by its triumphs in Jacksonian politics, determined the nature of the characters to appear in these papers—either horse-sense characters such as Jack Downing or Hosea Biglow, fool characters such as Birdofredum Sawin, or both. The characters blessed with common sense offered sound solutions to current problems; the chump characters urged actions which were patently muddleheaded. Since the earmarks of either kind of character would be his background, his way of thinking, his way of talking, it was necessary to show something about his environment and to let him talk a good deal. But since

the pieces had to appear in the columns of the rather skimpy newspapers of the day, they had to be short.

These factors largely determined the nature of the Yankee humorous writings of Smith, Davis, Lowell, and dozens of others such as George E. Foxcraft, Tobias H. Miller, Matthew F. Whittier, and Thomas Chandler Haliburton. The characters divided sharply on the basis of their being either common-sensible or the opposite, and various devices were used to make clear to which class they belonged. Their talk was that of the uneducated—the native dialect which more and more, as time passed, was to shape the style of American literature. The talk showed, in brief snatches, what kind of minds they had, what their background and experience had been, what they had figured out on the basis of their experience. Often, if they were strong on common sense, they uttered aphorisms of the sort favored by ordinary men in America ever since the days of Poor Richard. (Examples are Jack Downing's "Sometimes rum gets folks so they can't see at all—so do the newspapers"; or Hosea Biglow's "The moral question's always plain enough; it's jes' the human-natur' side thet's tough.") Often, too, if their creators knew well the background and characteristics appropriate for them, these salty characters were portrayed with an abundance of authentic detail—and the matter as well as the manner of the fiction about them was both native and novel.

POETRY: A COMBINATION of the OLD and the NEW

The nearest approach in this period to such humor in poetry—by authors other than Lowell, of course—is offered by the songs of the Singers of the West (pp. 1156-1161). These were in the tradition of ancient and modern balladry—composed by the people (or by an artist who felt and thought as they did), for the people, and kept alive by the people. At this time, little attention was paid to such crude poems, but in a later period many serious poets learned much about art and life from these earthy and vigorous songs.

For the most part, the poetry of this prewar period had more of the elegance and remoteness characteristic of Poe than of the simplicity and immediacy of the author of "Hell in Texas."

The background of the cultured New England poets led them to think of poetry as the height of elegance. Among the books which Holmes listed as obligatory reading for a boy of a good Boston or Cambridge family was "Pope, original edition, 15 volumes, London, 1717." Not only Holmes but others as well who had learned to like literature as youngsters in ancestral libraries had a natural tendency to worship somewhat old-fashioned literary gods. Bowdoin and Harvard were likely to encourage this tendency with their classical curriculums and their courses in writing based upon Blair's old-fashioned, square-toed *Rhetoric.* When Emerson was in Latin school, his favorite declamation was from the "Pleasures of Hope," a typical eighteenth-century philosophizing poem written by Campbell in heroic couplets. When he versified an old nursery story for his brother, Emerson wrote:

So erst two brethren climb'd the cloud capp'd hill,
Ill-fated Jack and long-lamented Jill,
Snatched from the crystal font its lucid store,
And in full pails the precious treasure bore.
But ah! by dull forgetfulness oppress'd
(Forgive me, Edward), I've forgot the rest.

Many gems of expression in these lines might have been by polished Alexander Pope. The superstition that this same Pope was "the greatest poet that ever lived" was, Lowell confessed, inculcated in him by childhood teachers; and, similarly, the other famous New England authors from babyhood to manhood listened to encomiums of the older poets.

But the tradition of culture, though it fostered approval of old ideas and models, also fostered the discovery and development of new ones. The new forces it put to work in Massachusetts made certain that the prominent authors would modify, in various fashions, the ways of looking at things and the ways of voicing attitudes. Literary men of Massachusetts might be sketchily informed about the nation to the West and to the South, but in this period they were likely to widen their horizons by traveling extensively in the Old World. As

Parrington has noticed, the New England Renaissance "involved three major strands: the social Utopianism that came from revolutionary France; the idealistic metaphysics that emerged from revolutionary Germany; and the new culture that spread with the development of literary romanticism . . . these strands . . . are but different, new world phases of a comprehensive European movement. . . ." The widespread revolutionary spirit invaded both the quiet Cambridge libraries and the woods by Walden Pond.

From the old and new books which they discovered abroad and at home, the New England authors took hints about poetic techniques. They learned procedures in writing from modern writers such as Goethe, Wordsworth, Coleridge, and Keats and from those of other times, such as the writers of Norse epic poems, the authors of ancient Oriental works, and Plato and the Neo-Platonists. In much of the poetry of the section, as a result, there was a combination of the old and the new—and each author's conception of poetry determined the nature of the combinations he made.

Holmes: "Florist in Verse"

Much of Holmes' poetry had a periwig-and-velvet-breeches quality about it. In such verse there were so many similarities in form and substance to that of Goldsmith, Pope, Gray, Campbell, Gay, and others of their century that Holmes appeared, in the words of one critic, to be "less a revival of the eighteenth century than its latest survival."

Holmes' kinship with the coffee-house gentry was in part the result of his paying them the tribute of imitation, in part the consequence of his seeing poetry, as they often had, as a graceful social accomplishment. "I'm a florist in verse," he sang, "and what would people say, if I came to a banquet without my boquet?" So successful was he at writing "by request of friends" that around Boston, almost invariably, first-class celebrations, anniversaries, banquets, receptions, and professional meetings were likely to list on the program an appearance of Dr. Holmes, poem in hand. Again, he wrote verse appropriate for reading at more informal gatherings, "at the breakfast table," perhaps, or "over the teacups."

All this meant a good deal about his poems. For *vers de société* or *vers d'occasion,* he saw as well as had the Neoclassicists, had to have certain qualities of tone and form. In it deep emotion was as much out of place as it would be in a social group; the tone had to be light—wit and pathos were better than deep feeling. Much depended upon exactly the right phrasing—polished but conversational, graceful, witty, condensed. With these points in mind, Holmes wrote some of the finest familiar verse this country has produced.

Yet Holmes himself in the end considered his most typical poems evidences of his talent rather than of his genius. Eventually he came to feel that his earliest conception of poetry, that of a young man "trained after the schools of classical English verse," had represented "simple and partial views," since it had dealt too exclusively with "the constructive side of the poet's function." "I should rather say," he continued, "if I were called upon now to define that which makes a poet, it is the power of transfiguring the experience and shows of life into an aspect which comes from his imagination and kindles that of others." His occasional poems, he told Lowell, were "for the most part to poetry as the beating of a drum or tinkling of a triangle is to the harmony of a band." True poetry, he believed, was inspired: its thought and to some extent its form came to a poet in an intuitive flash (see p. 810). Only once during his career did he feel sure that he had written such poetry—in "The Chambered Nautilus" (p. 814).

This romantic concept of the inspired poet was shared by all the famous New England literary men, both those of Cambridge and those of Concord. These men differed only in their ideas about the extent to which a poem was inspired as compared with the extent to which it was consciously contrived. The Brahmins rather tended, with Holmes, to see careful artistry playing an important part. They also joined him in allowing the older conception of poet as teacher to shape their writings.

Longfellow: Master of Words and Accents

Longfellow in particular has been praised by recent scholars for his technique and scolded for his didacticism. His prosodic skill was developed most definitely, perhaps, by his achieve-

ment of the exacting task of changing over to English, without signs of painful effort, the *chansons* of French troubadours, the *lieder* of German lyricists, the *terza rima* and sonnets of Italians, the eclogues of Latin poets, the sagas of Finnish bards. However he acquired his skill, as Professor Shepard says, "Together with his thought, he had at the same moment a clear notion of the form in which it could be expressed most effectively . . . and it is for this reason that in his better work the thought seems to fill the form without crowding or inflation."

Longfellow's art concealed art largely because of its simple naturalness. Unlike most poets, he managed to get both rhyme and rhythm without using many unusual words and, as a rule, without changing the normal order of phrases and sentences. What Professor Allen, in his *American Prosody,* says about the hackneyed poem "The Village Blacksmith" hints at similar compliments which might be paid to more important achievements: "Its severe simplicity of diction and regularity of rhythm is likely to make us underestimate the technical achievements. . . . There are only two inversions in the whole piece: 'a mighty man is he' and 'onward through life he goes.' The natural speech and syntax . . . was practically unique in American versification in 1839." The fifteen representative poems by Longfellow in this volume (pp. 771-808) show his simple diction and natural grammatical arrangement. Also, it happens, they show him using without ostentation or evident difficulty each of the ordinary meters (iambic, anapestic, dactylic, and trochaic), some of them in unusual ways, and combining them with several metrical devices which are quite extraordinary. (Note the refrain of "My Lost Youth," and the spacing of accented syllables in "The Skeleton in Armor," "Jugurtha," and "The Tide Rises.")

This master of words and accents could, at times, make each word, each line do its job. The plots of his best narratives he developed in excellent order. His best lyrics—whatever might be said against their preachments—at least have the unity which development of a single thought or sentiment gives them. The unity of thought in such poems as "The Rainy Day," "The Arrow and the Song," and "Jugurtha," cannot be surpassed; in each the first part offers some image, and the second part suggests, usually with the aid of incremental repetition, the

spiritual connotation in a detailed parallel. Similarly, "The Bridge" starts with a description of a scene, then passes to the meaning of the scene to the poet, and ends by applying the meaning to all men. In such simple structures, there is integration of the sort important in sonnets, a form particularly well handled by Longfellow.

Despite such prosodic skill and such unity and coherence of thought, Longfellow often failed to please for three reasons. The thought which held together a lyric of his was too often platitudinous. Secondly, more even than Holmes or Lowell, he was a bookish, library poet. One sees why Whitman complained of Longfellow's poetry being "reminiscent, polish'd, elegant, with the air of finest conventional library, picture-gallery or parlor, with ladies and gentlemen in them. . . ." Finally, although his poems were logically constructed, they were likely to be badly put together emotionally—or connotatively. That similes and metaphors should be more than handsome ornaments—that they should be as organic to the poem as the thought—he apparently did not conceive. Hence in many of his poems he used imagery which modern readers find incongruous, and in only a few did he avoid jarring connotations.

Lowell: Pioneer in Freedom of Verse Form

Professor Howard Mumford Jones has noticed that "readers do not turn to Lowell as they do to Longfellow, for a body of verse; and though certain lyrics are individual favorites, they are such as two or three other poets might have written. 'To the Dandelion' is Keatsian; many readers confuse 'The First Snowfall' with Bryant's poem on the same theme, and 'The Present Crisis' inevitably suggests Whittier." This comparison can be carried further: *A Fable for Critics* (p. 834), with its Pope-like critiques, suggests Holmes; and "Auspex" (p. 871) might well have been written by Longfellow. Lowell perhaps busied himself too much with other matters to develop a poetic style all his own.

Yet in some of Lowell's work there are merits not discoverable in Holmes or Longfellow. His *Biglow Papers* are the most effective political satire in verse yet written in America, and *A Fable for Critics* combined sharply phrased wit with shrewd

literary judgments as no other poetry in this country has. In his famous "Commemoration Ode" he showed ability in shaping a long contemplative poem beyond the skill of his fellow Brahmins. He had exactly the perception of the emotional relationship that Longfellow lacked. "My notion of a true lyric," he said, "is that the meaning should float steadfast in the centre of every stanza, while the vapory emotions . . . float up to it and over it, and wreathe it with an opal halo which seems their own, but is truly its own work. The shades of emotion over, there floats the meaning, clear and sole and sharp-cut in its luminous integrity. . . ." Lowell wrote some poems in which the figurative language thus related the emotion it connoted to the meaning as a whole: "To the Dandelion" (p. 833), "The Courtin'" (p. 858), and "Auspex" are instances. Finally, Lowell did make the sort of technical contribution to American versification best suggested by his irregular "Ode Recited at the Harvard Commemoration." In Professor Allen's words, this poet's prosody "introduced into American poetry the freedom which we find in the first two or three decades of nineteenth-century English poetry. . . . This freedom includes a more varied placing of accents and the combination of different kinds of feet to produce a suggestiveness of tone and cadence. . . . Yet . . . Lowell's versification is more important for the lessons it teaches than for the poetic beauty it achieved."

Emerson and Thoreau: Rebels Against Nineteenth-Century Forms

Some free verse lines of the Transcendentalist, Ralph Waldo Emerson, serve to set off his aims in poetry from those of the Brahmins who have just been considered:

I will not read a pretty tale
To pretty people in a nice saloon
Borrowed from their expectation,
But I will sing aloud and free
From the heart of the world.

Thoreau, another Transcendentalist, also stated a view of writing at variance with that of the genteel Cambridge men when he wrote: "Enough has been said in these days of the charm

of fluent writing. . . . The surliness with which the woodchopper speaks of his woods, handling them as indifferently as his axe, is better than the mealy-mouthed enthusiasm of the lover of nature. Better that the primrose by the river's brim be a yellow primrose, and nothing more, than that it be something less." In some ways, so far as form and substance were concerned, the most radical of the ante-bellum New England versifiers were the Transcendentalists, Emerson in a few great poems and Thoreau in even fewer.

"The form [of Transcendental poetry]," Cooke notes, "is often rugged, the verse is halting and defective. The metres stumble, and . . . rhymes are not correct. The poems are . . . metaphysical, subtle, and complicated in their thought. . . ." Unlike Longfellow, who acquired his free and easy ways with verse by echoing foreign metrical schemes, or Lowell, who came late enough to learn lessons from Shelley, the Transcendentalists found their chief models in a seventeenth-century school of unorthodox versifiers. From the metaphysical poets—Marvell, Crashaw, Donne, and others—who had rebelled against the dulcet melodiousness of Elizabethan lyricists, these rebels against the nineteenth-century saccharinity learned something about the forcefulness which results from breaking up regular patterns. It may be true, as some critics claim, that the very infrequency of the Concord men's excursions into verse had something to do with the harshness of their songs. But the most important cause for their radicalism, probably, was that the nature of Transcendental poetry, like that of Transcendental prose, was influenced strongly by the philosophy of its creators.

According to this philosophy the matter and the expression of a poem, one and inseparable, were both spontaneously inspired. Theoretically, this would lead a Transcendentalist, trusting his "instinct," to set down his songs without change; actually, it did cause them to tinker with initial expressions less than other poets did. And the intuitive expression, in their opinion, would carry to others the message the poets themselves had been vouchsafed. It would do this because the poets would pass on to readers the same symbols which originally had suggested eternal verities to the poets. "Things," said Emerson, "admit of being used as symbols, because

nature is a symbol, in the whole, and in every part." The whole theory of Emerson and his group has been admirably summarized by Miss Gorely (in "Emerson's Theory of Poetry," *Poetry Review,* July-August 1931, XXII, 272-273):

> Emerson . . . believed that poetry . . . comes into being as the result of inspiration. In that moment the poet sees the very essence of things. . . . The poet makes the unseen visible by means of language. But he is not the conscious creator. Vision, also, shows him the symbols and the thought takes its own form in language that is rhythmical. Because of this, there is a certain indwelling beauty of poetry . . . poetry is spiritual and forms a link between the visible and invisible worlds.

Thus the symbols were important, and the ideas of deep perceptions for which the symbols stood were even more important—so significant that, as in earlier metaphysical poetry, they controlled everything else in a poem. The sentiment often cultivated by the Brahmin poets was practically crowded out by the thought. Since only imagery which developed such a thought was relevant, merely ornamental imagery was avoided. And the concept being expressed determined the general structure of the poem. "It is not metres, but metre-making argument," said Emerson, "that makes a poem,—a thought so passionate and alive, that, like the spirit of a plant or an animal, it has an architecture of its own and adorns nature with a new thing." This theory suggested the four chief methods for ordering material used by Emerson and Thoreau: (1) as in "The Snow-storm" (p. 929) or "Though All the Fates" (p. 979), the poet might give a description of an object or scene which embodied and implied meaning; (2) as in "Brahma" (p. 936) or "The Summer Rain" (p. 977), the poet might list a number of parallel phenomena; (3) as in "Each and All" (p. 927) or "Inspiration" (p. 978), the poet might record the process by which he arrived at a great truth; (4) as in "Rumors from an Æolian Harp" (p. 976), the poet might record a state of inspiration.

Logically, the meter in such poems should be appropriate for the emphasis of both the

symbols and the truths for which the symbols stand. "There is a soberness," wrote Thoreau, "in a rough aspect, as of unhewn granite, which addresses a depth in us, but a polished surface hits only the ball of the eye." And Emerson, in "Merlin" (p. 930), pointed out that:

> The kingly bard
> Must strike the chords rudely and hard,
> As with hammer or with mace;
> That they may render back
> Artful thunder, which conveys
> Secrets of the solar track. . . .

In these ways, the Transcendental poetry of Emerson and Thoreau looked backward to seventeenth-century metaphysical poetry, forward to the type of poetry admired most in the third and fourth decades of the present century.

Thus in the essay, in fiction, and in poetry, the authors of the period 1829-1860 combined old and new materials and techniques. As a result, these writers gave memorable expression to the ideas about which our countrymen were excited during the American Renaissance, one of the richest periods in our literary history. W.B.

Chronological Table of Literature and History

1829

Poe's **Al Aaraaf, Tamerlane, and Minor Poems** • Irving's **Conquest of Granada** • Bryant became editor of the **New York Evening Post**

Andrew Jackson inaugurated seventh President • The first locomotive was used in America

1830

Holmes' "Old Ironsides" • **Godey's Lady's Book** founded • **The Book of Mormon** • Benjamin Silliman's **Elements of Experimental Chemistry**, one of the first scientific textbooks in America • Lyell's **Principles of Geology**, a pioneer work in England • Victor Hugo's **Hernani**, a landmark in French romanticism

Webster-Hayne debate on the issue of the Union • The settled frontier reached Independence, Missouri

1831

Poe's **Poems** (second edition) • Whittier's **Legends of New England** • W. L. Garrison established the **Liberator**, an antislavery journal, at Boston

Nat Turner's slave insurrection in Virginia, in which over fifty whites were murdered, and for which the **Liberator** was blamed by slaveholders

1832

Bryant's **Poems** • Irving's **Alhambra** • Kennedy's **Swallow Barn**

Death of Freneau • Oregon Trail in general use • Black Hawk War, in which Lincoln served as captain • Clay's tariff, which removed some of the "abominations" of the 1828 tariff • Nullification of the tariff by South Carolina • Jackson's proclamation against nullification • New York City established free public schools • The Reform Bill in England, which extended the franchise and eliminated many of the "rotten boroughs"

1833

Poe's "MS Found in a Bottle" • Seba Smith's **Life and Writings of Major Jack Downing** • Carlyle's **Sartor Resartus**

The English Oxford Movement, a revival of Romanism within the English Church, initiated by John Keble's sermon at Oxford • Jackson's second inauguration • Cyrus H. McCormick's reaper • Oberlin became the first co-educational college • Abolition of slavery in the British colonies • The English Factory Act, which improved working conditions in English factories

1834

Narrative of the Life of David Crockett of West Tennessee

1835

Irving's **Tour on the Prairies** • Poe began his contributions to the **Southern Literary Messenger** in Richmond • Kennedy's **Horse-Shoe Robinson** • Simms' **Yemassee** and **Partisan** • Longstreet's **Georgia Scenes** • James Gordon Bennett founded the New York **Herald**

Colt patented the revolver

1836

Irving's **Astoria** • Emerson's **Nature**

Fall of the Alamo; defeat of Mexicans by Texans under Sam Houston at San Jacinto • Roger B. Taney succeeded John Marshall as chief justice • Arkansas, the twenty-fifth state, admitted with slavery • Mt. Holyoke founded, the first of the women's colleges

1837

Irving's **Adventures of Captain Bonneville, U. S. A.** • Emerson's **American Scholar** • Hawthorne's **Twice-Told Tales**

Inauguration of Van Buren, the eighth President, 4 March • Financial panic • Republic of Texas with Sam Houston as president, recognized by the United States, 3 March • Elijah P. Lovejoy, editor of an abolitionist paper in Alton, Illinois, killed by a mob • Admission to the Union of Michigan, the twenty-sixth state

1838

Kennedy's **Rob of the Bowl** • Emerson's "Divinity School Address" • Cooper's **American Democrat**

Atlantic crossing by steamships

1839

Longfellow's **Voices of the Night**

First lectures at the Lowell Institute in Boston by Benjamin Silliman, Yale chemist

1840

Poe's **Tales of the Grotesque and Arabesque** • Cooper's **Pathfinder** • Dana's **Two Years Before the Mast** • **The Dial** (1840-1844), Transcendental magazine edited by Emerson and Margaret Fuller • Bronson Alcott's **Orphic Sayings**

1200 cotton factories in the United States, two thirds being in New England • United States Census: 17,000,000, including 400,000 free Negroes and 2,500,000 slaves

1841

Cooper's **Deerslayer** • Emerson's **Essays** (First Series) • Melville shipped on the **Acushnet** for the South Seas • Longfellow's **Ballads and Other Poems** • Thorpe's **Big Bear of Arkansas** • Carlyle's **On Heroes, Hero Worship, and the Heroic in History** • Browning's **Pippa Passes**

Hawthorne at Brook Farm • Harrison inaugurated ninth President; died one month later; Tyler inaugurated tenth President • Act for preëmption of public lands: settlers could preëmpt 160 acres at $1.25 per acre

1842

Hawthorne's **Twice-Told Tales** (second edition); his marriage and residence at the Old Manse • Longfellow's **Poems on Slavery** • Thoreau's "Natural History of Mas-

sachusetts" in **The Dial** • **Thoughts on the Present Collegiate System of the United States** by President Wayland of Brown University, anticipating the "elective" system later popularized by Charles W. Eliot • Charles Dickens' **American Notes**

Webster-Ashburton Treaty with Great Britain, settling the northeastern boundary between the United States and Canada • Dorr Rebellion in Rhode Island, which resulted in manhood suffrage in that state, the last state of the original thirteen to achieve it • Fremont's explorations in the far West • Trade unions declared lawful by Chief Justice Shaw of Massachusetts

1843

Holmes' "The Contagiousness of Puerperal Fever," revealing a medical discovery which the author later regarded as his chief title to fame • Thompson's **Major Jones's Courtship** • Carlyle's **Past and Present**

1844

Emerson's **Essays** (Second Series) • Lowell's **Poems**

Driven out of Illinois, the Mormons migrated to the Great Salt Lake • Morse's telegraph used between Washington and Baltimore • Goodyear patented process of vulcanizing rubber

1845

Poe's "Raven" • Cooper's **Satanstoe** • Simms' **Life of Francis Marion**, South Carolina hero in the Revolution • Hooper's **Adventures of Simon Suggs**, a "tall tale" book of the old Southwest

Florida, the twenty-seventh state, admitted to the Union with slavery • Texas, the twenty-eighth state, annexed to the Union with slavery, making fifteen slave states to thirteen free • Polk inaugurated eleventh President • **The Rainbow**, first of the clipper ships which became famous in the following decade, built in New York

1846

Poe's **Literati**, profiles of New York writers • Hawthorne's **Mosses from an Old Manse**; Hawthorne in the Salem Custom House • Whittier's **Voices of Freedom** • Melville's **Typee** • Thorpe's **Mysteries of the Backwoods** • Margaret Fuller was literary critic for Horace Greeley's New York **Tribune**

Louis Agassiz became professor of zoölogy at Harvard • Joseph Henry became the first director of the Smithsonian Institution in Washington • Great famine in Ireland, after which Irish immigration to the United States reached a new high • Treaty with Great Britain determined the Oregon boundary line • War with Mexico, "by act of Mexico" • Wilmot Proviso—prohibiting slavery in any territory to be acquired from Mexico—passed the House but was defeated in the Senate • Iowa, the twenty-ninth state, admitted as a free state • Howe patented the sewing machine • Ether first used successfully as an anesthetic in Boston

1847

Poe's "Ulalume" • Emerson's **Poems** • Longfellow's **Evangeline** • Thoreau's "Thomas Carlyle and His Works" in **Graham's Magazine** • Melville's **Omoo** • Emily Brontë's **Wuthering Heights** • Charlotte Brontë's **Jane Eyre**

Emily Dickinson attended the South Hadley Female Seminary (Mt. Holyoke) • Lincoln elected to Congress from Illinois • Hoe invented the rotary printing press

1848

Poe's **Eureka** • Lowell's **Fable for Critics, Biglow Papers, First Series,** and **Vision of Sir Launfal**—his "annus mirabilis" • Thackeray's **Vanity Fair**

Emerson lectured in England • Whitman sojourned in New Orleans • Mexican cession of what is now California, Nevada, Utah, and Arizona • Gold discovered in California, resulting in the famous "rush" • Wisconsin, the thirtieth state, admitted as a free state: the balance of free and slave states restored • The founding of the University of Wisconsin • Widespread revolutions in Europe

1849

Thoreau's **Week on the Concord and Merrimack Rivers**, and "Civil Disobedience" in Elizabeth Peabody's **Aesthetic Papers** • Melville's **Mardi** and **Redburn** • Parkman's **Oregon Trail**

Death of Poe • Taylor inaugurated twelfth President • Hawthorne lost his job in the Salem Custom House

1850

Emerson's **Representative Men** • Hawthorne's **Scarlet**

Letter • Whittier's **Songs of Labor and Other Poems** • Melville's **White Jacket** • Calhoun's **Speech on the Slavery Question** • Webster's **Seventh of March Speech** • Dickens' **David Copperfield** • Tennyson's **In Memoriam**

Death of President Taylor; succeeded by Fillmore, thirteenth President • Death of Margaret Fuller • Compromise of 1850: admission of California, the thirty-first state, as free state • A drastic Fugitive Slave Law • First act of Congress making land grants to aid in construction of railroads—in this case, the Illinois Central • United States Census: 23,000,000

1851

Hawthorne's **House of the Seven Gables** • Melville's **Moby Dick**

Death of Cooper • Hawthorne and Melville in the Berkshires • Erie Railroad completed from New York to Buffalo • Clipper ship **Flying Cloud** made record of eighty-nine days from New York to San Francisco • Prohibition of liquor in Maine

1852

Hawthorne's **Blithedale Romance** and **Life of Franklin Pierce** • Melville's **Pierre,** his darkest tragedy • Mrs. Stowe's **Uncle Tom's Cabin,** greatest of all literary stimuli to the antislavery movement

Pennsylvania Railroad completed from Philadelphia to Pittsburgh

1853

Baldwin's **Flush Times of Alabama and Mississippi,** one of Lincoln's favorites • Ruskin's **Stones of Venice** • Matthew Fontaine Maury's **Lanes for Steamers Crossing the Atlantic,** pioneer work in oceanography

Pierce inaugurated fourteenth President • Hawthorne went to Liverpool as United States consul • Commodore Matthew C. Perry "opened" Japan to the Western World • Baltimore and Ohio Railroad completed from Baltimore to Wheeling • Chicago connected by railroad with New York and Boston

1854

Thoreau's **Walden**

Kansas-Nebraska Act establishing "squatter sovereignty" in those territories; bloody conflicts there between free-state and slave-state settlers; emergence of John Brown • Republican Party organized as protest against the Kansas-Nebraska Act • Anthony Burns, fugitive slave, captured in Boston and returned to his owner despite the efforts of a Boston mob to rescue him from the police • Preston Brooks of South Carolina assaulted Senator Charles Sumner of Massachusetts in the Senate chamber

1855

Longfellow's **Hiawatha** • Simms' **Forayers** • Whittier's "Barefoot Boy" • Whitman's **Leaves of Grass** • Melville's **Benito Cereno** • Browning's **Men and Women** • Kingsley's **Westward Ho!** • Matthew Arnold's **Poems**

1856

Emerson's **English Traits** • Simms' **Eutaw** • Melville's **Piazza Tales** • Whitman's **Leaves of Grass** (second edition, containing Emerson's letter) • Motley's **Rise of the Dutch Republic** • Flaubert's **Madame Bovary**

Illinois Central Railroad completed from Chicago to Cairo

1857

Founding of the **Atlantic Monthly** in Boston, with Lowell as editor • Founding of **Russell's Magazine** (1857-1861) in Charleston, with Paul Hamilton Hayne as editor • Trollope's **Barchester Towers** • Baudelaire's **Fleurs du mal**

Inauguration of Buchanan as fifteenth President • Mark Twain piloted steamboats on the Mississippi (1857-1861) • Chief Justice Taney's Dred Scott Decision: a Negro was not a citizen and therefore had no right to bring suit in a Federal court • Financial panic

1858

Longfellow's **Courtship of Miles Standish** • Holmes' **Autocrat of the Breakfast-Table**

Hawthorne in Italy • The Lincoln-Douglas debates in Illinois on the questions arising from the slavery issue • Admission of Minnesota, thirty-second state • Federal troops compelled the subjection of the Mormons to the Federal government

1859

Irving's **Life of Washington** • Thackeray's **Virginians** • Meredith's **Ordeal of Richard Feverel** • George Eliot's **Adam Bede** • Fitzgerald's **Rubáiyát of Omar Khayyám**

• Darwin's **On the Origin of Species by Natural Selection,** the most influential scientific work of the century

Death of Irving • Oregon admitted, thirty-third state • Silver discovered in the Comstock lode, Nevada • First oil well, Oil Creek, Pennsylvania • John Brown's raid on Harper's Ferry

1860

Emerson's **Conduct of Life** • Hawthorne's **Marble Faun** • Thoreau's "Plea for John Brown" • Whitman's **Leaves of Grass** (third edition) • Howells' campaign biography of Lincoln

First Japanese embassy received at Washington • United States Census: 31,500,000, including 450,000 free Negroes and 4,000,000 slaves • South Carolina seceded from the Union

1861

Timrod's "Ethnogenesis" • Holmes' **Elsie Venner** • Reade's **Cloister and the Hearth** • George Eliot's **Silas Marner**

Howells went to Venice as United States consul (1861-1865) • Henry Adams went to London as secretary to Charles Francis Adams, minister to England (1861-1865) • Telegraphic communication opened across the continent • Kansas admitted as a free state, thirty-fourth state • Mississippi, Florida, Alabama, Georgia, Louisiana, and Texas seceded from the Union • Confederate States of America organized at Montgomery with Jefferson Davis president • Lincoln inaugurated sixteenth President of the United States • The Civil War began when the Confederates fired on Fort Sumter, 12 April • Virginia, Arkansas, Tennessee, and North Carolina joined the Confederacy • Great Britain and France recognized the belligerency of the Confederate States • The First Battle of Bull Run • Unification of a large part of Italy under the leadership of Cavour

1862

Lowell's **Biglow Papers, Second Series** • Holmes' **Songs in Many Keys** • Timrod's "Cotton Boll" • Victor Hugo's **Les Misérables**

Death of Thoreau • **Merrimac-Monitor** engagement in Hampton Roads, first battle of ironclads • The Battles of Shiloh, Seven Days, Second Bull Run, Antietam, Murfreesboro • The Lancashire cotton famine in England • Pacific Railway Act to promote by land grants the construction of a railroad between Missouri points and California • Morrill Agricultural College Act granting public land to states for the founding and support of colleges of agriculture and the mechanical arts

1863

Hawthorne's **Our Old Home** • Longfellow's **Tales of a Wayside Inn** • Whittier's "Barbara Frietchie" • Lincoln's Emancipation Proclamation and "Gettysburg Address" • Lyell's **Geological Evidence of the Antiquity of Man** • Huxley's **Man's Place in Nature,** chief precipitant of the debate between religion and science

Whitman served in the Washington hospitals • Admission of West Virginia, formed by secession from Virginia, thirty-fifth state • Death of Stonewall Jackson, great Confederate general, at Battle of Chancellorsville • Battle of Gettysburg (1-3 July) and surrender of Vicksburg (4 July), the turning point of the War

1864

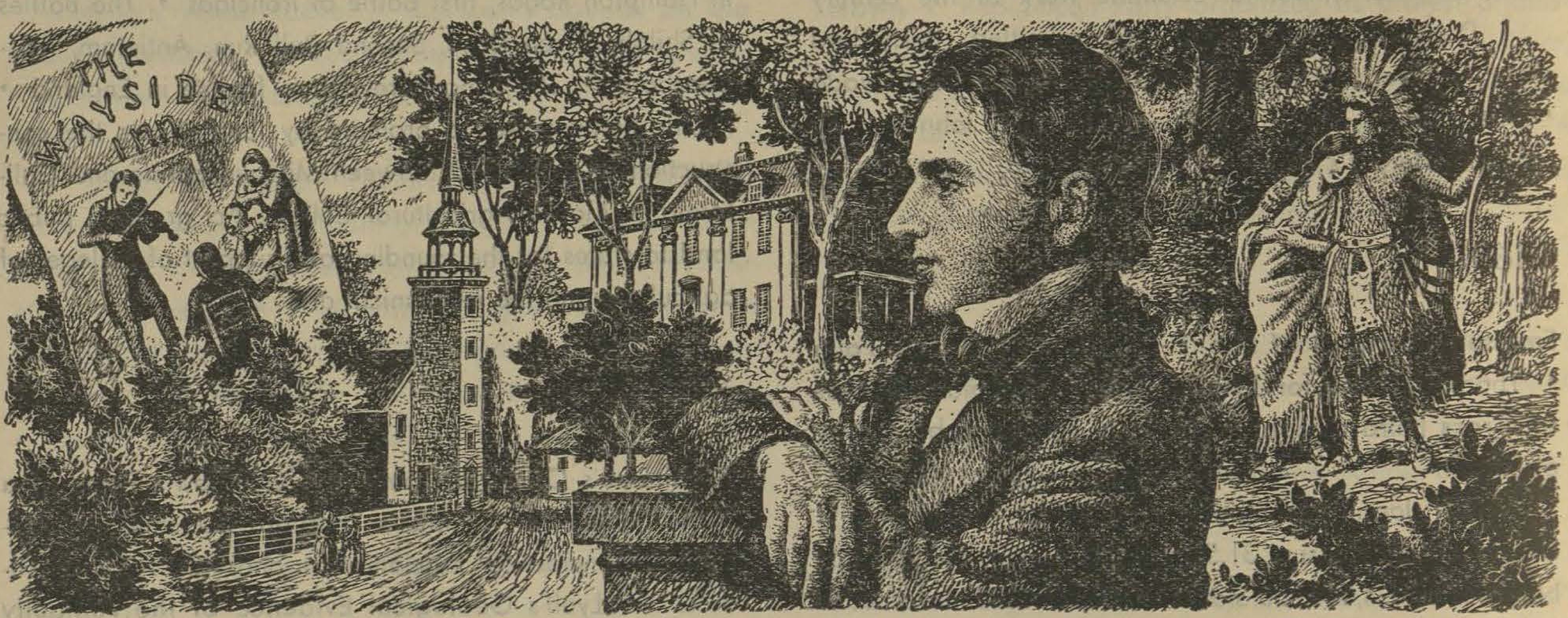
Bryant's **Thirty Poems**

Death of Hawthorne • Battles of the Wilderness, Spottsylvania Courthouse, Cold Harbor • Grant versus Lee in Virginia • Farragut at Mobile Bay • Sherman's March to the Sea • Nevada admitted, thirty-sixth state

1865

Lincoln's **Second Inaugural** • Whittier's **Snow-Bound** • Lowell's "Commemoration Ode" • Whitman's **Drum-Taps,** including "When Lilacs Last in the Dooryard Bloomed," the greatest poem on Lincoln • Mark Twain's **Celebrated Jumping Frog of Calaveras County** • Ruskin's **Sesame and Lilies** • Lewis Carroll's **Alice's Adventures in Wonderland**

Surrender of Lee to Grant at Appomattox, 9 April • Assassination of Lincoln, 14 April; Andrew Johnson became seventeenth President



Henry Wadsworth Longfellow

1807 • 1882

During his lifetime Henry Wadsworth Longfellow was the best-loved American poet, and even today his poetry is popular because it says what many people want to be told in ways generally considered "poetic." Critics who disapprove of a large share of Longfellow's verse do so because they feel that its thought is commonplace, its mood sentimental, and its form not well related to its substance. Such critics are likely to admit, however, that at his infrequent best he wrote poetry which deserves to be treasured by fastidious readers.

Longfellow was born in Portland, Maine, on February 27, 1807. He was educated at Bowdoin and abroad, and he taught modern languages at Bowdoin (1829-1835) and then, after a second trip abroad, at Harvard (1837-1854). Meanwhile, his fame, which had begun to flourish when *Voices of the Night* was published in 1839, was augmented by such books as *Ballads and Other Poems* (1841) and *Evangeline* (1847). Works published after his retirement from Harvard—*Hiawatha* (1855), *The Courtship of Miles Standish* (1858), *Tales of a Wayside Inn* (1863), and *Christus: A Mystery* (1872)—brought still greater appreciation. Carefully sheltered in childhood and early manhood, never worried by poverty, the poet lived most of his days in peaceful old Craigie House in Cambridge. Professor Shepard has pictured him there as "he sat by the fireside writing verse on his knee with his eyes closed, now and then striding to the window to look down the vista of bristling elms to where the River Charles was 'writing the last letter of his name.'" When Howells saw

Panel (l. to r.): Title page of Tales of a Wayside Inn, 1863 • Cambridge in 1831 • Craigie House, Longfellow's home • Henry Wadsworth Longfellow at 33 • "Hiawatha's Wedding Journey"

him at the height of fame, he thought he was perfectly characterized as "the white Mr. Longfellow."

These and other similar details have long caused scholars to think of Longfellow's life as always sheltered and placid. Recent study by Lawrance Thompson, however, has shown that Longfellow won such peacefulness only after a youth full of storm and struggle. His fight, against odds, to become an author, his desperate sorrow following the death of his first wife in 1835, and his torture of spirit during the seven-year courtship of his second wife, Frances Appleton, all left their imprint on his life and work.

Because Europe was the background for some of his deepest emotional experiences and because he discovered new possibilities in literature during his study there, Longfellow was impelled to acquaint his countrymen with the Old World as he saw it. Culture-starved, painfully aware of their crudeness as European travel-book writers showed it, Americans were delighted with Longfellow's translations of European poems and his romantic depictions of the picturesque Old World. When he turned to the depiction of the America of the past (as he frequently did), one of his services was, in a sense, to "Europeanize" it—to show that this country, too, had mellow legends which might be given something like Old World treatments.

Much of Longfellow's verse has a simple pattern: a story is told, an object or scene is described, and then a moral which figuratively makes use of the story, object, or scene concludes the poem. The morals, some derived from German authors, have popular appeal; typical ones are: "Fight on"; "Others sorrow, too"; and "Sorrow must end." Many times there are striking figures of speech not only in the closing lines but also in earlier lines, but too often these are not related to one another or—in a basic way, at least—to the poem as a whole. The poems are written in relatively simple (sometimes prosaic) words and in memorable rhythms. When Longfellow avoids obvious preachments, sentimental tone, flat words, and loosely related figures, he does his best work. Sometimes, as in *The Courtship of Miles Standish,* he tells a story masterfully and employs a gentle sort of humor with excellent effect. At other times, as in some sonnets and in some lyrics—"Hymn to the Night" and "The Tide Rises," for instance—his economically managed imagery, his emotional restraint, his sure diction, and his masterfully handled rhythms create memorable verse.

Complete Poetical Works, ed. H. E. Scudder, Boston, 1893 • Samuel Longfellow, The Life of Henry Wadsworth Longfellow, 2 vols., **Boston, 1885-1886** • Lawrance Thompson, **Young Longfellow (1807-1843), New York, 1938**

A Psalm of Life

When, in 1838, Longfellow gave a new course on "Literature and the Literary Life" at Harvard, his study of Goethe was particularly useful in helping him to formulate a workable philosophy. The period was a trying one in Longfellow's life. His first wife's death had been and still was the cause of much sorrow. His courtship of Frances Appleton seemed doomed to failure. In Goethe, Longfellow found a suggestion for living when "the time is out of joint"—"to bear one's self doughtily in Life's battle: and make the best of things." This was the message expressed in "A Psalm of Life." "I kept it some time in manuscript," he wrote, "unwilling to show it to any one, it being a voice from my inmost heart, and expressing my feelings at a time when I was rallying from the depression of disappointment." Many repetitions have robbed the poem of its early fire, but it is important to remember that at the time it appeared this attack on acquiescence fostered by either dreamy romanticism or Calvinistic fatalism said something important to many readers.

Tell me not, in mournful numbers,
  Life is but an empty dream!
For the soul is dead that slumbers,
  And things are not what they seem.

Life is real! Life is earnest!
  And the grave is not its goal;
Dust thou art, to dust returnest,
  Was not spoken of the soul.

Not enjoyment, and not sorrow,
  Is our destined end or way;

But to act, that each to-morrow
Find us farther than today.

Art is long, and Time is fleeting,
And our hearts, though stout and brave,
Still, like muffled drums, are beating
Funeral marches to the grave.

In the world's broad field of battle,
In the bivouac of Life,
Be not like dumb, driven cattle!
Be a hero in the strife!

Trust no Future, howe'er pleasant!
Let the dead Past bury its dead!
Act,—act in the living Present!
Heart within, and God o'erhead!

Lives of great men all remind us
We can make our lives sublime,
And, departing, leave behind us
Footprints on the sands of time;

Footprints, that perhaps another,
Sailing o'er life's solemn main,
A forlorn and shipwrecked brother,
Seeing, shall take heart again.

Let us, then, be up and doing,
With a heart for any fate;
Still achieving, still pursuing,
Learn to labor and to wait.

1838

Hymn to the Night

'Ασπασίη, τρίλλιστος

Longfellow said he wrote this poem in the summer of 1839, "while sitting at my chamber window, on one of the balmiest nights of the year. I endeavored to reproduce the impression of the hour and scene." The poem offers a way of coping with sorrow contrasting with the one suggested in "Psalm of Life." Here nighttime reveries, rather than heroic action, bring surcease of sorrow.

I heard the trailing garments of the Night
Sweep through her marble halls!
I saw her sable skirts all fringed with light
From the celestial walls!

I felt her presence, by its spell of might,
Stoop o'er me from above;
The calm, majestic presence of the Night,
As of the one I love.

I heard the sounds of sorrow and delight,
The manifold, soft chimes,
That fill the haunted chambers of the Night,
Like some old poet's rhymes.

From the cool cisterns of the midnight air
My spirit drank repose;
The fountain of perpetual peace flows there,—
From those deep cisterns flows.

O holy Night! from thee I learn to bear
What man has borne before!
Thou layest thy finger on the lips of Care,
And they complain no more.

Peace! Peace! Orestes-like I breathe this prayer!
Descend with broad-winged flight,
The welcome, the thrice-prayed for, the most fair,
The best-beloved Night!

1839

The Skeleton in Armor

In a letter to his father written in December 1840, Longfellow announced that he had prepared this ballad, "which has been lying by me for some time," for the press. "It is connected," he said, "with the old Round Tower at New-

Hymn . . . • 'Ασπασίη, τρίλλιστος • Welcome, three times prayed for • 21 Orestes-like refers to the character Orestes in the plays of Aeschylus. At the end of the tragedy The Choephorae, Orestes, having avenged his father by murdering his mother, is pursued by the Furies. In a sequel he finds peace

port. The skeleton in armor really exists. It was dug up near Fall River, where I saw it some two years ago. I suppose it to be the remains of one of the old Northern sea-rovers. . . . Of course, I make the tradition myself; and I think I have succeeded in giving the whole a Northern air."

Reviewing Ballads and Other Poems (1841), in which the ballad was published, Poe said: "In 'The Skeleton in Armor' we find a pure and perfect thesis artistically treated. . . . The metre is simple, sonorous, well-balanced, and fully adapted to the subject." Scholars have pointed out Longfellow's indebtedness in this ballad to Michael Drayton's poem on the battle of Agincourt and to Shelley's "The Fugitives."

"Speak! speak! thou fearful guest!
Who, with thy hollow breast,
Still in rude armor drest,
Comest to daunt me!
Wrapt not in Eastern balms,
But with thy fleshless palms
Stretched, as if asking alms,
Why dost thou haunt me?"

Then from those cavernous eyes
Pale flashes seemed to rise,
As when the Northern skies
Gleam in December;
And, like the water's flow
Under December's snow,
Came a dull voice of woe
From the heart's chamber.

"I was a Viking old!
My deeds, though manifold,
No Skald in song has told,
No Saga taught thee!
Take heed that in thy verse
Thou dost the tale rehearse,
Else dread a dead man's curse;
For this I sought thee.

"Far in the Northern Land,
By the wild Baltic's strand,
I, with my childish hand,
Tamed the gerfalcon;
And, with my skates fast-bound,
Skimmed the half-frozen Sound,
That the poor whimpering hound
Trembled to walk on.

"Oft to his frozen lair
Tracked I the grisly bear,
While from my path the hare
Fled like a shadow;
Oft through the forest dark
Followed the were-wolf's bark,
Until the soaring lark
Sang from the meadow.

"But when I older grew,
Joining a corsair's crew,
O'er the dark sea I flew
With the marauders.
Wild was the life we led;
Many the souls that sped,
Many the hearts that bled,
By our stern orders.

"Many a wassail-bout
Wore the long winter out;
Often our midnight shout
Set the cocks crowing,
As we the Berserk's tale
Measured in cups of ale,
Draining the oaken pail
Filled to o'erflowing.

"Once as I told in glee
Tales of the stormy sea,
Soft eyes did gaze on me,
Burning yet tender;
And as the white stars shine
On the dark Norway pine,
On that dark heart of mine
Fell their soft splendor.

"I wooed the blue-eyed maid,
Yielding, yet half afraid,
And in the forest's shade
Our vows were plighted.
Under its loosened vest

Fluttered her little breast,
Like birds within their nest
By the hawk frighted.

"Bright in her father's hall
Shields gleamed upon the wall,
Loud sang the minstrels all,
Chanting his glory;
When of old Hildebrand
I asked his daughter's hand,
Mute did the minstrels stand
To hear my story.

"While the brown ale he quaffed,
Loud then the champion laughed,
And as the wind-gusts waft
The sea-foam brightly,
So the loud laugh of scorn
Out of those lips unshorn,
From the deep drinking-horn
Blew the foam lightly.

"She was a Prince's child,
I but a Viking wild,
And though she blushed and smiled,
I was discarded!
Should not the dove so white
Follow the sea-mew's flight?
Why did they leave that night
Her nest unguarded?

"Scarce had I put to sea,
Bearing the maid with me,
Fairest of all was she
Among the Norsemen!
When on the white sea-strand,
Waving his armèd hand,
Saw we old Hildebrand,
With twenty horsemen.

"Then launched they to the blast,
Bent like a reed each mast,
Yet we were gaining fast,
When the wind failed us;
And with a sudden flaw
Came round the gusty Skaw,
So that our foe we saw
Laugh as he hailed us.

"And as to catch the gale
Round veered the flapping sail,
'Death!' was the helmsman's hail,
'Death without quarter!'
Midships with iron keel
Struck we her ribs of steel;
Down her black hulk did reel
Through the black water!

"As with his wings aslant,
Sails the fierce cormorant,
Seeking some rocky haunt,
With his prey laden,—
So toward the open main,
Beating to sea again,
Through the wild hurricane,
Bore I the maiden.

"Three weeks we westward bore,
And when the storm was o'er,
Cloud-like we saw the shore
Stretching to leeward;
There for my lady's bower
Built I the lofty tower,
Which, to this very hour,
Stands looking seaward.

"There lived we many years;
Time dried the maiden's tears;
She had forgot her fears,
She was a mother;
Death closed her mild blue eyes;
Under that tower she lies;
Ne'er shall the sun arise
On such another!

"Still grew my bosom then,
Still as a stagnant fen!
Hateful to me were men,
The sunlight hateful;

110 Skaw, Cape Skagen, the northern point of Jutland in Denmark

In the vast forest here,
Clad in my warlike gear,
Fell I upon my spear,
  Oh, death was grateful!

"Thus, seamed with many scars,
Bursting these prison bars
Up to its native stars
  My soul ascended!
There from the flowing bowl
Deep drinks the warrior's soul,
Skoal! to the Northland! *skoal!*"
  Thus the tale ended.

1840·1841

The Slave's Dream

Returning from a trip abroad in 1842, Longfellow had a stormy journey. "I was not out of my berth more than twelve hours for the first twelve days," he recorded. "I was in the forward part of the vessel, where all the great waves struck and broke with voices of thunder. There, 'cribbed, cabined, and confined,' I passed fifteen days. During this time I wrote seven poems on slavery; I meditated upon them in the stormy, sleepless nights, and wrote them down with a pencil in the morning."

Shortly after arriving in America, he published these poems and one other in a volume called Poems on Slavery—his contribution to the antislavery crusade. In a period when most of the New Englanders of good family were saying as little as possible about this controversy, it was rather brave for him thus to speak out.

Beside the ungathered rice he lay,
  His sickle in his hand;
His breast was bare, his matted hair
  Was buried in the sand.
Again, in the mist and shadow of sleep,
  He saw his Native Land.

Wide through the landscape of his dreams
  The lordly Niger flowed;
Beneath the palm-trees on the plain
  Once more a king he strode;
And heard the tinkling caravans
  Descend the mountain road.

He saw once more his dark-eyed queen
  Among her children stand;
They clasped his neck, they kissed his cheeks,
  They held him by the hand!—
A tear burst from the sleeper's lids
  And fell into the sand.

And then at furious speed he rode
  Along the Niger's bank;
His bridle-reins were golden chains,
  And, with a martial clank,
At each leap he could feel his scabbard of steel
  Smiting his stallion's flank.

Before him, like a blood-red flag,
  The bright flamingoes flew;
From morn till night he followed their flight,
  O'er plains where the tamarind grew,
Till he saw the roofs of Caffre huts,
  And the ocean rose to view.

At night he heard the lion roar,
  And the hyena scream,
And the river-horse, as he crushed the reeds
  Beside some hidden stream;
And it passed, like a glorious roll of drums,
  Through the triumph of his dream.

The forests, with their myriad tongues,
  Shouted of liberty;
And the Blast of the Desert cried aloud,
  With a voice so wild and free,
That he started in his sleep and smiled
  At their tempestuous glee.

He did not feel the driver's whip,
  Nor the burning heat of day;

The Skeleton . . . • 159 Skoal, "the customary salutation for drinking a health in Scandinavia."—Longfellow

For Death had illumined the Land of Sleep,
And his lifeless body lay
A worn-out fetter, that the soul
Had broken and thrown away!

1842

The Rainy Day

The day is cold, and dark, and dreary;
It rains, and the wind is never weary;
The vine still clings to the mouldering wall,
But at every gust the dead leaves fall,
And the day is dark and dreary.

My life is cold, and dark, and dreary;
It rains, and the wind is never weary;
My thoughts still cling to the mouldering Past,
But the hopes of youth fall thick in the blast,
And the days are dark and dreary.

Be still, sad heart! and cease repining;
Behind the clouds is the sun still shining;
Thy fate is the common fate of all,
Into each life some rain must fall,
Some days must be dark and dreary.

1842

The Bridge

I stood on the bridge at midnight
As the clocks were striking the hour,
And the moon rose o'er the city,
Behind the dark church-tower.

I saw her bright reflection
In the waters under me,
Like a golden goblet falling
And sinking into the sea.

And far in the hazy distance
Of that lovely night in June,
The blaze of the flaming furnace
Gleamed redder than the moon.

Among the long, black rafters
The wavering shadows lay,
And the current that came from the ocean
Seemed to lift and bear them away;

As sweeping and eddying through them,
Rose the belated tide,
And, streaming into the moonlight,
The seaweed floated wide.

And like those waters rushing
Among the wooden piers,
A flood of thoughts came o'er me
That filled my eyes with tears.

How often, oh how often,
In the days that had gone by,
I had stood on that bridge at midnight
And gazed on that wave and sky!

How often, oh how often,
I had wished that the ebbing tide
Would bear me away on its bosom
O'er the ocean wild and wide!

For my heart was hot and restless,
And my life was full of care,
And the burden laid upon me
Seemed greater than I could bear.

But now it has fallen from me,
It is buried in the sea;
And only the sorrow of others
Throws its shadow over me.

Yet whenever I cross the river
On its bridge with wooden piers,
Like the odor of brine from the ocean
Comes the thought of other years.

And I think how many thousands
Of care-encumbered men,

Each bearing his burden of sorrow
Have crossed the bridge since then.

I see the long procession
Still passing to and fro,
The young heart hot and restless,
And the old subdued and slow!

And forever and forever,
As long as the river flows,
As long as the heart has passions,
As long as life has woes;

The moon and its broken reflection
And its shadows shall appear,
As the symbol of love in heaven,
And its wavering image here.

1845

The Arrow and the Song

The following is Longfellow's account of the writing of this poem: "October 16, 1845. Before church, wrote 'The Arrow and the Song,' which came into my mind as I stood with my back to the fire, and glanced onto the paper with an arrow's speed. Literally an improvisation."

I shot an arrow into the air,
It fell to earth, I knew not where;
For, so swiftly it flew, the sight
Could not follow it in its flight.

I breathed a song into the air,
It fell to earth, I knew not where;
For who has sight so keen and strong,
That it can follow the flight of song?

Long, long afterward, in an oak
I found the arrow, still unbroke;
And the song, from beginning to end,
I found again in the heart of a friend.

1845

The Jewish Cemetery at Newport

An entry in Longfellow's journal for June 9, 1852, tells of the visit to the cemetery which suggested this poem. "There are few graves," he wrote; "nearly all are low tombstones of marble, with Hebrew inscriptions, and a few words added in English or Portuguese. . . . It is a shady nook, at the corner of two dusty, frequented streets. . . ."

Professor Odell Shepard comments: "The poem . . . is written in the difficult stanza of Gray's 'Elegy' and in the mood of that poem. Comparison will show that Longfellow is as much superior to Gray in thought-structure and 'sense of the whole' as he is inferior in vividness and intensity of phrase and image."

How strange it seems! These Hebrews in their graves,
Close by the street of this fair seaport town,
Silent beside the never-silent waves,
At rest in all this moving up and down!

The trees are white with dust, that o'er their sleep
Wave their broad curtains in the south-wind's breath,
While underneath these leafy tents they keep
The long, mysterious Exodus of Death.

And these sepulchral stones, so old and brown,
That pave with level flags their burial-place,
Seem like the tablets of the Law, thrown down
And broken by Moses at the mountain's base.

The very names recorded here are strange,
Of foreign accent, and of different climes;
Alvares and Rivera interchange
With Abraham and Jacob of old times.

"Blessed be God, for he created Death!"
The mourners said, "and Death is rest and peace;"
Then added, in the certainty of faith,
"And giveth Life that nevermore shall cease."

The Jewish Cemetery . . . • **8 Exodus** refers to the Book of Exodus, which recounts the journey of the Israelites from Egypt under Moses

Closed are the portals of their Synagogue,
No Psalms of David now the silence break,
No Rabbi reads the ancient Decalogue
In the grand dialect the Prophets spake.

Gone are the living, but the dead remain,
And not neglected; for a hand unseen,
Scattering its bounty, like a summer rain,
Still keeps their graves and their remembrance green.

How came they here? What burst of Christian hate,
What persecution, merciless and blind,
Drove o'er the sea—that desert desolate—
These Ishmaels and Hagars of mankind?

They lived in narrow streets and lanes obscure,
Ghetto and Judenstrass, in mirk and mire;
Taught in the school of patience to endure
The life of anguish and the death of fire.

All their lives long, with the unleavened bread
And bitter herbs of exile and its fears,
The wasting famine of the heart they fed,
And slaked its thirst with marah of their tears.

Anathema maranatha! was the cry
That rang from town to town, from street to street:
At every gate the accursed Mordecai
Was mocked and jeered, and spurned by Christian feet.

Pride and humiliation hand in hand
Walked with them through the world where'er they went;
Trampled and beaten were they as the sand,
And yet unshaken as the continent.

For in the background figures vague and vast
Of patriarchs and of prophets rose sublime,
And all the great traditions of the Past
They saw reflected in the coming time.

And thus forever with reverted look
The mystic volume of the world they read,
Spelling it backward, like a Hebrew book,
Till life became a Legend of the Dead.

But ah! what once has been shall be no more!
The groaning earth in travail and in pain
Brings forth its races, but does not restore,
And the dead nations never rise again.

1852

My Lost Youth

During a visit to Portland in 1846 Longfellow took a long walk around Munjoy's hill and down to old Fort Lawrence. Then, he says, "I lay down in one of the embrasures and listened to the lashing, lulling sound of the sea just at my feet. It was a beautiful afternoon, and the harbor was full of white sails, coming and departing." He considered writing a poem at the time, but not until 1855 did these two entries in his journal record its composition:

"March 29. A day of pain; cowering over the fire. At night, as I lie in bed, a poem comes into my mind,—a memory of Portland,—my native town, the city by the sea. . . .

"March 30. Wrote the poem; and am rather pleased with it, and with the bringing in of the two lines of the old Lapland song. . . ."

The song may be found in a book by John Scheffer, **The History of Lapland** (1674). The important passage is:

"A youth's desire is the desire of the wind,
All his essaies
Are long delaies,
No issue can they find."

Often I think of the beautiful town
That is seated by the sea;
Often in thought go up and down
The pleasant streets of that dear old town,

The Jewish Cemetery . . . • 32 **Ishmael.** See Genesis 16, 21 • 32 **Hagar,** a concubine of Abraham who was driven into the desert with Ishmael, her son • 34 **Ghetto and Judenstrass,** quarters in which Jews are segregated • 41 **Anathema maranatha,** an expression found in I Corinthians, formerly thought to be a double curse • 43 **Mordecai,** the cousin of Esther. See the Book of Esther • 55 **Spelling it backward.** Hebrew is printed so as to be read from right to left in contrast with other languages reading from left to right

And my youth comes back to me.
And a verse of a Lapland song
Is haunting my memory still:
"A boy's will is the wind's will,
And the thoughts of youth are long, long thoughts."

I can see the shadowy lines of its trees,
And catch, in sudden gleams,
The sheen of the far-surrounding seas,
And islands that were the Hesperides
Of all my boyish dreams.
And the burden of that old song,
It murmurs and whispers still:
"A boy's will is the wind's will,
And the thoughts of youth are long, long thoughts."

I remember the black wharves and the slips,
And the sea-tides tossing free;
And Spanish sailors with bearded lips,
And the beauty and mystery of the ships,
And the magic of the sea.
And the voice of that wayward song
Is singing and saying still:
"A boy's will is the wind's will,
And the thoughts of youth are long, long thoughts."

I remember the bulwarks by the shore,
And the fort upon the hill;
The sunrise gun, with its hollow roar,
The drumbeat repeated o'er and o'er,
And the bugle wild and shrill.
And the music of that old song
Throbs in my memory still:
"A boy's will is the wind's will,
And the thoughts of youth are long, long thoughts."

I remember the sea-fight far away,
How it thundered o'er the tide!
And the dead captains, as they lay
In their graves, o'erlooking the tranquil bay
Where they in battle died.
And the sound of that mournful song
Goes through me with a thrill:
"A boy's will is the wind's will,
And the thoughts of youth are long, long thoughts."

I can see the breezy dome of groves,
The shadows of Deering's Woods;
And the friendships old and the early loves
Come back with a Sabbath sound, as of doves
In quiet neighborhoods.
And the verse of that sweet old song,
It flutters and murmurs still:
"A boy's will is the wind's will,
And the thoughts of youth are long, long thoughts."

I remember the gleams and glooms that dart
Across the schoolboy's brain;
The song and the silence in the heart,
That in part are prophecies, and in part
Are longings wild and vain.
And the voice of that fitful song
Sings on, and is never still:
"A boy's will is the wind's will,
And the thoughts of youth are long, long thoughts."

There are things of which I may not speak;
There are dreams that cannot die;
There are thoughts that make the strong heart weak,
And bring a pallor into the cheek,
And a mist before the eye.
And the words of that fatal song
Come over me like a chill:
"A boy's will is the wind's will,
And the thoughts of youth are long, long thoughts."

Strange to me now are the forms I meet,
When I visit the dear old town;
But the native air is pure and sweet,
And the trees that o'ershadow each well-known street,
As they balance up and down,
Are singing the beautiful song,
Are singing and whispering still:
"A boy's will is the wind's will,
And the thoughts of youth are long, long thoughts."

And Deering's Woods are fresh and fair,
And with joy that is almost pain
My heart goes back to wander there,
And among the dreams of the days that were,
I find my lost youth again.

And the strange and beautiful song,
Sings on, and is never still:
"A boy's will is the wind's will,
And the thoughts of youth are long, long thoughts."

1855

The Courtship of Miles Standish

Longfellow recorded that he began to write this "idyll of the Old Colony times" in December 1857; he finished his revisions on June 3, 1858. It was very successful, twenty-five thousand copies selling in the week following its publication in October 1858.

This representation of Longfellow's longer narrative poems does not, to be sure, embody the sentiment so appealing to the taste of Victorian readers so well as Evangeline does. Its lighter, more playful tone, however, appeals to more modern readers; and as well as any such poem, it suggests the author's really considerable skill as a teller of stories. Professor Howard Mumford Jones perceptively emphasizes the skill shown in the way Longfellow's verse narratives are put together—"with what deft devices the poet has knitted his plot, and how beautifully the descriptive passages are made to melt into the steady flow of the narrative." The characterization, too, it should be noted, is of exactly the sort to make probable all the actions in this amusing narrative. Lowell's review of the poem, printed hereafter (p. 851), makes some interesting comments.

I

MILES STANDISH

In the Old Colony days, in Plymouth the land of the Pilgrims,
To and fro in a room of his simple and primitive dwelling,
Clad in doublet and hose, and boots of Cordovan leather,
Strode, with a martial air, Miles Standish the Puritan Captain.
Buried in thought he seemed, with his hands behind him, and pausing
Ever and anon to behold his glittering weapons of warfare,
Hanging in shining array along the walls of the chamber,—
Cutlass and corselet of steel, and his trusty sword of Damascus,
Curved at the point and inscribed with its mystical Arabic sentence,
While underneath, in a corner, were fowling-piece, musket, and matchlock.
Short of stature he was, but strongly built and athletic,
Broad in the shoulders, deep-chested, with muscles and sinews of iron;
Brown as a nut was his face, but his russet beard was already
Flaked with patches of snow, as hedges sometimes in November.
Near him was seated John Alden, his friend, and household companion,
Writing with diligent speed at a table of pine by the window;
Fair-haired, azure-eyed, with delicate Saxon complexion,
Having the dew of his youth, and the beauty thereof, as the captives
Whom Saint Gregory saw, and exclaimed, "Not Angles, but Angels."
Youngest of all was he of the men who came in the Mayflower.

Suddenly breaking the silence, the diligent scribe interrupting,
Spake, in the pride of his heart, Miles Standish the Captain of Plymouth.
"Look at these arms," he said, "the warlike weapons that hang here
Burnished and bright and clean, as if for parade or inspection!
This is the sword of Damascus I fought with in Flanders; this breastplate,
Well I remember the day! once saved my life in a skirmish;
Here in front you can see the very dint of the bullet

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19 Saint Gregory is reputed to have made this remark about some captive Anglo-Saxons

Fired point-blank at my heart by a Spanish arcabucero.
Had it not been of sheer steel, the forgotten bones of Miles Standish
Would at this moment be mould, in their grave in the Flemish morasses."
Thereupon answered John Alden, but looked not up from his writing:
"Truly the breath of the Lord hath slackened the speed of the bullet;
He in his mercy preserved you, to be our shield and our weapon!"
Still the Captain continued, unheeding the words of the stripling:
"See, how bright they are burnished, as if in an arsenal hanging;
That is because I have done it myself, and not left it to others.
Serve yourself, would you be well served, is an excellent adage;
So I take care of my arms, as you of your pens and your inkhorn.
Then, too, there are my soldiers, my great, invincible army,
Twelve men, all equipped, having each his rest and his matchlock,
Eighteen shillings a month, together with diet and pillage,
And, like Caesar, I know the name of each of my soldiers!"
This he said with a smile, that danced in his eyes, as the sunbeams
Dance on the waves of the sea, and vanish again in a moment.
Alden laughed as he wrote, and still the Captain continued:
"Look! you can see from this window my brazen howitzer planted
High on the roof of the church, a preacher who speaks to the purpose,
Steady, straightforward, and strong, with irresistible logic,
Orthodox, flashing conviction right into the hearts of the heathen.
Now we are ready, I think, for any assault of the Indians;
Let them come, if they like, and the sooner they try it the better,—
Let them come, if they like, be it sagamore, sachem, or pow-wow,
Aspinet, Samoset, Corbitant, Squanto, or Tokamahamon!"

Long at the window he stood, and wistfully gazed on the landscape,
Washed with a cold gray mist, the vapory breath of the east-wind,
Forest and meadow and hill, and the steel-blue rim of the ocean,
Lying silent and sad, in the afternoon shadows and sunshine.
Over his countenance flitted a shadow like those on the landscape,
Gloom intermingled with light; and his voice was subdued with emotion,
Tenderness, pity, regret, as after a pause he proceeded:
"Yonder there, on the hill by the sea, lies buried Rose Standish;
Beautiful rose of love, that bloomed for me by the wayside!
She was the first to die of all who came in the Mayflower!
Green above her is growing the field of wheat we have sown there,
Better to hide from the Indian scouts the graves of our people,
Lest they should count them and see how many already have perished!"
Sadly his face he averted, and strode up and down, and was thoughtful.

Fixed to the opposite wall was a shelf of books, and among them
Prominent three, distinguished alike for bulk and for binding;
Bariffe's *Artillery Guide,* and the *Commentaries of Caesar*
Out of the Latin translated by Arthur Goldinge of London,
And, as if guarded by these, between them was standing the *Bible.*
Musing a moment before them, Miles Standish paused, as if doubtful

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53 Aspinet . . . Tokamahamon, Indian chieftains

Which of the three he should choose for his consolation and comfort,
Whether the wars of the Hebrews, the famous campaigns of the Romans,
Or the Artillery practice, designed for belligerent Christians.
Finally down from its shelf he dragged the ponderous Roman,
Seated himself at the window, and opened the book, and in silence
Turned o'er the well-worn leaves, where thumb-marks thick on the margin,
Like the trample of feet, proclaimed the battle was hottest.
Nothing was heard in the room but the hurrying pen of the stripling,
Busily writing epistles important, to go by the Mayflower,
Ready to sail on the morrow, or next day at least, God willing!
Homeward bound with the tidings of all that terrible winter,
Letters written by Alden, and full of the name of Priscilla!
Full of the name and the fame of the Puritan maiden Priscilla!

II

LOVE AND FRIENDSHIP

Nothing was heard in the room but the hurrying pen of the stripling,
Or an occasional sigh from the laboring heart of the Captain,
Reading the marvellous words and achievements of Julius Caesar.
After a while he exclaimed, as he smote with his hand, palm downwards,
Heavily on the page: "A wonderful man was this Caesar!
You are a writer, and I am a fighter, but here is a fellow
Who could both write and fight, and in both was equally skilful!"
Straightway answered and spake John Alden, the comely, the youthful:
"Yes, he was equally skilled, as you say, with his pen and his weapons.
Somewhere have I read, but where I forget, he could dictate
Seven letters at once, at the same time writing his memoirs."
"Truly," continued the Captain, not heeding or hearing the other,
"Truly a wonderful man was Caius Julius Caesar!
Better be first, he said, in a little Iberian village,
Than be second in Rome, and I think he was right when he said it.
Twice was he married before he was twenty, and many times after;
Battles five hundred he fought, and a thousand cities he conquered;
He, too, fought in Flanders, as he himself has recorded;
Finally he was stabbed by his friend, the orator Brutus!
Now, do you know what he did on a certain occasion in Flanders,
When the rear-guard of his army retreated, the front giving way too,
And the immortal Twelfth Legion was crowded so closely together
There was no room for their swords? Why, he seized a shield from a soldier,
Put himself straight at the head of his troops, and commanded the captains,
Calling on each by his name, to order forward the ensigns;
Then to widen the ranks, and give more room for their weapons;
So he won the day, the battle of something-or-other.
That's what I always say; if you wish a thing to be well done,
You must do it yourself, you must not leave it to others!"
All was silent again; the Captain continued his reading.
Nothing was heard in the room but the hurrying pen of the stripling
Writing epistles important to go next day by the Mayflower,
Filled with the name and the fame of the Puritan maiden Priscilla;
Every sentence began or closed with the name of Priscilla,

Till the treacherous pen, to which he confided the secret,
Strove to betray it by singing and shouting the name of Priscilla!
Finally closing his book, with a bang of the ponderous cover,
Sudden and loud as the sound of a soldier grounding his musket,
Thus to the young man spake Miles Standish the Captain of Plymouth:
"When you have finished your work, I have something important to tell you.
Be not however in haste; I can wait; I shall not be impatient!"
Straightway Alden replied, as he folded the last of his letters,
Pushing his papers aside, and giving respectful attention:
"Speak; for whenever you speak, I am always ready to listen,
Always ready to hear whatever pertains to Miles Standish."
Thereupon answered the Captain, embarrassed, and culling his phrases:
" 'T is not good for a man to be alone, say the Scriptures.
This I have said before, and again and again I repeat it;
Every hour in the day, I think it, and feel it, and say it.
Since Rose Standish died, my life has been weary and dreary;
Sick at heart have I been, beyond the healing of friendship;
Oft in my lonely hours have I thought of the maiden Priscilla.
She is alone in the world; her father and mother and brother
Died in the winter together; I saw her going and coming,
Now to the grave of the dead, and now to the bed of the dying,
Patient, courageous, and strong, and said to myself, that if ever
There were angels on earth, as there are angels in heaven,
Two have I seen and known; and the angel whose name is Priscilla
Holds in my desolate life the place which the other abandoned.
Long have I cherished the thought, but never have dared to reveal it,
Being a coward in this, though valiant enough for the most part.
Go to the damsel Priscilla, the loveliest maiden of Plymouth,
Say that a blunt old Captain, a man not of words but of actions,
Offers his hand and his heart, the hand and heart of a soldier.
Not in these words, you know, but this in short is my meaning;
I am a maker of war, and not a maker of phrases.
You, who are bred as a scholar, can say it in elegant language,
Such as you read in your books of the pleadings and wooings of lovers,
Such as you think best adapted to win the heart of a maiden."

When he had spoken, John Alden, the fair-haired, taciturn stripling,
All aghast at his words, surprised, embarrassed, bewildered,
Trying to mask his dismay by treating the subject with lightness,
Trying to smile, and yet feeling his heart stand still in his bosom,
Just as a timepiece stops in a house that is stricken by lightning,
Thus made answer and spake, or rather stammered than answered:
"Such a message as that, I am sure I should mangle and mar it;
If you would have it well done,—I am only repeating your maxim,—
You must do it yourself, you must not leave it to others!"
But with the air of a man whom nothing can turn from his purpose,
Gravely shaking his head, made answer the Captain of Plymouth:
"Truly the maxim is good, and I do not mean to gainsay it;
But we must use it discreetly, and not waste powder for nothing.
Now, as I said before, I was never a maker of phrases.
I can march up to a fortress and summon the place to surrender,

But march up to a woman with such a proposal, I dare not.
I'm not afraid of bullets, nor shot from the mouth of a cannon,
But of a thundering 'No!' point-blank from the mouth of a woman,
That I confess I'm afraid of, nor am I ashamed to confess it!
So you must grant my request, for you are an elegant scholar,
Having the graces of speech, and skill in the turning of phrases."
Taking the hand of his friend, who still was reluctant and doubtful,
Holding it long in his own, and pressing it kindly, he added:
"Though I have spoken thus lightly, yet deep is the feeling that prompts me;
Surely you cannot refuse what I ask in the name of our friendship!"
Then made answer John Alden: "The name of friendship is sacred;
What you demand in that name, I have not the power to deny you!"
So the strong will prevailed, subduing and moulding the gentler,
Friendship prevailed over love, and Alden went on his errand.

III

THE LOVER'S ERRAND

So the strong will prevailed, and Alden went on his errand,
Out of the street of the village, and into the paths of the forest,
Into the tranquil woods, where bluebirds and robins were building
Towns in the populous trees, with hanging gardens of verdure,
Peaceful, aerial cities of joy and affection and freedom.
All around him was calm, but within him commotion and conflict,
Love contending with friendship, and self with each generous impulse.
To and fro in his breast his thoughts were heaving and dashing,
As in a foundering ship, with every roll of the vessel,
Washes the bitter sea, the merciless surge of the ocean!
"Must I relinquish it all," he cried with a wild lamentation,—
"Must I relinquish it all, the joy, the hope, the illusion?
Was it for this I have loved, and waited, and worshipped in silence?
Was it for this I have followed the flying feet and the shadow
Over the wintry sea, to the desolate shores of New England?
Truly the heart is deceitful, and out of its depths of corruption
Rise, like an exhalation, the misty phantoms of passion;
Angels of light they seem, but are only delusions of Satan.
All is clear to me now; I feel it, I see it distinctly!
This is the hand of the Lord; it is laid upon me in anger,
For I have followed too much the heart's desires and devices,
Worshipping Astaroth blindly, and impious idols of Baal.
This is the cross I must bear; the sin and the swift retribution."

So through the Plymouth woods John Alden went on his errand;
Crossing the brook at the ford, where it brawled over pebble and shallow,
Gathering still, as he went, the May-flowers blooming around him,
Fragrant, filling the air with a strange and wonderful sweetness,
Children lost in the woods, and covered with leaves in their slumber.
"Puritan flowers," he said, "and the type of Puritan maidens,
Modest and simple and sweet, the very type of Priscilla!
So I will take them to her; to Priscilla the Mayflower of Plymouth,

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206 Astaroth, Ashtoreth. See notes, pp. 667 and 708 • 206 Baal, a local deity of the ancient Semitic races. In the context, both deities are "heathen"

Modest and simple and sweet, as a parting gift will I take them;
Breathing their silent farewells, as they fade and wither and perish,
Soon to be thrown away as is the heart of the giver."
So through the Plymouth woods John Alden went on his errand;
Came to an open space, and saw the disk of the ocean,
Sailless, sombre and cold with the comfortless breath of the east-wind;
Saw the new-built house and people at work in the meadow;
Heard, as he drew near the door, the musical voice of Priscilla
Singing the hundredth Psalm, the grand old Puritan anthem,
Music that Luther sang to the sacred words of the Psalmist,
Full of the breath of the Lord, consoling and comforting many.
Then, as he opened the door, he beheld the form of the maiden
Seated beside her wheel, and the carded wool like a snow-drift
Piled at her knee, her white hands feeding the ravenous spindle,
While with her foot on the treadle she guided the wheel in its motion.
Open wide on her lap lay the well-worn psalm-book of Ainsworth,
Printed in Amsterdam, the words and the music together,
Rough-hewn, angular notes, like stones in the wall of a churchyard,
Darkened and overhung by the running vine of the verses.
Such was the book from whose pages she sang the old Puritan anthem,
She, the Puritan girl, in the solitude of the forest,
Making the humble house and the modest apparel of home-spun
Beautiful with her beauty, and rich with the wealth of her being!
Over him rushed, like a wind that is keen and cold and relentless,
Thoughts of what might have been, and the weight and woe of his errand;
All the dreams that had faded, and all the hopes that had vanished,
All his life henceforth a dreary and tenantless mansion,
Haunted by vain regrets, and pallid, sorrowful faces.
Still he said to himself, and almost fiercely he said it,
"Let not him that putteth his hand to the plough look backwards;
Though the ploughshare cut through the flowers of life to its fountains,
Though it pass o'er the graves of the dead and the hearths of the living,
It is the will of the Lord; and his mercy endureth forever!"

So he entered the house: and the hum of the wheel and the singing
Suddenly ceased; for Priscilla, aroused by his step on the threshold,
Rose as he entered, and gave him her hand, in signal of welcome,
Saying, "I knew it was you, when I heard your step in the passage;
For I was thinking of you, as I sat there singing and spinning."
Awkward and dumb with delight, that a thought of him had been mingled
Thus in the sacred psalm, that came from the heart of the maiden,
Silent before her he stood, and gave her the flowers for an answer,
Finding no words for his thought. He remembered that day in the winter,
After the first great snow, when he broke a path from the village,
Reeling and plunging along through the drifts that encumbered the doorway,
Stamping the snow from his feet as he entered the house, and Priscilla
Laughed at his snowy locks, and gave him a seat by the fireside,
Grateful and pleased to know he had thought of her in the snow-storm.
Had he but spoken then! perhaps not in vain had he spoken;

Now it was all too late; the golden moment had vanished!
So he stood there abashed, and gave her the flowers for an answer.

Then they sat down and talked of the birds and the beautiful Spring-time,
Talked of their friends at home, and the Mayflower that sailed on the morrow.
"I have been thinking all day," said gently the Puritan maiden,
"Dreaming all night, and thinking all day, of the hedge-rows of England,—
They are in blossom now, and the country is all like a garden:
Thinking of lanes and fields, and the song of the lark and the linnet,
Seeing the village street, and familiar faces of neighbors
Going about as of old, and stopping to gossip together,
And, at the end of the street, the village church, with the ivy
Climbing the old gray tower, and the quiet graves in the churchyard.
Kind are the people I live with, and dear to me my religion;
Still my heart is so sad, that I wish myself back in Old England.
You will say it is wrong, but I cannot help it: I almost
Wish myself back in Old England, I feel so lonely and wretched."

Thereupon answered the youth: "Indeed I do not condemn you;
Stouter hearts than a woman's have quailed in this terrible winter.
Yours is tender and trusting, and needs a stronger to lean on;
So I have come to you now, with an offer and proffer of marriage
Made by a good man and true, Miles Standish the Captain of Plymouth!"
Thus he delivered his message, the dexterous writer of letters,—
Did not embellish the theme, not array it in beautiful phrases,
But came straight to the point, and blurted it out like a school-boy;



"If I am not worth the wooing, I surely am not worth the winning!"

Even the Captain himself could hardly have said it more bluntly.
Mute with amazement and sorrow, Priscilla the Puritan maiden
Looked into Alden's face, her eyes dilated with wonder,
Feeling his words like a blow, that stunned her and rendered her speechless;
Till at length she exclaimed, interrupting the ominous silence:
"If the great Captain of Plymouth is so very eager to wed me,
Why does he not come himself, and take the trouble to woo me?
If I am not worth the wooing, I surely am not worth the winning!"
Then John Alden began explaining and smoothing the matter,
Making it worse as he went, by saying the Captain was busy,—
Had no time for such things;—such things! the words grating harshly

Fell on the ear of Priscilla; and swift as a flash she made answer:
"Has he no time for such things, as you call it, before he is married,
Would he be likely to find it, or make it, after the wedding?
That is the way with you men; you don't understand us, you cannot.
When you have made up your minds, after thinking of this one and that one,
Choosing, selecting, rejecting, comparing one with another,
Then you make known your desire, with abrupt and sudden avowal,
And are offended and hurt, and indignant perhaps, that a woman
Does not respond at once to a love that she never suspected,
Does not attain at a bound the height to which you have been climbing.
This is not right nor just: for surely a woman's affection
Is not a thing to be asked for, and had for only the asking.
When one is truly in love, one not only says it, but shows it.
Had he but waited awhile, had he only showed that he loved me,
Even this Captain of yours—who knows?—at last might have won me,
Old and rough as he is; but now it never can happen."

Still John Alden went on, unheeding the words of Priscilla,
Urging the suit of his friend, explaining, persuading, expanding;
Spoke of his courage and skill, and of all his battles in Flanders,
How with the people of God he had chosen to suffer affliction;
How, in return for his zeal, they had made him Captain of Plymouth;
He was a gentleman born, could trace his pedigree plainly
Back to Hugh Standish of Duxbury Hall, in Lancashire, England,
Who was the son of Ralph, and the grandson of Thurston de Standish;
Heir unto vast estates, of which he was basely defrauded,
Still bore the family arms, and had for his crest a cock argent
Combed and wattled gules, and all the rest of the blazon.
He was a man of honor, of noble and generous nature;
Though he was rough, he was kindly; she knew how during the winter
He had attended the sick, with a hand as gentle as woman's;
Somewhat hasty and hot, he could not deny it, and headstrong,
Stern as a soldier might be, but hearty, and placable always,
Not to be laughed at and scorned, because he was little of stature;
For he was great of heart, magnanimous, courtly, courageous;
Any woman in Plymouth, nay, any woman in England,
Might be happy and proud to be called the wife of Miles Standish!

But as he warmed and glowed, in his simple and eloquent language,
Quite forgetful of self, and full of the praise of his rival,
Archly the maiden smiled, and, with eyes overrunning with laughter,
Said, in a tremulous voice, "Why don't you speak for yourself, John?"

IV

JOHN ALDEN

Into the open air John Alden, perplexed and bewildered,
Rushed like a man insane, and wandered alone by the sea-side;
Paced up and down the sands, and bared his head to the east-wind,
Cooling his heated brow, and the fire and fever within him.
Slowly as out of the heavens, with apocalyptical splendors,

Sank the City of God, in the vision of John the Apostle,
So, with its cloudy walls of chrysolite, jasper, and sapphire,
Sank the broad red sun, and over its turrets uplifted
Glimmered the golden reed of the angel who measured the city.

"Welcome, O wind of the East!" he exclaimed in his wild exultation,
"Welcome, O wind of the East, from the caves of the misty Atlantic!
Blowing o'er fields of dulse, and measureless meadows of sea-grass,
Glowing o'er rocky wastes, and the grottos and gardens of ocean!
Lay thy cold, moist hand on my burning forehead, and wrap me
Close in thy garments of mist, to allay the fever within me!"

Like an awakened conscience, the sea was moaning and tossing,
Beating remorseful and loud the mutable sands of the sea-shore.
Fierce in his soul was the struggle and tumult of passions contending;
Love triumphant and crowned, and friendship wounded and bleeding,
Passionate cries of desire, and importunate pleadings of duty!
"Is it my fault," he said, "that the maiden has chosen between us?
Is it my fault that he failed,—my fault that I am the victor?"
Then within him there thundered a voice, like the voice of the Prophet:
"It hath displeased the Lord!"—and he thought of David's transgression,
Bathsheba's beautiful face, and his friend in the front of the battle!
Shame and confusion of guilt, and abasement and self-condemnation,
Overwhelmed him at once; and he cried in the deepest contrition:
"It hath displeased the Lord! It is the temptation of Satan!"

Then, uplifting his head, he looked at the sea, and beheld there
Dimly the shadowy form of the Mayflower riding at anchor,
Rocked on the rising tide, and ready to sail on the morrow;
Heard the voices of men through the mist, the rattle of cordage
Thrown on the deck, the shouts of the mate, and the sailors' "Ay, ay, Sir!"
Clear and distinct, but not loud, in the dripping air of the twilight.
Still for a moment he stood, and listened, and stared at the vessel,
Then went hurriedly on, as one who, seeing a phantom,
Stops, then quickens his pace, and follows the beckoning shadow.
"Yes, it is plain to me now," he murmured; "the hand of the Lord is
Leading me out of the land of darkness, the bondage of error,
Through the sea, that shall lift the walls of its waters around me,
Hiding me, cutting me off, from the cruel thoughts that pursue me.
Back will I go o'er the ocean, this dreary land will abandon,
Her whom I may not love, and him whom my heart has offended.
Better to be in my grave in the green old churchyard in England,
Close to my mother's side, and among the dust of my kindred;
Better be dead and forgotten, than living in shame and dishonor;
Sacred and safe and unseen, in the dark of the narrow chamber
With me my secret shall lie, like a buried jewel that glimmers
Bright on the hand that is dust, in the chambers of silence and darkness,—
Yes, as the marriage ring of the great espousal hereafter!"

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344 vision refers to a passage in the Book of Revelation, attached to the name of John the Apostle, brother of James, son of Zebedee

Thus as he spake, he turned, in the strength of his strong resolution,
Leaving behind him the shore, and hurried along in the twilight,
Through the congenial gloom of the forest silent and sombre,
Till he beheld the lights in the seven houses of Plymouth,
Shining like seven stars in the dusk and mist of the evening.
Soon he entered his door, and found the redoubtable Captain
Sitting alone, and absorbed in the martial pages of Caesar,
Fighting some great campaign in Hainault or Brabant or Flanders.
"Long have you been on your errand," he said with a cheery demeanor,
Even as one who is waiting an answer, and fears not the issue.
"Not far off is the house, although the woods are between us;
But you have lingered so long, that while you were going and coming
I have fought ten battles and sacked and demolished a city.
Come, sit down, and in order relate to me all that has happened."

Then John Alden spake, and related the wondrous adventure,
From beginning to end, minutely, just as it happened;
How he had seen Priscilla, and how he had sped in his courtship,
Only smoothing a little, and softening down her refusal.
But when he came at length to the words Priscilla had spoken,
Words so tender and cruel: "Why don't you speak for yourself, John?"
Up leaped the Captain of Plymouth, and stamped on the floor, till his armor
Clanged on the wall, where it hung, with a sound of sinister omen.
All his pent-up wrath burst forth in a sudden explosion,
E'en as a hand-grenade, that scatters destruction around it.
Wildly he shouted, and loud: "John Alden! you have betrayed me!
Me, Miles Standish, your friend! have supplanted, defrauded, betrayed me!
One of my ancestors ran his sword through the heart of Wat Tyler;
Who shall prevent me from running my own through the heart of a traitor?
Yours is the greater treason, for yours is a treason to friendship!
You, who lived under my roof, whom I cherished and loved as a brother;
You, who have fed at my board, and drunk at my cup, to whose keeping
I have intrusted my honor, my thoughts the most sacred and secret,—
You too, Brutus! ah woe to the name of friendship hereafter!
Brutus was Caesar's friend, and you were mine, but henceforward
Let there be nothing between us save war, and implacable hatred!"

So spake the Captain of Plymouth, and strode about in the chamber,
Chafing and choking with rage; like cords were the veins on his temples.
But in the midst of his anger a man appeared at the doorway,
Bringing in uttermost haste a message of urgent importance,
Rumors of danger and war and hostile incursions of Indians!
Straightway the Captain paused, and without further question or parley,
Took from the nail on the wall his sword with its scabbard of iron,
Buckled the belt round his waist, and, frowning fiercely, departed.
Alden was left alone. He heard the clank of the scabbard
Growing fainter and fainter, and dying away in the distance.
Then he arose from his seat, and looked forth into the darkness,
Felt the cool air blow on his cheek, that was hot with the insult,

415 Wat Tyler (?-1381), leader of the Peasants' Revolt in England

Lifted his eyes to the heavens, and, folding his hands as in childhood,
Prayed in the silence of night to the Father who seeth in secret.

Meanwhile the choleric Captain strode wrathful away to the council,
Found it already assembled, impatiently waiting his coming;
Men in the middle of life, austere and grave in deportment,
Only one of them old, the hill that was nearest to heaven,
Covered with snow, but erect, the excellent Elder of Plymouth.
God had sifted three kingdoms to find the wheat for this planting,
Then had sifted the wheat, as the living seed of a nation;
So say the chronicles old, and such is the faith of the people!
Near them was standing an Indian, in attitude stern and defiant,
Naked down to the waist, and grim and ferocious in aspect;
While on the table before them was lying unopened a Bible,
Ponderous, bound in leather, brass-studded, printed in Holland,
And beside it outstretched the skin of a rattlesnake glittered,
Filled, like a quiver, with arrows; a signal and challenge of warfare,
Brought by the Indian, and speaking with arrowy tongues of defiance.
This Miles Standish beheld, as he entered, and heard them debating
What were an answer befitting the hostile message and menace,
Talking of this and of that, contriving, suggesting, objecting;
One voice only for peace, and that the voice of the Elder,
Judging it wise and well that some at least were converted,
Rather than any were slain, for this was but Christian behavior!
Then out spake Miles Standish, the stalwart Captain of Plymouth,
Muttering deep in his throat, for his voice was husky with anger,
"What! do you mean to make war with milk and the water of roses?
Is it to shoot red squirrels you have your howitzer planted
There on the roof of the church, or is it to shoot red devils?
Truly the only tongue that is understood by a savage
Must be the tongue of fire that speaks from the mouth of the cannon!"
Thereupon answered and said the excellent Elder of Plymouth,
Somewhat amazed and alarmed at this irreverent language:
"Not so thought St. Paul, nor yet the other Apostles;
Not from the cannon's mouth were the tongues of fire they spake with!"
But unheeded fell this mild rebuke on the Captain,
Who had advanced to the table, and thus continued discoursing:
"Leave this matter to me, for to me by right it pertaineth.
War is a terrible trade; but in the cause that is righteous,
Sweet is the smell of powder; and thus I answer the challenge!"

Then from the rattlesnake's skin, with a sudden, contemptuous gesture,
Jerking the Indian arrows, he filled it with powder and bullets
Full to the very jaws, and handed it back to the savage,
Saying, in thundering tones: "Here, take it! this is your answer!"
Silently out of the room then glided the glistening savage,
Bearing the serpent's skin, and seeming himself like a serpent,
Winding his sinuous way in the dark to the depths of the forest.

V

THE SAILING OF THE MAYFLOWER

Just in the gray of the dawn, as the mists uprose from the meadows,
There was a stir and a sound in the slumbering village of Plymouth;

Clanging and clicking of arms, and the order imperative, "Forward!"
Given in tone suppressed, a tramp of feet, and then silence.
Figures ten, in the mist, marched slowly out of the village.
Standish the stalwart it was, with eight of his valorous army,
Led by their Indian guide, by Hobomok, friend of the white men,
Northward marching to quell the sudden revolt of the savage.
Giants they seemed in the mist, or the mighty men of King David;
Giants in heart they were, who believed in God and the Bible,—
Ay, who believed in the smiting of Midianites and Philistines.
Over them gleamed far off the crimson banners of morning;
Under them loud on the sands, the serried billows, advancing,
Fired along the line, and in regular order retreated.

Many a mile had they marched, when at length the village of Plymouth
Woke from its sleep, and arose, intent on its manifold labors.
Sweet was the air and soft; and slowly the smoke from the chimneys
Rose over roofs of thatch, and pointed steadily eastward;
Men came forth from the doors and paused and talked of the weather,
Said that the wind had changed, and was blowing fair for the Mayflower;
Talked of their Captain's departure, and all the dangers that menaced,
He being gone, the town, and what should be done in his absence.
Merrily sang the birds, and the tender voices of women
Consecrated with hymns the common cares of the household.
Out of the sea rose the sun, and the billows rejoiced at his coming;
Beautiful were his feet on the purple tops of the mountains;
Beautiful on the sails of the Mayflower riding at anchor,
Battered and blackened and worn by all the storms of the winter.
Loosely against her masts was hanging and flapping her canvas,
Rent by so many gales, and patched by the hands of the sailors.
Suddenly from her side, as the sun rose over the ocean,
Darted a puff of smoke, and floated seaward; anon rang
Loud over field and forest the cannon's roar, and the echoes
Heard and repeated the sound, the signal-gun of departure!
Ah! but with louder echoes replied the hearts of the people!
Meekly, in voices subdued, the chapter was read from the Bible,
Meekly the prayer was begun, but ended in fervent entreaty!
Then from their houses in haste came forth the Pilgrims of Plymouth,
Men and women and children, all hurrying down to the sea-shore,
Eager, with tearful eyes, to say farewell to the Mayflower,
Homeward bound o'er the sea, and leaving them here in the desert.

Foremost among them was Alden. All night he had lain without slumber,
Turning and tossing about in the heat and unrest of his fever.
He had beheld Miles Standish, who came back late from the council,
Stalking into the room, and heard him mutter and murmur,
Sometimes it seemed a prayer, and sometimes it sounded like swearing,
Once he had come to the bed, and stood there a moment in silence;
Then he had turned away, and said: "I will not awake him;
Let him sleep on, it is best; for what is the use of more talking!"
Then he extinguished the light, and threw himself down on his pallet,
Dressed as he was, and ready to start at the break of the morning,—

Covered himself with the cloak he had worn in his campaigns in Flanders,—
Slept as a soldier sleeps in his bivouac, ready for action.
But with the dawn he arose; in the twilight Alden beheld him
Put on his corselet of steel, and all the rest of his armor,
Buckle about his waist his trusty blade of Damascus,
Take from the corner his musket, and so stride out of the chamber.
Often the heart of the youth had burned and yearned to embrace him,
Often his lips had essayed to speak, imploring for pardon;
All the old friendship came back, with its tender and grateful emotions;
But his pride overmastered the nobler nature within him,—
Pride, and the sense of his wrong, and the burning fire of the insult.
So he beheld his friend departing in anger, but spake not,
Saw him go forth to danger, perhaps to death, and he spake not!
Then he arose from his bed, and heard what the people were saying,
Joined in the talk at the door, with Stephen and Richard and Gilbert,
Joined in the morning prayer, and in the reading of Scripture,
And, with the others, in haste went hurrying down to the sea-shore,
Down to the Plymouth Rock, that had been to their feet as a doorstep
Into a world unknown,—the corner-stone of a nation!

There with his boat was the Master, already a little impatient
Lest he should lose the tide, or the wind might shift to the eastward,
Square-built, hearty, and strong, with an odor of ocean about him,
Speaking with this one and that, and cramming letters and parcels
Into his pockets capacious, and messages mingled together
Into his narrow brain, till at last he was wholly bewildered.
Nearer the boat stood Alden, with one foot placed on the gunwale,
One still firm on the rock, and talking at times with the sailors,
Seated erect on the thwarts, all ready and eager for starting.
He too was eager to go, and thus put an end to his anguish,
Thinking to fly from despair, that swifter than keel is or canvas,
Thinking to drown in the sea the ghost that would rise and pursue him.
But as he gazed on the crowd, he beheld the form of Priscilla
Standing dejected among them, unconscious of all that was passing.
Fixed were her eyes upon his, as if she divined his intention,
Fixed with a look so sad, so reproachful, imploring, and patient,
That with a sudden revulsion his heart recoiled from its purpose,
As from the verge of a crag, where one step more is destruction.
Strange is the heart of man, with its quick, mysterious instincts!
Strange is the life of man, and fatal or fated are moments,
Whereupon turn, as on hinges, the gates of the wall adamantine!
"Here I remain!" he exclaimed, as he looked at the heavens above him,
Thanking the Lord whose breath had scattered the mist and the madness,
Wherein, blind and lost, to death he was staggering headlong.
"Yonder snow-white cloud, that floats in the ether above me,
Seems like a hand that is pointing and beckoning over the ocean.
There is another hand, that is not so spectral and ghost-like,
Holding me, drawing me back, and clasping mine for protection.
Float, O hand of cloud, and vanish away in the ether!
Roll thyself up like a fist, to threaten and daunt me; I heed not
Either your warning or menace, or any omen of evil!

There is no land so sacred, no air so pure and so wholesome,
As is the air she breathes, and the soil that is pressed by her footsteps.
Here for her sake will I stay, and like an invisible presence
Hover around her forever, protecting, supporting her weakness;
Yes! as my foot was the first that stepped on this rock at the landing,
So, with the blessing of God, shall it be the last at the leaving!"

Meanwhile the Master alert, but with dignified air and important,
Scanning with watchful eye the tide and the wind and the weather,
Walked about on the sands, and the people crowded around him
Saying a few last words, and enforcing his careful remembrance.
Then, taking each by the hand, as if he were grasping a tiller,
Into the boat he sprang, and in haste shoved off to his vessel,
Glad in his heart to get rid of all this worry and flurry,
Glad to be gone from a land of sand and sickness and sorrow,
Short allowance of victual, and plenty of nothing but Gospel!
Lost in the sound of the oars was the last farewell of the Pilgrims.
O strong hearts and true! not one went back in the Mayflower!
No, not one looked back, who had set his hand to this ploughing!

Soon were heard on board the shouts and songs of the sailors
Heaving the windlass round, and hoisting the ponderous anchor.
Then the yards were braced, and all sails set to the west-wind,
Blowing steady and strong; and the Mayflower sailed from the harbor,
Rounded the point of the Gurnet, and leaving far to the southward
Island and cape of sand, and the Field of the First Encounter,
Took the wind on her quarter, and stood for the open Atlantic,
Borne on the sand of the sea, and the swelling hearts of the Pilgrims.

Long in silence they watched the receding sail of the vessel,
Much endeared to them all, as something living and human;
Then, as if filled with the spirit, and wrapt in a vision prophetic,
Baring his hoary head, the excellent Elder of Plymouth
Said, "Let us pray!" and they prayed, and thanked the Lord and took courage.
Mournfully sobbed the waves at the base of the rock, and above them
Bowed and whispered the wheat on the hill of death, and their kindred
Seemed to awake in their graves, and to join in the prayer that they uttered.
Sun-illumined and white, on the eastern verge of the ocean
Gleamed the departing sail, like a marble slab in a grave-yard;
Buried beneath it lay forever all hope of escaping.
Lo! as they turned to depart, they saw the form of an Indian,
Watching them from the hill; but while they spake with each other,
Pointing with outstretched hands, and saying, "Look!" he had vanished.
So they returned to their homes; but Alden lingered a little,
Musing alone on the shore, and watching the wash of the billows
Round the base of the rock, and the sparkle and flash of the sunshine,
Like the spirit of God, moving visibly over the waters.

VI

PRISCILLA

Thus for a while he stood, and mused by the shore of the ocean,

Thinking of many things, and most of all of Priscilla;
And as if thought had the power to draw to itself, like the loadstone,
Whatsoever it touches, by subtile laws of its nature,
Lo! as he turned to depart, Priscilla was standing beside him.

"Are you so much offended, you will not speak to me?" said she.
"Am I so much to blame, that yesterday, when you were pleading
Warmly the cause of another, my heart, impulsive and wayward,
Pleaded your own, and spake out, forgetful perhaps of decorum?
Certainly you can forgive me for speaking so frankly, for saying
What I ought not to have said, yet now I can never unsay it;
For there are moments in life, when the heart is so full of emotion,
That if by chance it be shaken, or into its depth like a pebble
Drops some careless word, it overflows, and its secret
Spilt on the ground like water, can never be gathered together.
Yesterday I was shocked, when I heard you speak of Miles Standish,
Praising his virtues, transforming his very defects into virtues,
Praising his courage and strength, and even his fighting in Flanders,
As if by fighting alone you could win the heart of a woman,
Quite overlooking yourself and the rest, in exalting your hero.
Therefore I spake as I did, by an irresistible impulse.
You will forgive me, I hope, for the sake of the friendship between us,
Which is too true and too sacred to be so easily broken!"
Thereupon answered John Alden, the scholar, the friend of Miles Standish:
"I was not angry with you, with myself alone I was angry,
Seeing how badly I managed the matter I had in my keeping."
"No!" interrupted the maiden, with answer prompt and decisive;
"No; you were angry with me, for speaking so frankly and freely.
It was wrong, I acknowledge; for it is the fate of a woman
Long to be patient and silent, to wait like a ghost that is speechless,
Till some questioning voice dissolves the spell of its silence.
Hence is the inner life of so many suffering women
Sunless and silent and deep, like subterranean rivers
Running through caverns of darkness, unheard, unseen, and unfruitful,
Chafing their channels of stone, with endless and profitless murmurs."
Thereupon answered John Alden, the young man, the lover of women:
"Heaven forbid it, Priscilla; and truly they seem to me always
More like the beautiful rivers that watered the garden of Eden,
More like the river Euphrates, through deserts of Havilah flowing,
Filling the land with delight, and memories sweet of the garden!"
"Ah, by these words, I can see," again interrupted the maiden,
"How very little you prize me, or care for what I am saying.
When from the depths of my heart, in pain and with secret misgiving,
Frankly I speak to you, asking for sympathy only and kindness,
Straightway you take up my words, that are plain and direct and in earnest,
Turn them away from their meaning, and answer with flattering phrases.
This is not right, is not just, is not true to the best that is in you;
For I know and esteem you, and feel that your nature is noble,
Lifting mine up to a higher, a more ethereal level.
Therefore I value your friendship, and feel it perhaps the more keenly
If you say aught that implies I am only as one among many,

If you make use of those common and complimentary phrases
Most men think so fine, in dealing and speaking with women,
But which women reject as insipid, if not as insulting."

Mute and amazed was Alden; and listened and looked at Priscilla,
Thinking he never had seen her more fair, more divine in her beauty.
He who but yesterday pleaded so glibly the cause of another,
Stood there embarrased and silent, and seeking in vain for an answer.
So the maiden went on, and little divined or imagined
What was at work in his heart, that made him so awkward and speechless.
"Let us, then, be what we are, and speak what we think, and in all things
Keep ourselves loyal to truth, and the sacred professions of friendship.
It is no secret I tell you, nor am I ashamed to declare it:
I have liked to be with you, to see you, to speak with you always.
So I was hurt at your words, and a little affronted to hear you
Urge me to marry your friend, though he were the Captain Miles Standish.
For I must tell you the truth: much more to me is your friendship
Than all the love he could give, were he twice the hero you think him."
Then she extended her hand, and Alden, who eagerly grasped it,
Felt all the wounds in his heart, that were aching and bleeding so sorely,
Healed by the touch of that hand, and he said, with a voice full of feeling:
"Yes, we must ever be friends; and of all who offer you friendship
Let me be ever the first, the truest, the nearest and dearest!"

Casting a farewell look at the glimmering sail of the Mayflower,
Distant, but still in sight, and sinking below the horizon,
Homeward together they walked, with a strange, indefinite feeling,
That all the rest had departed and left them alone in the desert.
But, as they went through the fields in the blessing and smile of the sunshine,
Lighter grew their hearts, and Priscilla said very archly:
"Now that our terrible Captain has gone in pursuit of the Indians,
Where he is happier far than he would be commanding a household,
You may speak boldly, and tell me of all that happened between you,
When you returned last night, and said how ungrateful you found me."
Thereupon answered John Alden, and told her the whole of the story,—
Told her his own despair, and the direful wrath of Miles Standish.
Whereat the maiden smiled, and said between laughing and earnest,
"He is a little chimney, and heated hot in a moment!"
But as he gently rebuked her, and told her how he had suffered,—
How he had even determined to sail that day in the Mayflower,
And had remained for her sake, on hearing the dangers that threatened,—
All her manner was changed, and she said with a faltering accent,
"Truly I thank you for this: how good you have been to me always!"

Thus, as a pilgrim devout, who toward Jerusalem journeys,
Taking three steps in advance, and one reluctantly backward,
Urged by importunate zeal, and withheld by pangs of contrition;
Slowly but steadily onward, receding yet ever advancing,
Journeyed this Puritan youth to the Holy Land of his longings,
Urged by the fervor of love, and withheld by remorseful misgivings.

VII

THE MARCH OF MILES STANDISH

Meanwhile the stalwart Miles Standish was marching steadily northward,
Winding through forest and swamp, and along the trend of the seashore,
All day long, with hardly a halt, the fire of his anger
Burning and crackling within, and the sulphurous odor of powder
Seeming more sweet to his nostrils than all the scents of the forest.
Silent and moody he went, and much he revolved his discomfort;
He who was used to success, and to easy victories always,
Thus to be flouted, rejected, and laughed to scorn by a maiden,
Thus to be mocked and betrayed by the friend whom most he had trusted!
Ah! 't was too much to be borne, and he fretted and chafed in his armor!

"I alone am to blame," he muttered, "for mine was the folly.
What has a rough old soldier, grown grim and gray in the harness,
Used to the camp and its ways, to do with the wooing of maidens?
'T was but a dream,—let it pass,—let it vanish like so many others!
What I thought was a flower, is only a weed, and is worthless;
Out of my heart will I pluck it, and throw it away, and henceforward
Be but a fighter of battles, a lover and wooer of dangers!"
Thus he revolved in his mind his sorry defeat and discomfort,
While he was marching by day or lying at night in the forest,
Looking up at the trees, and the constellations beyond them.

After a three days' march he came to an Indian encampment
Pitched on the edge of a meadow, between the sea and the forest;
Women at work by the tents, and warriors, horrid with war-paint,
Seated about a fire, and smoking and talking together;
Who, when they saw from afar the sudden approach of the white men,
Saw the flash of the sun on breastplate and sabre and musket,
Straightway leaped to their feet, and two, from among them advancing,
Came to parley with Standish, and offer him furs as a present,
Friendship was in their looks, but in their hearts there was hatred.
Braves of the tribe were these, and brothers, gigantic in stature,
Huge as Goliath of Gath, or the terrible Og, king of Bashan;
One was Pecksuot named, and the other was called Wattawamat.
Round their necks were suspended their knives in scabbards of wampum,
Two-edged, trenchant knives, with points as sharp as a needle.
Other arms had they none, for they were cunning and crafty.
"Welcome, English!" they said,—these words they had learned from the traders
Touching at times on the coast, to barter and chaffer for peltries.
Then in their native tongue they began to parley with Standish,
Through his guide and interpreter, Hobomok, friend of the white man,
Begging for blankets and knives, but mostly for muskets and powder,
Kept by the white man, they said, concealed, with the plague, in his cellars,
Ready to be let loose, and destroy his brother the red man!
But when Standish refused, and said he would give them the Bible,
Suddenly changing their tone, they began to boast and to bluster.
Then Wattawamat advanced with a stride in front of the other,

And, with a lofty demeanor, thus vauntingly spake to the Captain:
"Now Wattawamat can see, by the fiery eyes of the Captain,
Angry is he in his heart; but the heart of the brave Wattawamat
Is not afraid at the sight. He was not born of a woman,
But on a mountain at night, from an oak-tree riven by lightning,
Forth he sprang at a bound, with all his weapons about him,
Shouting, 'Who is there here to fight with the brave Wattawamat?' "
Then he unsheathed his knife, and, whetting the blade on his left hand,
Held it aloft and displayed a woman's face on the handle;
Saying, with bitter expression and look of sinister meaning:
"I have another at home, with the face of a man on the handle;
By and by they shall marry; and there will be plenty of children!"

Then stood Pecksuot forth, self-vaunting, insulting Miles Standish:
While with his fingers he patted the knife that hung at his bosom,
Drawing it half from its sheath, and plunging it back, as he muttered,
"By and by it shall see; it shall eat; ah, ha! but shall speak not!
This is the mighty Captain the white men have sent to destroy us!
He is a little man: let him go and work with the women!"

Meanwhile Standish had noted the faces and figures of Indians
Peeping and creeping about from bush to tree in the forest,
Feigning to look for game, with arrows set on their bow-strings,
Drawing about him still closer and closer the net of their ambush.
But undaunted he stood, and dissembled and treated them smoothly;
So the old chronicles say, that were writ in the days of the fathers.
But when he heard their defiance, the boast, the taunt, and the insult,
All the hot blood of his race, of Sir Hugh and of Thurston de Standish,
Boiled and beat in his heart, and swelled in the veins of his temples.
Headlong he leaped on the boaster, and, snatching his knife from its scabbard,
Plunged it into his heart, and, reeling backward, the savage
Fell with his face to the sky, and a fiendlike fierceness upon it.
Straight there arose from the forest the awful sound of the war-whoop,
And, like a flurry of snow on the whistling wind of December,
Swift and sudden and keen came a flight of feathery arrows.
Then came a cloud of smoke, and out of the cloud came the lightning,
Out of the lightning thunder; and death unseen ran before it.
Frightened the savages fled for shelter in swamp and in thicket,
Hotly pursued and beset; but their sachem, the brave Wattawamat,
Fled not; he was dead. Unswerving and swift had a bullet
Passed through his brain, and he fell with both hands clutching the greensward,
Seeming in death to hold back from his foe the land of his fathers.

There on the flowers of the meadow the warriors lay, and above them,
Silent, with folded arms, stood Hobomok, friend of the white man.
Smiling at length he exclaimed to the stalwart Captain of Plymouth:—
"Pecksuot bragged very loud, of his courage, his strength, and his stature,—
Mocked the great Captain, and called him a little man; but I see now
Big enough have you been to lay him speechless before you!"

Thus the first battle was fought and won by the stalwart Miles Standish.
When the tidings thereof were brought to the village of Plymouth,
And as a trophy of war the head of the brave Wattawamat
Scowled from the roof of the fort, which at once was a church and a fortress,
All who beheld it rejoiced, and praised the Lord, and took courage.
Only Priscilla averted her face from this spectre of terror,
Thanking God in her heart that she had not married Miles Standish;
Shrinking, fearing almost, lest, coming home from his battles,
He should lay claim to her hand, as the prize and reward of his valor.

VIII

THE SPINNING-WHEEL

Month after month passed away, and in Autumn the ships of the merchants
Came with kindred and friends, with cattle and corn for the Pilgrims.
All in the village was peace; the men were intent on their labors,
Busy with hewing and building, with garden-plot and with merestead,
Busy with breaking the glebe, and mowing the grass in the meadows,
Searching the sea for its fish, and hunting the deer in the forest.
All in the village was peace; but at times the rumor of warfare
Filled the air with alarm, and the apprehension of danger.
Bravely the stalwart Standish was scouring the land with his forces,
Waxing valiant in fight and defeating the alien armies,
Till his name had become a sound of fear to the nations.
Anger was still in his heart, but at times the remorse and contrition
Which in all noble natures succeed the passionate outbreak,
Came like a rising tide, that encounters the rush of a river,
Staying its current awhile, but making it bitter and brackish.

Meanwhile Alden at home had built him a new habitation,
Solid, substantial, of timber rough-hewn from the firs of the forest.
Wooden-barred was the door, and the roof was covered with rushes;
Latticed the windows were, and the window-panes were of paper,
Oiled to admit the light, while wind and rain were excluded.
There too he dug a well, and around it planted an orchard:
Still may be seen to this day some trace of the well and the orchard.
Close to the house was the stall, where, safe and secure from annoyance,
Raghorn, the snow-white bull, that had fallen to Alden's allotment
In the division of cattle, might ruminate in the night-time
Over the pastures he cropped, made fragrant by sweet pennyroyal.

Oft when his labor was finished, with eager feet would the dreamer
Follow the pathway that ran through the woods to the house of Priscilla,
Led by illusions romantic and subtile deceptions of fancy,
Pleasure disguised as duty, and love in the semblance of friendship.
Ever of her he thought, when he fashioned the walls of his dwelling;
Ever of her he thought, when he delved in the soil of his garden;
Ever of her he thought, when he read in his Bible on Sunday
Praise of the virtuous woman, as she is described in the Proverbs,—
How the heart of her husband doth safely trust in her always,

828 merestead, building site

How all the days of her life she will do him good, and not evil,
How she seeketh the wool and the flax and worketh with gladness,
How she layeth her hand to the spindle and holdeth the distaff,
How she is not afraid of the snow for herself or her household,
Knowing her household are clothed with the scarlet cloth of her weaving!

So as she sat at her wheel one afternoon in the Autumn,
Alden, who opposite sat, and was watching her dexterous fingers,
As if the thread she was spinning were that of his life and his fortune,
After a pause in their talk, thus spake to the sound of the spindle.
"Truly, Priscilla," he said, "when I see you spinning and spinning,
Never idle a moment, but thrifty and thoughtful of others,
Suddenly you are transformed, are visibly changed in a moment;
You are no longer Priscilla, but Bertha the Beautiful Spinner."
Here the light foot on the treadle grew swifter and swifter; the spindle
Uttered an angry snarl, and the thread snapped short in her fingers;
While the impetuous speaker, not heeding the mischief, continued:
"You are the beautiful Bertha, the spinner, the queen of Helvetia;
She whose story I read at a stall in the streets of Southampton,
Who, as she rode on her palfrey, o'er valley and meadow and mountain,
Ever was spinning her thread from a distaff fixed to her saddle.
She was so thrifty and good, that her name passed into a proverb.
So shall it be with your own, when the spinning-wheel shall no longer
Hum in the house of the farmer, and fill its chambers with music.
Then shall the mothers, reproving, relate how it was in their childhood,
Praising the good old times, and the days of Priscilla the spinner!"
Straight uprose from her wheel the beautiful Puritan maiden,
Pleased with the praise of her thrift from him whose praise was the sweetest,
Drew from the reel on the table a snowy skein of her spinning,
Thus making answer, meanwhile, to the flattering phrases of Alden:
"Come, you must not be idle; if I am a pattern for housewives,
Show yourself equally worthy of being the model of husbands.
Hold this skein on your hands, while I wind it, ready for knitting;
Then who knows but hereafter, when fashions have changed and the manners,
Fathers may talk to their sons of the good old times of John Alden!"
Thus, with a jest and a laugh, the skein on his hands she adjusted,
He sitting awkwardly there, with his arms extended before him,
She standing graceful, erect, and winding the thread from his fingers,
Sometimes chiding a little his clumsy manner of holding,
Sometimes touching his hands, as she disentangled expertly
Twist or knot in the yarn, unawares—for how could she help it?—
Sending electrical thrills through every nerve in his body.

Lo! in the midst of this scene, a breathless messenger entered,
Bringing in hurry and heat the terrible news from the village.
Yes; Miles Standish was dead!—an Indian had brought them the tidings,—
Slain by a poisoned arrow, shot down in the front of the battle,
Into an ambush beguiled, cut off with the whole of his forces;

All the town would be burned, and all the people be murdered!
Such were the tidings of evil that burst on the hearts of the hearers.
Silent and statue-like stood Priscilla, her face looking backward
Still at the face of the speaker, her arms uplifted in horror;
But John Alden, upstarting, as if the barb of the arrow
Piercing the heart of his friend had struck his own, and had sundered
Once and forever the bonds that held him bound as a captive
Wild with excess of sensation, the awful delight of his freedom,
Mingled with pain and regret, unconscious of what he was doing,
Clasped, almost with a groan, the motionless form of Priscilla,
Pressing her close to his heart, as forever his own, and exclaiming:
"Those whom the Lord hath united, let no man put them asunder!"

Even as rivulets twain, from distant and separate sources,
Seeing each other afar, as they leap from the rocks, and pursuing
Each one its devious path, but drawing nearer and nearer,
Rush together at last, at their trysting-place in the forest;
So these lives that had run thus far in separate channels,
Coming in sight of each other, then swerving and flowing asunder,
Parted by barriers strong, but drawing nearer and nearer,
Rushed together at last, and one was lost in the other.

IX

THE WEDDING PARTY

Forth from the curtain of clouds, from the tent of purple and scarlet,
Issued the sun, the great High-Priest, in his garments resplendent,
Holiness unto the Lord, in letters of light, on his forehead,
Round the hem of his robe the golden bells and pomegranates.
Blessing the world he came, and the bars of vapor beneath him
Gleamed like a grate of brass, and the sea at his feet was a laver!

This was the wedding morn of Priscilla the Puritan maiden.
Friends were assembled together; the Elder and Magistrate also
Graced the scene with their presence, and stood like the Law and the Gospel,
One with the sanction of earth and one with the blessing of heaven.
Simple and brief was the wedding, as that of Ruth and of Boaz.
Softly the youth and the maiden repeated the words of betrothal,
Taking each other for husband and wife in the Magistrate's presence,
After the Puritan way, and the laudable custom of Holland.
Fervently then, and devoutly, the excellent Elder of Plymouth
Prayed for the hearth and the home, that were founded that day in affection,
Speaking of life and of death, and imploring Divine benedictions.

Lo! when the service was ended, a form appeared on the threshold,
Clad in armor of steel, a sombre and sorrowful figure!
Why does the bridegroom start and stare at the strange apparition?
Why does the bride turn pale, and hide her face on his shoulder?
Is it a phantom of air,—a bodiless, spectral illusion?
Is it a ghost from the grave, that has come to forbid the betrothal?

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936 wedding, as recorded in the Book of Ruth • 939 After . . . way. Bradford, in his History, speaks of the Puritan belief that a marriage should be performed by a magistrate, "as being a civill thing . . . no wher found in the gospell to be layed on the ministers as a part of their office"

Long had it stood there unseen, a guest uninvited, unwelcomed;
Over its clouded eyes there had passed at times an expression
Softening the gloom and revealing the warm heart hidden beneath them,
As when across the sky the driving rack of the rain-cloud
Grows for a moment thin, and betrays the sun by its brightness.
Once it had lifted its hand, and moved its lips, but was silent,
As if an iron will had mastered the fleeting intention.
But when were ended the troth and the prayer and the last benediction,
Into the room it strode, and the people beheld with amazement
Bodily there in his armor Miles Standish, the Captain of Plymouth!
Grasping the bridegroom's hand, he said with emotion, "Forgive me!
I have been angry and hurt,—too long have I cherished the feeling;
I have been cruel and hard, but now, thank God! it is ended.
Mine is the same hot blood that leaped in the veins of Hugh Standish,
Sensitive, swift to resent, but as swift in atoning for error.
Never so much as now was Miles Standish the friend of John Alden."
Thereupon answered the bridegroom: "Let all be forgotten between us,—
All save the dear, old friendship, and that shall grow older and dearer!"
Then the Captain advanced, and, bowing, saluted Priscilla,
Gravely, and after the manner of old-fashioned gentry in England,
Something of camp and of court, of town and of country, commingled,
Wishing her joy of her wedding, and loudly lauding her husband.
Then he said with a smile: "I should have remembered the adage,—
If you would be well served, you must serve yourself; and moreover,
No man can gather cherries in Kent at the season of Christmas!"

Great was the people's amazement, and greater yet their rejoicing,
Thus to behold once more the sunburnt face of their Captain,
Whom they had mourned as dead; and they gathered and crowded about him,
Eager to see him and hear him, forgetful of bride and of bridegroom,
Questioning, answering, laughing, and each interrupting the other,
Till the good Captain declared, being quite overpowered and bewildered,
He had rather by far break into an Indian encampment,
Than come again to a wedding to which he had not been invited.

Meanwhile the bridegroom went forth and stood with the bride at the doorway,
Breathing the perfumed air of that warm and beautiful morning.
Touched with autumnal tints, but lonely and sad in the sunshine,
Lay extended before them the land of toil and privation;
There were the graves of the dead, and the barren waste of the sea-shore,
There the familiar fields, the groves of pine, and the meadows;
But to their eyes transfigured, it seemed as the Garden of Eden,
Filled with the presence of God, whose voice was the sound of the ocean.

Soon was their vision disturbed by the noise and stir of departure,
Friends coming forth from the house, and impatient of longer delaying,
Each with his plan for the day, and the work that was left uncompleted.
Then from a stall near at hand, amid exclamations of wonder,
Alden the thoughtful, the careful, so happy, so proud of Priscilla,

Brought out his snow-white bull, obeying the hand of its master,
Led by a cord that was tied to an iron ring in its nostrils,
Covered with crimson cloth, and a cushion placed for a saddle.
She should not walk, he said, through the dust and heat of the noonday;
Nay, she should ride like a queen, not plod along like a peasant.
Somewhat alarmed at first, but reassured by the others,
Placing her hand on the cushion, her foot in the hand of her husband,
Gayly, with joyous laugh, Priscilla mounted her palfrey.
"Nothing is wanting now," he said with a smile, "but the distaff;
Then you would be in truth my queen, my beautiful Bertha!"

Onward the bridal procession now moved to their new habitation,
Happy husband and wife, and friends conversing together.
Pleasantly murmured the brook, as they crossed the ford in the forest,
Pleased with the image that passed, like a dream of love through its bosom,
Tremulous, floating in air, o'er the depths of the azure abysses.
Down through the golden leaves the sun was pouring his splendors,
Gleaming on purple grapes, that, from branches above them suspended,
Mingled their odorous breath with the balm of the pine and the fir-tree,
Wild and sweet as the clusters that grew in the valley of Eshcol.
Like a picture it seemed of the primitive, pastoral ages,
Fresh with the youth of the world, and recalling Rebecca and Isaac,
Old and yet ever new, and simple and beautiful always,
Love immortal and young in the endless succession of lovers.
So through the Plymouth woods passed onward the bridal procession.

1857-1858•1858

Divina Commedia

The six sonnets under this title prefaced the three parts of Longfellow's translation of Dante's masterpiece—I and II, the "Inferno"; III and IV, the "Purgatorio"; and V and VI, the "Paradiso." They at once comment on Dante's poem and reveal what it meant to Longfellow when, in the years of his grief over the death of his second wife, the years, also, of the Civil War, he translated the poem. The pairs of sonnets have appropriateness to the respective sections which they preface—Inferno, Purgatory, and Paradise.

I

Oft have I seen at some cathedral door
A laborer, pausing in the dust and heat,
Lay down his burden, and with reverent feet
Enter, and cross himself, and on the floor
Kneel to repeat his paternoster o'er;
Far off the noises of the world retreat;
The loud vociferations of the street
Become an undistinguishable roar.
So, as I enter here from day to day,
And leave my burden at this minster gate,
Kneeling in prayer, and not ashamed to pray,
The tumult of the time disconsolate
To inarticulate murmurs dies away,
While the eternal ages watch and wait.

1865

II

How strange the sculptures that adorn these towers!
This crowd of statues, in whose folded sleeves
Birds build their nests; while canopied with leaves
Parvis and portal bloom like trellised bowers,
And the vast minster seems a cross of flowers!
But fiends and dragons on the gargoyled eaves

Divina Commedia • 5 paternoster, literally, "Our Father"—the rosary • 10 minster gate, cathedral door • 12 time disconsolate refers to the Civil War • 18 Parvis, the church porch • 20 fiends, a richly allusive reference, literally to the gargoyles in the church, figuratively to man in a world of evil and to the sufferers in the "Inferno"

Watch the dead Christ between the living thieves,
And, underneath, the traitor Judas lowers!
Ah! from what agonies of heart and brain,
What exultations trampling on despair,
What tenderness, what tears, what hate of wrong,
What passionate outcry of a soul in pain,
Uprose this poem of the earth and air,
This medieval miracle of song!

1865

III

I enter, and I see thee in the gloom
Of the long aisles, O poet saturnine!
And strive to make my steps keep pace with thine.
The air is filled with some unknown perfume;
The congregation of the dead make room
For thee to pass; the votive tapers shine;
Like rooks that haunt Ravenna's groves of pine
The hovering echoes fly from tomb to tomb.
From the confessionals I hear arise
Rehearsals of forgotten tragedies,
And lamentations from the crypts below;
And then a voice celestial that begins
With the pathetic words, "Although your sins
As scarlet be," and end with "as the snow."

1866

IV

With snow-white veil and garments as of flame,
She stands before thee, who so long ago
Filled thy young heart with passion and the woe
From which thy song and all its splendors came;
And while with stern rebuke she speaks thy name,
The ice about thy heart melts as the snow
On mountain heights, and in swift overflow
Comes gushing from thy lips in sobs of shame.
Thou makest full confession; and a gleam,
As of the dawn on some dark forest cast,
Seems on thy lifted forehead to increase;
Lethe and Eunoë—the remembered dream
And the forgotten sorrow—bring at last
That perfect pardon which is perfect peace.

1866

V

I lift mine eyes, and all the windows blaze
With forms of Saints and holy men who died,
Here martyred and hereafter glorified;
And the great Rose upon its leaves displays
Christ's Triumph, and the angelic roundelays,
With splendor upon splendor multiplied;
And Beatrice again at Dante's side
No more rebukes, but smiles her words of praise.
And then the organ sounds, and unseen choirs
Sing the old Latin hymns of peace and love
And benedictions of the Holy Ghost;
And the melodious bells among the spires
O'er all the housetops and through heaven above
Proclaim the elevation of the Host!

1867

VI

O star of morning and of liberty!
O bringer of the light, whose splendor shines
Above the darkness of the Apennines,
Forerunner of the day that is to be!
The voices of the city and the sea,
The voices of the mountains and the pines,
Repeat thy song, till the familiar lines
Are footpaths for the thought of Italy!
Thy flame is blown abroad from all the heights,
Through all the nations, and a sound is heard,
As of a mighty wind, and men devout,
Strangers of Rome, and the new proselytes,
In their own language hear the wondrous word,
And many are amazed and many doubt.

1867

Morituri Salutamus

When he was sixty-seven, Longfellow composed this poem for delivery at the fiftieth-anniversary celebration of the

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27 **this poem . . . air,** the "Inferno." Here the poet combines the images of the opening five lines of this sonnet with those describing the "fiends and dragons" • 30 **poet saturnine,** Dante • 35 **Ravenna,** a city in Italy frequently mentioned by Dante • 44 **She,** Beatrice • 54 **Lethe and Eunoë.** In classical mythology the Lethe is the river of forgetfulness and the Eunoë, the river of the memory of good. At the summit of the mountain of Purgatory, Dante drinks from these rivers • 60 **Rose** refers not only to the windows of the cathedral but also to the end of Dante's journey in the "Paradiso," when he sees the Trinity and the Blessed in the form of a rose • 70 **the . . . Host,** the climax of the celebration of the Mass when the Host is lifted high before the congregation • 71 **star,** Dante

Class of 1825, Bowdoin College. The title, which means "We who are about to die salute you," was the legendary cry of gladiators to the emperor as they were about to enter the arena. The poem is said to have been suggested by a painting of the French artist Léon Gérome (1824-1904). Longfellow prefixed the poem with a quotation from Ovid: "Time passes away, we grow old with the quiet years, and the days fly with no delaying check."

"O Caesar, we who are about to die
Salute you!" was the gladiators' cry
In the arena, standing face to face
With death and with the Roman populace.

O ye familiar scenes,—ye groves of pine,
That once were mine and are no longer mine,—
Thou river, widening through the meadows green
To the vast sea, so near and yet unseen,—
Ye halls, in whose seclusion and repose
Phantoms of fame, like exhalations, rose
And vanished,—we who are about to die,
Salute you; earth and air and sea and sky,
And the Imperial Sun that scatters down
His sovereign splendors upon grove and town.

Ye do not answer us! ye do not hear!
We are forgotten; and in your austere
And calm indifference, ye little care
~~Whether we come or go, or whence or where.~~
What passing generations fill these halls,
What passing voices echo from these walls,
Ye heed not; we are only as the blast,
A moment heard, and then forever past.

Not so the teachers who in earlier days
Led our bewildered feet through learning's maze;
They answer us—alas! what have I said?
What greetings come there from the voiceless dead?
What salutation, welcome, or reply?
What pressure from the hands that lifeless lie?
They are no longer here; they all are gone
Into the land of shadows,—all save one.
Honor and reverence, and the good repute
That follows faithful service as its fruit,
Be unto him, whom living we salute.

The great Italian poet, when he made
His dreadful journey to the realms of shade,
Met there the old instructor of his youth,
And cried in tone of pity and of ruth:
"Oh, never from the memory of my heart
Your dear, paternal image shall depart,
Who while on earth, ere yet by death surprised,
Taught me how mortals are immortalized;
How grateful am I for that patient care
All my life long my language shall declare."

Today we make the poet's words our own,
And utter them in plaintive undertone;
Nor to the living only be they said,
But to the other living called the dead,
Whose dear, paternal images appear
Not wrapped in gloom, but roped in sunshine here;
Whose simple lives, complete and without flaw,
Were part and parcel of great Nature's law;
Who said not to their Lord, as if afraid,
"Here is thy talent in a napkin laid,"
But labored in their sphere, as men who live
In the delight that work alone can give.
Peace be to them; eternal peace and rest,
And the fulfillment of the great behest:
"Ye have been faithful over a few things,
Over ten cities shall ye reign as kings."

And ye who fill the places we once filled,
And follow in the furrows that we tilled,
Young men, whose generous hearts are beating high,
We who are old, and are about to die,
Salute you; hail you; take your hands in ours,
And crown you with our welcome as with flowers!
How beautiful is youth! how bright it gleams
With its illusions, aspirations, dreams!
Book of Beginnings, Story without End,
Each maid a heroine, and each man a friend!

Aladdin's Lamp, and Fortunatus' Purse,
That holds the treasures of the universe!

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30 one, Professor A. S. Packard • 36 the old instructor, Brunetto Latini. Lines 38-43 are a translation of a speech in the "Inferno" • 70 Fortunatus' Purse, an inexhaustible purse which, according to an old tale, was given to Fortunatus by Fortune

All possibilities are in its hands,
No danger daunts it, and no foe withstands;
In its sublime audacity of faith,
"Be thou removed," it to the mountain saith,
And with ambitious feet, secure and proud,
Ascends the ladder leaning on the cloud!

As ancient Priam at the Scæan gate
Sat on the walls of Troy in regal state
With the old men, too old and weak to fight,
Chirping like grasshoppers in their delight
To see the embattled hosts, with spear and shield,
Of Trojans and Achaians in the field;
So from the snowy summits of our years
We see you in the plain, as each appears,
And question of you; asking, "Who is he
That towers above the others? Which may be
Atreides, Menelaus, Odysseus,
Ajax the great, or bold Idomeneus?"

Let him not boast who puts his armor on
As he who puts it off, the battle done.
Study yourselves; and most of all note well
Wherein kind Nature meant you to excel.
Not every blossom ripens into fruit;
Minerva, the inventress of the flute,
Flung it aside, when she her face surveyed
Distorted in a fountain as she played;
The unlucky Marsyas found it, and his fate
Was one to make the bravest hesitate.
Write on your doors the saying wise and old,
"Be bold! be bold!" and everywhere, "Be bold;
Be not too bold!" Yet better the excess
Than the defect; better the more than less;
Better like Hector in the field to die,
Than like a perfumed Paris turn and fly.

And now, my classmates; ye remaining few
That number not the half of those we knew,
Ye, against whose familiar names not yet
The fatal asterisk of death is set,
Ye I salute! The horologe of Time
Strikes the half-century with a solemn chime,
And summons us together once again,
The joy of meeting not unmixed with pain.

Where are the others? Voices from the deep
Caverns of darkness answer me: "They sleep!"
I name no names; instinctively I feel
Each at some well-remembered grave will kneel,
And from the inscription wipe the weeds and moss,
For every heart best knoweth its own loss.
I see their scattered gravestones gleaming white
Through the pale dusk of the impending night;
O'er all alike the impartial sunset throws
Its golden lilies mingled with the rose;
We give to each a tender thought, and pass
Out of the graveyards with their tangled grass,
Unto these scenes frequented by our feet
When we were young, and life was fresh and sweet.

What shall I say to you? What can I say
Better than silence is? When I survey
This throng of faces turned to meet my own,
Friendly and fair, and yet to me unknown,
Transformed the very landscape seems to be;
It is the same, yet not the same to me.
So many memories crowd upon my brain,
So many ghosts are in the wooded plain,
I fain would steal away, with noiseless tread,
As from a house where someone lieth dead.
I cannot go;—I pause;—I hesitate;
My feet reluctant linger at the gate;
As one who struggles in a troubled dream
To speak and cannot, to myself I seem.

Vanish the dream! Vanish the idle fears!
Vanish the rolling mists of fifty years!
Whatever time or space may intervene,
I will not be a stranger in this scene.
Here every doubt, all indecision, ends;
Hail, my companions, comrades, classmates, friends!

Ah me! the fifty years since last we met
Seem to me fifty folios bound and set

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78 As ancient Priam . . . . The incident treated in ll. 78-89 occurs in the Iliad, Bk. III • 98 Marsyas, a presumptuous Greek poet who challenged Apollo to a musical contest, lost, and was flayed alive • 104 Hector, a Grecian hero who bravely met his death at the hands of Achilles. For Hector's bravery, and Paris' less admirable activity, see the Iliad, Bks. III and XXII • 109 fatal asterisk, a reference to the custom of indicating which members of a college class have died by marking their names with asterisks

By Time, the great transcriber, on his shelves,
Wherein are written the histories of ourselves.
What tragedies, what comedies, are there;
What joy and grief, what rapture and despair!
What chronicles of triumph and defeat,
Of struggle, and temptation, and retreat!
What records of regrets, and doubts, and fears!
What pages blotted, blistered by our tears!
What lovely landscapes on the margin shine,
What sweet, angelic faces, what divine
And holy images of love and trust,
Undimmed by age, unsoiled by damp or dust!
Whose hand shall dare to open and explore
These volumes, closed and clasped forevermore?
Not mine. With reverential feet I pass;
I hear a voice that cries, "Alas! alas!
Whatever hath been written shall remain,
Nor be erased nor written o'er again;
The unwritten only still belongs to thee:
Take heed, and ponder well what that shall be."

As children frightened by a thunder-cloud
Are reassured if some one reads aloud
A tale of wonder, with enchantment fraught,
Or wild adventure, that diverts their thought,
Let me endeavor with a tale to chase
The gathering shadows of the time and place,
And banish what we all too deeply feel
Wholly to say, or wholly to conceal.

In medieval Rome, I know not where,
There stood an image with its arm in air,
And on its lifted finger, shining clear,
A golden ring with the device, "Strike here!"
Greatly the people wondered, though none guessed
The meaning that these words but half expressed,
Until a learned clerk, who at noonday
With downcast eyes was passing on his way,
Paused, and observed the spot, and marked it well,
Whereon the shadow of the finger fell;

And, coming back at midnight, delved, and found
A secret stairway leading underground.
Down this he passed into a spacious hall,
Lit by a flaming jewel on the wall;
And opposite, in threatening attitude,
With bow and shaft a brazen statue stood.
Upon its forehead, like a coronet,
Were these mysterious words of menace set:
"That which I am, I am; my fatal aim
None can escape, not even yon luminous flame!"

Midway the hall was a fair table placed,
With cloth of gold, and golden cups enchased
With rubies, and the plates and knives were gold,
And gold the bread and viands manifold.
Around it, silent, motionless, and sad,
Were seated gallant knights in armor clad,
And ladies beautiful with plume and zone,
But they were stone, their hearts within were stone;
And the vast hall was filled in every part
With silent crowds, stony in face and heart.

Long at the scene, bewildered and amazed,
The trembling clerk in speechless wonder gazed;
Then from the table, by his greed made bold,
He seized a goblet and a knife of gold,
And suddenly from their seats the guests upsprang,
The vaulted ceiling with loud clamors rang,
The archer sped his arrow, at their call,
Shattering the lambent jewel on the wall,
And all was dark around and overhead;—
Stark on the floor the luckless clerk lay dead.

The writer of this legend then records
Its ghostly application in these words:
The image is the Adversary old,
Whose beckoning finger points to realms of gold;
Our lusts and passions are the downward stair
That leads the soul from a diviner air;
The archer, Death; the flaming jewel, Life;
Terrestrial goods, the goblet and the knife;
The knights and ladies, all whose flesh and bone
By avarice have been hardened into stone;
The clerk, the scholar whom the love of pelf
Tempts from his books and from his nobler self.

The scholar and the world! The endless strife,
The discord in the harmonies of life!

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174 tale, in the famous medieval collection, Gesta Romanorum, Tale CVII

The love of learning, the sequestered nooks,
And all the sweet serenity of books;
The market-place, the eager love of gain,
Whose aim is vanity, and whose end is pain!

But why, you ask me, should this tale be told
To men grown old, or who are growing old?
It is too late! Ah, nothing is too late
Till the tired heart shall cease to palpitate.
Cato learned Greek at eighty; Sophocles
Wrote his grand Œdipus, and Simonides
Bore off the prize of verse from his compeers,
When each had numbered more than fourscore years,
And Theophrastus, at fourscore and ten,
Had but begun his "Characters of Men."
Chaucer, at Woodstock with the nightingales,
At sixty wrote the Canterbury Tales;
Goethe at Weimar, toiling to the last,
Completed Faust when eighty years were past.
These are indeed exceptions; but they show
How far the gulf-stream of our youth may flow
Into the arctic regions of our lives,
Where little else than life itself survives.

As the barometer foretells the storm
While still the skies are clear, the weather warm,
So something in us, as old age draws near,
Betrays the pressure of the atmosphere.
The nimble mercury, ere we are aware,
Descends the elastic ladder of the air;
The telltale blood in artery and vein
Sinks from its higher levels in the brain;
Whatever poet, orator, or sage
May say of it, old age is still old age.
It is the waning, not the crescent moon;
The dusk of evening, not the blaze of noon;
It is not strength, but weakness; not desire,
But its surcease; not the fierce heat of fire,
The burning and consuming element,
But that of ashes and of embers spent,
In which some living sparks we still discern,
Enough to warm, but not enough to burn.

What then? Shall we sit idly down and say
The night hath come; it is no longer day?
The night hath not yet come; we are not quite
Cut off from labor by the failing light;
Something remains for us to do or dare;
Even the oldest tree some fruit may bear;
Not Œdipus Coloneus, or Greek Ode,
Or tales of pilgrims that one morning rode
Out of the gateway of the Tabard Inn,
But other something, would we but begin;
For age is opportunity no less
Than youth itself, though in another dress,
And as the evening twilight fades away
The sky is filled with stars, invisible by day.

1874·1875

Sleep

Lull me to sleep, ye winds, whose fitful sound
  Seems from some faint Æolian harp-string caught;
  Seal up the hundred wakeful eyes of thought
  As Hermes with his lyre in sleep profound
The hundred wakeful eyes of Argus bound;
  For I am weary, and am overwrought
  With too much toil, with too much care distraught,
  And with the iron crown of anguish crowned.
Lay thy soft hand upon my brow and cheek,
  O peaceful Sleep! until from pain released
  I breathe again uninterrupted breath!
Ah, with what subtle meaning did the Greek
  Call thee the lesser mystery at the feast
Whereof the greater mystery is death!

1875

Morituri Salutamus • 240 **Cato,** Cato the Censor (234-149 B.C.) • 240 **Sophocles** (495-405 B.C.) is said to have written **Oedipus at Colonus** shortly before his death • 241 **Simonides** (556-467 B.C.), great Greek lyric poet • 244 **Theophrastus** (382-297 B.C.), author of **Moral Characters** • 246 **Chaucer . . . sixty.** At the time Longfellow wrote, it was thought that Chaucer had been born in 1320. Modern scholars believe that 1340 was nearer the date of his birth • 248 **Goethe** began work on **Faust** in 1773, but the conclusion did not appear until 1833

Sleep • 4 **Hermes,** son of Jupiter and the inventor of the lyre • 5 **Argus,** the hundred-eyed son of Zeus, who had a habit of sleeping with only two eyes at a time. Hermes, by playing wonderful music, put all his eyes to sleep at once and then slew him

Jugurtha

The incident treated here is based on Plutarch's life of Marius, the Roman general. In Plutarch's account Jugurtha, a Numidian king defeated by the Romans, addresses his words to Hercules. But the name of Apollo, the god of manly youth and beauty, of poetry, music, and oracles, and of healing and sudden death, has more poetic associations for modern readers.

How cold are thy baths, Apollo!
Cried the African monarch, the splendid,
As down to his death in the hollow
Dark dungeons of Rome he descended,
Uncrowned, unthroned, unattended;
How cold are thy baths, Apollo!

How cold are thy baths, Apollo!
Cried the Poet, unknown, unbefriended,
As the vision that lured him to follow
With the mist and the darkness blended,
And the dream of his life was ended;
How cold are thy baths, Apollo!

1879·1880

The Tide Rises, the Tide Falls

The tide rises, the tide falls,
The twilight darkens, the curlew calls;
Along the sea-sands damp and brown
The traveller hastens toward the town,
And the tide rises, the tide falls.

Darkness settles on roofs and walls,
But the sea, the sea in the darkness calls;
The little waves, with their soft, white hands,
Efface the footprints in the sands,
And the tide rises, the tide falls.

The morning breaks; the steeds in their stalls
Stamp and neigh, as the hostler calls;
The day returns, but nevermore
Returns the traveller to the shore,
And the tide rises, the tide falls.

1879·1880

Oliver Wendell Holmes

1809 · 1894

"I have always been good company for myself," said Oliver Wendell Holmes. Because he was also good company—almost always—for others, Holmes' chief contribution to our letters probably was the infusion into them of a social grace that, in those days, flourished most notably in Europe. For this reason historians have pointed out that, like the two other famed Cambridge authors, Longfellow and Lowell, in his own unique way Holmes helped adapt European culture to American needs.



It was Holmes who dubbed the social group to which he belonged "Brahmins." A Brahmin is defined in the dictionary as "a Hindu of the highest, or priestly, caste." That Holmes belonged to the highest caste in New England there can be no doubt. His birth and his rearing were in accord with the tradition of his class. He was born in an old house which had historical associations with important battles of the Revolution. He was what he called "a man of family"—one "who inherits family traditions and the cumulative humanities of at least five generations." He was educated at a leading private school, at Harvard, and abroad. In his profession, medicine, he won honors first as a scholar and later (1847-1882) as a noted professor at Harvard.

But there was nothing priestly about little Doctor Holmes. To be sure, in some of his poems, like "The Chambered Nautilus" and various hymns, he preached what he considered inspired truths in a fashion much like that of Longfellow. His scientific training, however, led him to hit out fiercely at older religious attitudes and to distinguish sharply between acts for which man was responsible and acts determined by heredity and environment. Unlike many religious folk of his day, he refused to blame men for the results of their inherited qualities and their upbringing. Perhaps his chief contribution to American thought was the exposition of the deterministic philosophy which stressed the way a man's nature and upbringing molded his life. Furthermore, he was enough of a conservative in his social attitude during this great period of reform to attack vigorously any notions of human regeneration. Finally, much of his most admired verse is worldly, polished, amusing, rather than profound or preachy; and such papers as *The Autocrat of the Breakfast-Table* (1858) and *Over the Teacups* (1891) thrive chiefly because they gracefully transfer Holmes' charming talk to the printed page.

Strung together on slender threads of fiction, these collections of papers from the *Atlantic Monthly* happily combine the informal essay with informal conversation. A group of boarding-house characters who now and then voice opinions or ask questions are, for the most part, useful foils for the Autocrat, the Professor, or the Poet as each carries on his interrupted monologues. Each of the monologuists, since he has various aspects of Holmes' character, can, like his creator, talk shrewdly and wittily about hosts of subjects. In books of this type, rather than in novels such as *Elsie Venner* (1861), Holmes excelled. The novels—"medicated" novels, he called them—deal more seriously but less successfully with scientific and ethical problems. Their chief interest, aside from the ideas they express, derives from their gropings toward the form of something like the psychological fiction Henry James was later to write.

Holmes' verse, like his prose, is at its best when it is most informal. With a taste for eighteenth-century

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Panel (l. to r.): Holmes' birthplace in Cambridge • Oliver Wendell Holmes at 41 • Medical students at Harvard • Holmes' study

authors formed by childhood reading in his father's library, Holmes for a long time scoffed at the idea of poetic inspiration. Although in time he came to believe that the best poetry was inspired, as a rule he himself was content to write after the models of the sociable Neoclassical authors who flourished in England between 1660 and 1720. His numerous occasional verses, his use of the mock-heroic form, his preference for ballad stanzas and heroic couplets show his kinship with the Queen Anne "gentlemen who writ with ease." "I hold it to be a gift of a certain value," he wrote Lowell, "to give that slight passing spasm of pleasure which a few ringing couplets often cause, read at the right moment. Though they are for the most part to poetry as the beating of a drum or the tinkling of a triangle is to the harmony of a band, yet it is not everybody who can get their limited significance out of these humble instruments."

Prose Works of Oliver Wendell Holmes, Riverside Edition, Boston, 1891 • **Poetical Works of Oliver Wendell Holmes**, Cambridge Edition, Boston, 1895 • J. T. Morse, **The Life and Letters of Oliver Wendell Holmes**, 2 vols., Boston, 1896 • W. J. Knickerbocker, "His Own Boswell: A Note on the Poetry of Oliver Wendell Holmes," **Sewanee Review**, October-December 1933, XLI, 454-466 • Catherine Bowen, **Yankee from Olympus**, Boston, 1944

Old Ironsides

When, in September 1830, Holmes read a newspaper report that the old and unseaworthy frigate **Constitution**, the conqueror of the **Guerrière** in the War of 1812, had been ordered destroyed, he wrote this indignant protest. Published first in the September 16, 1830 issue of the Boston **Daily Advertiser**, the poem was reprinted in many newspapers and was circulated in handbill form in Washington, D. C. The stir started by the poem caused the order to be retracted.

Ay, tear her tattered ensign down!
  Long has it waved on high,
And many an eye has danced to see
  That banner in the sky;
Beneath it rung the battle shout,
  And burst the cannon's roar;—
The meteor of the ocean air
  Shall sweep the clouds no more!

Her deck, once red with heroes' blood,
  Where knelt the vanquished foe,
When winds were hurrying o'er the flood,
  And waves were white below,
No more shall feel the victor's tread,
  Or know the conquered knee;—
The harpies of the shore shall pluck
  The eagle of the sea!

Oh, better that her shattered hulk
  Should sink beneath the wave;
Her thunder shook the mighty deep,
  And there should be her grave;
Nail to the mast her holy flag,
  Set every threadbare sail,
And give her to the god of storms,
  The lightning and the gale!

1830

The Ballad of the Oysterman

This mock-heroic poem emphasizes Holmes' indebtedness to the eighteenth-century light verse writers, such as Prior and Gray, who frequently wrote amusing poetry of this sort. An excellent example of the pretentious treatment of a nonheroic subject, it uses epic and ballad conventions to emphasize the incongruous elements in some of the sentimental love poetry of the 1830's.

It was a tall young oysterman lived by the river-side,
His shop was just upon the bank, his boat was on the
    tide;
The daughter of a fisherman, that was so straight and
    slim,
Lived over on the other bank, right opposite to him.

It was the pensive oysterman that saw a lovely maid,
Upon a moonlight evening, a-sitting in the shade;
He saw her wave her handkerchief, as much as if to say,
"I'm wide awake, young oysterman, and all the folks away."

Then up arose the oysterman, and to himself said he,
"I guess I'll leave the skiff at home, for fear that folks should see;
I read it in the story-book, that, for to kiss his dear,
Leander swam the Hellespont,—and I will swim this here."

And he has leaped into the waves, and crossed the shining stream,
And he has clambered up the bank, all in the moonlight gleam;
Oh there were kisses sweet as dew, and words as soft as rain,—
But they have heard her father's step, and in he leaps again!

Out spoke the ancient fisherman,—"Oh, what was that, my daughter?"
"'Twas nothing but a pebble, sir, I threw into the water."
"And what is that, pray tell me, love, that paddles off so fast?"
"It's nothing but a porpoise, sir, that's been a-swimming past."

Out spoke the ancient fisherman,—"Now bring me my harpoon!
I'll get into my fishing-boat, and fix the fellow soon."
Down fell that pretty innocent, as falls a snow-white lamb,
Her hair drooped round her pallid cheeks, like seaweed on a clam.

Alas for those two loving ones! she waked not from her swound.
And he was taken with the cramp, and in the waves was drowned;
But Fate has metamorphosed them, in pity of their woe,
And now they keep an oyster-shop for mermaids down below.

1830

My Aunt

My aunt! my dear unmarried aunt!
  Long years have o'er her flown;
Yet still she strains the aching clasp
  That binds her virgin zone;
I know it hurts her,—though she looks
  As cheerful as she can;
Her waist is ampler than her life,
  For life is but a span.

My aunt! my poor deluded aunt!
  Her hair is almost gray;
Why will she train that winter curl
  In such a spring-like way?
How can she lay her glasses down,
  And say she reads as well,
When through a double convex lens
  She just makes out to spell?

Her father—grandpapa! forgive
  This erring lip its smiles—
Vowed she should make the finest girl
  Within a hundred miles;
He sent her to a stylish school;
  'Twas in her thirteenth June;
And with her, as the rules required,
  "Two towels and a spoon."

They braced my aunt against a board,
  To make her straight and tall;
They laced her up, they starved her down,
  To make her light and small;
They pinched her feet, they singed her hair,
  They screwed it up with pins;—
Oh, never mortal suffered more
  In penance for her sins.

So, when my precious aunt was done,
  My grandsire brought her back;

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12 **Leander**, according to Greek legend, nightly swam the Hellespont to visit Hero, a priestess of Aphrodite. When Leander was drowned, Hero threw herself into the sea. The comparison of the humble oysterman to this character is a typical incongruous touch

(By daylight, lest some rabid youth
  Might follow on the track;)
"Ah!" said my grandsire, as he shook
  Some powder in his pan,
"What could this lovely creature do
  Against a desperate man!"

Alas! nor chariot, nor barouche,
  Nor bandit cavalcade,
Tore from the trembling father's arms
  His all-accomplished maid.
For her how happy had it been!
  And Heaven had spared to me
To see one sad, ungathered rose
  On my ancestral tree.

1831

The Last Leaf

A note preceding this poem, first published in the Amateur for March 23, 1831, remarks that it "was suggested by the appearance in one of our streets of a venerable relic of the Revolution, said to be one of the party that threw the tea overboard in Boston Harbor." Students of American literature have been interested to learn that the subject was old Major Thomas Melville, Herman Melville's grandfather.

This is one of the most famous examples of Holmes' admirable light verse. Actually, the material might have been used in a very sentimental poem, but the exaggerated and incongruous imagery and the tripping verse form save it from mawkishness. Of the metrical scheme, Holmes said: "I do not recall any earlier example of this form of verse, which was commended by the fastidious Edgar Allan Poe, who made a copy of the poem which I have in his own handwriting."

I saw him once before,
As he passed by the door,
    And again
The pavement stones resound,
As he totters o'er the ground
    With his cane.

They say that in his prime,
Ere the pruning-knife of Time
    Cut him down,
Not a better man was found
By the Crier on his round
    Through the town.

But now he walks the streets,
And he looks at all he meets
    Sad and wan,
And he shakes his feeble head,
That it seems as if he said,
    "They are gone."

The mossy marbles rest
On the lips that he has prest
    In their bloom,
And the names he loved to hear
Have been carved for many a year
    On the tomb.

My grandmamma has said—
Poor old lady, she is dead
    Long ago—
That he had a Roman nose,
And his cheek was like a rose
    In the snow;

But now his nose is thin,
And it rests upon his chin
    Like a staff,
And a crook is in his back,
And a melancholy crack
    In his laugh.

I know it is a sin
For me to sit and grin
    At him here;
But the old three-cornered hat,
And the breeches, and all that,
    Are so queer!

And if I should live to be
The last leaf upon the tree
    In the spring,
Let them smile, as I do now,
At the old forsaken bough
    Where I cling.

1831

The Deacon's Masterpiece

or, The Wonderful "One-Hoss Shay"

A Logical Story

A satire on the great logical system of theology worked out by Calvinists and on the downfall of Calvinism, this poem was published in the **Atlantic Monthly** of September 1858 as part of one of the **Autocrat** papers. The date of the building of the deacon's masterpiece, 1755, was the year after the publication of Jonathan Edwards' greatest defense of Calvinism, **Freedom of the Will**; the year, too, of the Lisbon earthquake, which provoked many arguments favorable to the Calvinistic system.

Have you heard of the wonderful one-hoss shay,
That was built in such a logical way
It ran a hundred years to a day,
And then, of a sudden, it—ah, but stay,
I'll tell you what happened without delay,
Scaring the parson into fits,
Frightening people out of their wits,—
Have you ever heard of that, I say?

Seventeen hundred and fifty-five.
Georgius Secundus was then alive,—
Snuffy old drone from the German hive.
That was the year when Lisbon-town
Saw the earth open and gulp her down,
And Braddock's army was done so brown,
Left without a scalp to its crown.
It was on the terrible Earthquake-day
That the Deacon finished the one-hoss shay.

Now in building of chaises, I tell you what,
There is always *somewhere* a weakest spot,—
In hub, tire, felloe, in spring or thill,
In panel, or crossbar, or floor, or sill,
In screw, bolt, thoroughbrace,—lurking still,
Find it somewhere you must and will,—
Above or below, or within or without,—
And that's the reason, beyond a doubt,
That a chaise *breaks down*, but doesn't *wear out.*

But the Deacon swore (as Deacons do,
With an "I dew vum," or an "I tell *yeou*")
He would build one shay to beat the taown
'N' the keountry 'n' all the kentry raoun';
It should be so built that it *could n'* break daown;
"Fur," said the Deacon, "'t 's mighty plain
Thut the weakes' place mus' stan' the strain;
'N' the way t' fix it, uz I maintain,
    Is only jest
T' make that place uz strong uz the rest."

So the Deacon inquired of the village folk
Where he could find the strongest oak,
That could n't be split nor bent nor broke,—
That was for spokes and floors and sills;
He sent for lancewood to make the thills;
The crossbars were ash, from the straightest trees,
The panels of white-wood, that cuts like cheese,
But lasts like iron for things like these;
The hubs of logs from the "Settler's ellum,"—
Last of its timber,—they could n't sell 'em,

Never an axe had seen their chips,
And the wedges flew from between their lips,
Their blunt ends frizzled like celery-tips;
Step and prop-iron, bolt and screw,
Spring, tire, axle, and linchpin too,
Steel of the finest, bright and blue;
Thoroughbrace bison-skin, thick and wide;
Boot, top, dasher, from tough old hide
Found in the pit when the tanner died.
That was the way he "put her through."
"There!" said the Deacon, "naow she'll dew!"

Do! I tell you, I rather guess
She was a wonder, and nothing less!
Colts grew horses, beards turned gray,
Deacon and deaconess dropped away,
Children and grandchildren—where were they?
But there stood the stout old one-hoss shay
As fresh as on Lisbon-earthquake-day!

EIGHTEEN HUNDRED;—it came and found
The Deacon's masterpiece strong and sound.
Eighteen hundred increased by ten;—
"Hahnsum kerridge" they called it then.
Eighteen hundred and twenty came;—

Running as usual; much the same.
Thirty and forty at last arrive,
And then come fifty, and FIFTY-FIVE.

Little of all we value here
Wakes on the morn of its hundredth year
Without both feeling and looking queer.
In fact, there 's nothing that keeps its youth,
So far as I know, but a tree and truth.
(This is a moral that runs at large;
Take it.—You 're welcome.—No extra charge.)

FIRST OF NOVEMBER,—the Earthquake-day,—
There are traces of age in the one-hoss shay,
A general flavor of mild decay,
But nothing local, as one may say.
There couldn't be,—for the Deacon's art
Had made it so like in every part
That there wasn't a chance for one to start.
For the wheels were just as strong as the thills,
And the floor was just as strong as the sills,
And the panels just as strong as the floor,
And the whipple-tree neither less nor more,
And the back crossbar as strong as the fore,
And spring and axle and hub *encore.*
And yet, *as a whole,* it is past a doubt
In another hour it will be *worn out!*

First of November, 'Fifty-five!
This morning the parson takes a drive.
Now, small boys, get out of the way!
Here comes the wonderful one-hoss shay,
Drawn by a rat-tailed, ewe-necked bay.
"Huddup!" said the parson.—Off went they.
The parson was working his Sunday's text,—
Had got to *fifthly,* and stopped perplexed
At what the—Moses—was coming next.
All at once the horse stood still,
Close by the meet'n'-house on the hill.
First a shiver, and then a thrill,
Then something decidedly like a spill,—
And the parson was sitting upon a rock,
At half past nine by the meet'n'-house clock—
Just the hour of the Earthquake shock!
What do you think the parson found,
When he got up and stared around?
The poor old chaise in a heap or mound,
As if it had been to the mill and ground!
You see, of course, if you're not a dunce,
How it went to pieces all at once,—
All at once, and nothing first,—
Just as bubbles do when they burst.

End of the wonderful one-hoss shay.
Logic is logic. That 's all I say.

1858

The Chambered Nautilus

The paragraph preceding this poem when it appeared at the end of a section of **The Autocrat** gave the necessary facts about the background of the poem: "If you will look into Roget's **Bridgewater Treatise**, you will find a figure of one of these shells [the nautilus], and a section of it. The last will show you the series of enlarging compartments successively dwelt in by the animal that inhabits the shell, which is built in a widening spiral. Can you find no lesson in this?"

Of "The Chambered Nautilus," Holmes wrote: "I am as willing to submit this to criticism as any [poem] I have written, in form as well as substance, and I have not seen any English verse of just the same pattern." It was one work of his which he avowed had been inspired.

"The Chambered Nautilus" is unusually suggestive of Longfellow's poems. Like "Excelsior" or "The Builders," it preaches a sermon with the text "Onward and upward." The form, too, resembles Longfellow's: an object is described in the three opening stanzas, and then, in the two stanzas addressed to the nautilus at the end, the moral is drawn. Holmes seems to have been bothered very little by the incongruity—distressing to careful readers—of some of his images.

This is the ship of pearl, which, poets feign,
    Sails the unshadowed main,—
    The venturous bark that flings
On the sweet summer wind its purpled wings
In gulfs enchanted, where the Siren sings,
    And coral reefs lie bare,
Where the cold sea-maids rise to sun their streaming hair.

Its webs of living gauze no more unfurl;
Wrecked is the ship of pearl!
Where its dim dreaming life was wont to dwell,
As the frail tenant shaped his growing shell,
And every chambered cell,
Before thee lies revealed,—
Its irised ceiling rent, its sunless crypt unsealed!

Year after year beheld the silent toil
That spread his lustrous coil;
Still, as the spiral grew,
He left the past year's dwelling for the new,
Stole with soft step its shining archway through,
Built up its idle door,
Stretched in his last-found home, and knew the old no more.

Thanks for the heavenly message brought by thee,
Child of the wandering sea,
Cast from her lap, forlorn!
From thy dead lips a clearer note is born
Than ever Triton blew from wreathed horn!
While on mine ear it rings,
Through the deep caves of thought I hear a voice that sings:—

Build thee more stately mansions, O my soul,
As the swift seasons roll!
Leave thy low-vaulted past!
Let each new temple, nobler than the last,
Shut thee from heaven with a dome more vast,
Till thou at length art free,
Leaving thine outgrown shell by life's unresting sea!

1858

The Boys

For many years Holmes read a poem composed for the occasion at the annual dinner of the Harvard Class of 1829. This one was written for the reunion of 1859, when he and his classmates probably were about fifty years old. It shows better perhaps than any other the way Holmes gave such verses the right mingling of wit and pathos. Even though it was written with a particular group in mind, the poem communicates its spirited humor to any reader.

Has there any old fellow got mixed with the boys?
If there has, take him out, without making a noise.
Hang the Almanac's cheat and the Catalogue's spite!
Old Time is a liar! We're twenty to-night!

We're twenty! We're twenty! Who says we are more?
He's tipsy,—young jackanapes!—show him the door!
"Gray temples at twenty?"—Yes! *white* if we please;
Where the snow-flakes fall thickest there's nothing can freeze!

Was it snowing I spoke of? Excuse the mistake!
Look close,—you will see not a sign of a flake!
We want some new garlands for those we have shed,—
And these are white roses in place of the red.

We've a trick, we young fellows, you may have been told,
Of talking (in public) as if we were old:—
That boy we call "Doctor," and this we call "Judge";
It's a neat little fiction,—of course it's all fudge.

That fellow's the "Speaker,"—the one on the right;
"Mr. Mayor," my young one, how are you to-night?
That's our "Member of Congress," we say when we chaff;
There's the "Reverend." What's his name?—don't make me laugh.

That boy with the grave mathematical look
Made believe he had written a wonderful book,
And the ROYAL SOCIETY thought it was *true!*
So they chose him right in; a good joke it was, too!

There's a boy, we pretend, with a three-decker brain,
That could harness a team with a logical chain;

The Boys • 15 **Doctor,** Francis Thomas • 15 **Judge,** George T. Bigelow, chief justice of Massachusetts • 17 **Speaker,** Francis B. Crowninshield, speaker of the Massachusetts House of Representatives • 18 **Mr. Mayor,** G. W. Richardson, mayor of Worcester, Massachusetts • 19 **Member of Congress,** George T. Davis, whom Thackeray described as "the most agreeable dinner-companion" that he had met during his visit to America • 20 **Reverend,** James Freeman Clark, a Unitarian minister and a friend of Emerson • 21 **That boy,** Prof. Benjamin Peirce of Harvard

When he spoke for our manhood in syllabled fire,
We called him "The Justice," but now he's "The Squire."

And there's a nice youngster of excellent pith,—
Fate tried to conceal him by naming him Smith;
But he shouted a song for the brave and the free,—
Just read on his medal, "My country," "of thee!"

You hear that boy laughing?—You think he's all fun;
But the angels laugh, too, at the good he has done;
The children laugh loud as they troop to his call,
And the poor man that knows him laughs loudest of all!

Yes, we're boys,—always playing with tongue or with pen,—
And I sometimes have asked,—Shall we ever be men?
Shall we always be youthful, and laughing, and gay,
Till the last dear companion drops smiling away?

Then here's to our boyhood, its gold and its gray!
The stars of its winter, the dews of its May!
And when we have done with our life-lasting toys,
Dear Father, take care of thy children, THE BOYS!

1859

Hymn of Trust

O Love Divine, that stooped to share
Our sharpest pang, our bitterest tear,
On Thee we cast each earth-born care,
We smile at pain while Thou art near!

Though long the weary way we tread,
And sorrow crown each lingering year,
No path we shun, no darkness dread,
Our hearts still whispering, Thou art near!

When drooping pleasure turns to grief,
And trembling faith is changed to fear,
The murmuring wind, the quivering leaf,
Shall softly tell us, Thou art near!

On Thee we fling our burdening woe,
O Love Divine, forever dear,
Content to suffer while we know,
Living and dying, Thou art near!

1859

28 **The Justice,** Benjamin R. Curtis, justice of the United States Supreme Court • 30 **Smith,** the Rev. Samuel Francis Smith, author of "America"

From

The Autocrat of the Breakfast-Table

When Holmes was nearly fifty, Lowell, urged to edit the new **Atlantic Monthly,** "made it a condition precedent" to his acceptance that Holmes should be "the first contributor to be engaged." Since Holmes was hardly a towering figure in the literary world, though he did have a fine reputation in medicine, the request rather surprised him. **The Autocrat of the Breakfast-Table,** which he contributed in monthly installments, established his literary reputation and did much to establish that of the magazine.

The **Autocrat** papers, like the other series which followed them, are unique in form. Each paper is a printed account of a conversation, informal because of its chatty tone and because of interruptions—the author's own asides and the remarks of other boarders who sit at the table. In a sense, furthermore, the papers have some of the appeals of fiction: they have the slightest of plots running through them, and they reveal characters and the interplay between diverse personalities.

Since the speakers differ greatly, there is a good deal of variety in the attitudes expressed. Variety is also pro-

vided by the wide range of subjects discussed. A glance at the Index to The Autocrat reveals that Holmes, interested in all sorts of matters, treated, among hundreds of other subjects, Aristocracy, Boating, Calamities, Drunkenness, Ears (Voluntary Movement of), Family, Hysterics, Jailers, Keats, Logical Minds, Maine (Willows in), Nerve-tapping, Old Age, Punning, Quantity, Racing (Horse), Sporting Men, Travel, Unloved, Voices, Women, and Zimmerman's Treatise on Solitude. The talk is witty and learned, allusive to both the classics and contemporary events—an excellent key to the appeal of Holmes as a talker.

A lyric conception—my friend, the Poet, said—hits me like a bullet in the forehead. I have often had the blood drop from my cheeks when it struck, and felt that I turned as white as death. Then comes a creeping as of centipedes running down the spine,—then a gasp and a great jump of the heart,—then a sudden flush and a beating in the vessels of the head,—then a long sigh,—and the poem is written.

It is an impromptu, I suppose, then, if you write it so suddenly,—I replied.

No, said he,—far from it. I said written, but I did not say *copied*. Every such poem has a soul and a body, and it is the body of it, or the copy, that men read and publishers pay for. The soul of it is born in an instant in the poet's soul. It comes to him a thought, tangled in the meshes of a few sweet words,—words that have loved each other from the cradle of the language, but have never been wedded until now. Whether it will ever fully embody itself in a bridal train of a dozen stanzas or not is uncertain; but it exists potentially from the instant that the poet turns pale with it. It is enough to stun and scare anybody, to have a hot thought come crashing into his brain, and ploughing up those parallel ruts where the wagon trains of common ideas were jogging along in their regular sequences of association. No wonder the ancients made the poetical impulse wholly external. Μῆνιν ἄειδε Θεά. Goddess,—Muse,—divine afflatus,—something outside always. *I* never wrote any verses worth reading. I can't. I am too stupid. If I ever copied any that were worth reading, I was only a medium.

[I was talking all this time to our boarders, you understand,—telling them what this poet told me. The company listened rather attentively, I thought, considering the literary character of the remarks.]

The old gentleman opposite all at once asked me if I ever read anything better than Pope's "Essay on Man"? Had I ever perused McFingal? He was fond of poetry when he was a boy,—his mother taught him to say many little pieces,—he remembered one beautiful hymn;—and the old gentleman began, in a clear, loud voice, for his years,—

"The spacious firmament on high,
With all the blue ethereal sky,
And spangled heavens,"—

He stopped, as if startled by our silence, and a faint flush ran up beneath the thin white hairs that fell upon his cheek. As I looked round, I was reminded of a show I once saw at the Museum,—the Sleeping Beauty, I think they called it. The old man's sudden breaking out in this way turned every face towards him, and each kept his posture as if changed to stone. Our Celtic Bridget, or Biddy, is not a foolish fat scullion to burst out crying for a sentiment. She is of the serviceable, red-handed, broad-and-high-shouldered type; one of those imported female servants who are known in public by their amorphous style of person, their stoop forwards, and a headlong and as it were precipitous walk,—the waist plunging downwards into the rocking pelvis at every heavy foot-fall. Bridget, constituted for action, not for emotion, was about to deposit a plate heaped with something upon the table, when I saw the coarse arm stretched by my shoulder arrested,—motionless as the arm of a terra-cotta caryatid; she couldn't set the plate down while the old gentleman was speaking!

He was quite silent after this, still wearing the slight flush on his cheek. Don't ever think the poetry is dead in an old man because his forehead is wrinkled, or that his manhood has left him when his hand trembles! If they ever *were* there, they *are* there still!

By and by we got talking again.—Does a poet love the verses written through him, do you think, Sir?—said the divinity-student.

So long as they are warm from his mind,—carry any

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27 Μῆνιν ἄειδε Θεά, the opening words of the Iliad, "Goddess, sing of the wrath [of Achilles]" • 43 The spacious firmament . . . , opening lines of "Hymn" by Joseph Addison (1672-1719)

of his animal heat about them, I *know* he loves them,— I answered. When they have had time to cool, he is more indifferent.

A good deal as it is with buckwheat cakes,—said the young fellow whom they call John.

The last words, only, reached the ear of the economically organized female in black bombazine.—Buckwheat is skerce and high,—she remarked. [Must be a poor relation sponging on our landlady—pays nothing,—so she must stand by the guns and be ready to repel boarders.]

I liked the turn the conversation had taken, for I had some things I wanted to say, and so, after waiting a minute, I began again.—I don't think the poems I read you sometimes can be fairly appreciated, given to you as they are in the green state.

—You don't know what I mean by the *green state?* Well, then, I will tell you. Certain things are good for nothing until they have been kept a long while; and some are good for nothing until they have been long kept and *used.* Of the first, wine is the illustrious and immortal example. Of those which must be kept and used I will name three,—meerschaum pipes, violins, and poems. The meerschaum is but a poor affair until it has burned a thousand offerings to the cloud-compelling deities. It comes to us without complexion or flavor,— born of the sea-foam, like Aphrodite, but colorless as *pallida Mors* herself. The fire is lighted in its central shrine, and gradually the juices which the broad leaves of the Great Vegetable had sucked up from an acre and curdled into a drachm are diffused through its thirsting pores. First a discoloration, then a stain, and at last a rich, glowing, umber tint spreading over the whole surface. Nature true to her old brown autumnal hue, you see,—as true in the fire of the meerschaum as in the sunshine of October! And then the cumulative wealth of its fragrant reminiscences! he who inhales its vapors takes a thousand whiffs in a single breath; and one cannot touch it without awakening the old joys that hang around it as the smell of flowers clings to the dresses of the daughters of the house of Farina!

[Don't think I use a meerschaum myself, for I *do not,* though I have owned a calumet since my childhood, which from a naked Pict (of the Mohawk species) my grandsire won, together with a tomahawk and beaded knife-sheath; paying for the lot with a bullet-mark on his right cheek. On the maternal side I inherit the loveliest silver-mounted tobacco-stopper you ever saw. It is a little box-wood Triton, carved with charming liveliness and truth; I have often compared it to a figure in Raphael's "Triumph of Galatea." It came to me in an ancient shagreen case,—how old it is I do not know,— but it must have been made since Sir Walter Raleigh's time. If you are curious, you shall see it any day. Neither will I pretend that I am so unused to the more perishable smoking contrivance that a few whiffs would make me feel as if I lay in a ground-well on the Bay of Biscay. I am not unacquainted with that fusiform, spiral-wound bundle of chopped stems and miscellaneous incombustibles, the *cigar,* so called, of the shops,—which to "draw" asks the suction-power of a nursling infant Hercules, and to relish, the leathery palate of an old Silenus. I do not advise you, young man, even if my illustration strike your fancy, to consecrate the flower of your life to painting the bowl of a pipe, for, let me assure you, the stain of a reverie-breeding narcotic may strike deeper than you think for. I have seen the green leaf of early promise grow brown before its time under such Nicotian regimen, and thought the umbered meerschaum was dearly bought at the cost of a brain enfeebled and a will enslaved.]

Violins, too,—the sweet old Amati!—the divine Stradivarius! Played on by ancient *maestros* until the bow-hand lost its power and the flying fingers stiffened. Bequeathed to the passionate young enthusiast, who made it whisper his hidden love, and cry his inarticulate longings, and scream his untold agonies, and wail his monotonous despair. Passed from his dying hand to the cold *virtuoso,* who let it slumber in its case for a generation, till, when his hoard was broken up, it came forth once more and rode the stormy symphonies of royal orchestras, beneath the rushing bow of their lord and leader. Into lonely prisons with improvident artists; into convents from which arose, day and night, the holy hymns with which its tones were blended; and back

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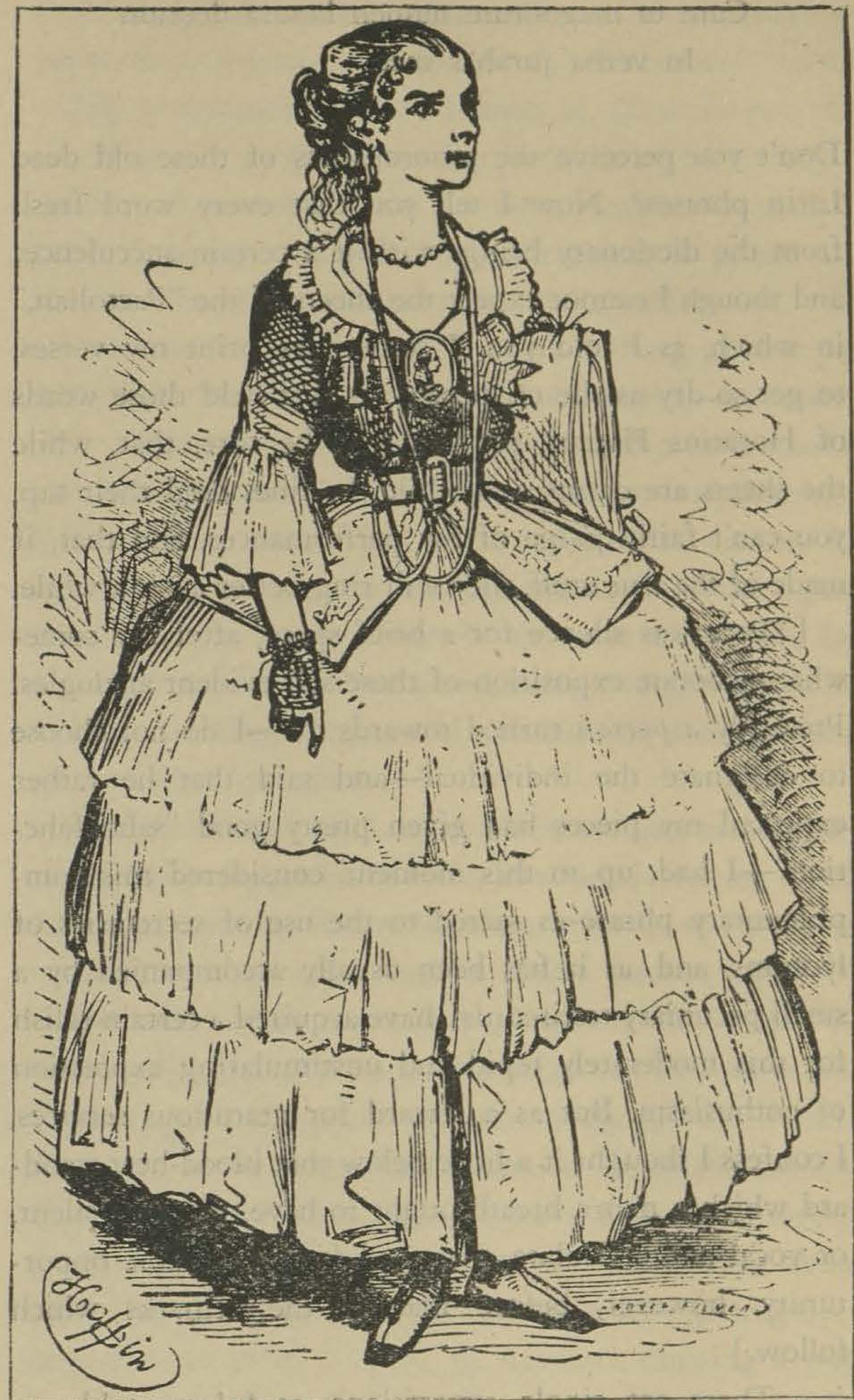
28 **pallida Mors,** pale Death • 51 **Triumph of Galatea,** a famous painting. Galatea was a Naiad, a lesser goddess • 57 **Bay of Biscay,** on the Cantabrian Sea, noted for the fierce waves stirred up on it by strong winds • 72 **Amati,** Nicoló Amati (1596-1684), a great violin maker, teacher of Antonio Stradivarius • 73 **Stradivarius,** Antonio Stradivarius (1644-1737), the most famous of the Stradivari, a family of famous violin makers in Cremona

again to orgies in which it learned to howl and laugh as if a legion of devils were shut up in it; then again to the gentle *dilettante* who calmed it down with easy melodies until it answered him softly as in the days of the old *maestros*. And so given into our hands, its pores all full of music; stained, like the meerschaum, through and through, with the concentrated hue and sweetness of all the harmonies which have kindled and faded on its strings.

Now I tell you a poem must be kept *and used*, like a meerschaum, or a violin. A poem is just as porous as the meerschaum;—the more porous it is, the better. I mean to say that a genuine poem is capable of absorbing an indefinite amount of the essence of our own humanity,—its tenderness, its heroism, its regrets, its aspirations, so as to be gradually stained through with a divine secondary color derived from ourselves. So you see it must take time to bring the sentiment of a poem into harmony with our nature, by staining ourselves through every thought and image our being can penetrate.

Then again as to the mere music of a new poem; why, who can expect anything more from that than from the music of a violin fresh from the maker's hands? Now you know very well that there are no less than fifty-eight different pieces in a violin. These pieces are strangers to each other, and it takes a century, more or less, to make them thoroughly acquainted. At last they learn to vibrate in harmony and the instrument becomes an organic whole, as if it were a great seed-capsule which had grown from a garden-bed in Cremona, or elsewhere. Besides, the wood is juicy and full of sap for fifty years or so, but at the end of fifty or a hundred more gets tolerably dry and comparatively resonant.

Don't you see that all this is just as true of a poem? Counting each word as a piece, there are more pieces in an average copy of verses than in a violin. The poet has forced all these words together, and fastened them, and they don't understand it at first. But let the poem be repeated aloud and murmured over in the mind's muffled whisper often enough, and at length the parts become knit together in such absolute solidarity that you could not change a syllable without the whole world's crying out against you for meddling with the harmonious fabric. Observe, too, how the drying process takes place in the stuff of a poem just as in that of a violin. Here is a Tyrolese fiddle that is just coming to its hundredth birthday,—(Pedro Klauss, Tyroli, fecit, 1760),—the sap is pretty well out of it. And here is the song of an old poet whom Neæra cheated:—



The landlady's daughter.

"Nox erat, et cœlo fulgebat Luna sereno
Inter minora sidera,

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48 Pedro Klauss . . . fecit, 1760, made by Pedro Klauss in 1760 • **51 Nox erat . . . mea.** Horace, Epodes, XV. The lines quoted have been translated thus by G. E. Bennett: "'Twas night, and in a cloudless sky the moon was shining amid the lesser lights, when thou, soon to outrage the majesty of the mighty gods, didst pledge thy loyalty . . ."

Cum tu magnorum numen læsura deorum
In verba jurabas mea."

Don't you perceive the sonorousness of these old dead Latin phrases? Now I tell you that every word fresh from the dictionary brings with it a certain succulence; and though I cannot expect the sheets of the "Pactolian," in which, as I told you, I sometimes print my verses, to get so dry as the crisp papyrus that held those words of Horatius Flaccus, yet you may be sure, that, while the sheets are damp, and while the lines hold their sap, you can't fairly judge of my performances, and that, if made of the true stuff, they will ring better after a while.

[There was silence for a brief space, after my somewhat elaborate exposition of these self-evident analogies. Presently *a person* turned towards me—I do not choose to designate the individual—and said that he rather expected my pieces had given pretty good "sahtisfahction"—I had, up to this moment, considered this complimentary phrase as sacred to the use of secretaries of lyceums, and, as it has been usually accompanied by a small pecuniary testimonial, have acquired a certain relish for this moderately tepid and unstimulating expression of enthusiasm. But as a reward for gratuitous services, I confess I thought it a little below that blood-heat standard which a man's breath ought to have, whether silent, or vocal and articulate. I waited for a favorable opportunity, however, before making the remarks which follow.]

—There are single expressions, as I have told you already, that fix a man's position for you before you have done shaking hands with him. Allow me to expand a little. There are several things, very slight in themselves, yet implying other things not so unimportant. Thus, your French servant has *dévalisé* your premises and got caught. *Excusez,* says the *sergent-de-ville,* as he politely relieves him of his upper garments and displays his bust in the full day-light. Good shoulders enough,—a little marked,—traces of smallpox, perhaps, —but white. . . . *Crac!* from the *sergent-de-ville's* broad palm on the white shoulder! Now look! *Vogue la galère!* Out comes the big red V—mark of the hot iron;—he had blistered it out pretty nearly,—hadn't he?—the old rascal VOLEUR, branded in the galleys at Marseilles! [Don't! What if he has got something like this?—nobody supposes I *invented* such a story.]

My man John, who used to drive two of those six equine females which I told you I had owned,—for, look you, my friends, simple though I stand here, I am one that has been driven in his "kerridge,"—not using that term, as liberal shepherds do, for any battered old shabby-genteel go-cart which has more than one wheel, but meaning thereby a four-wheeled vehicle *with a pole,*—my man John, I say, was a retired soldier. He retired unostentatiously, as many of Her Majesty's modest servants have done before and since. John told me, that when an officer thinks he recognizes one of these retiring heroes, and would know if he has really been in the service, that he may restore him, if possible, to a grateful country, he comes suddenly upon him, and says, sharply, "Strap!" If he has ever worn the shoulder-strap, he has learned the reprimand for its ill adjustment. The old word of command flashes through his muscles, and his hand goes up in an instant to the place where the strap used to be.

[I was all the time preparing for my grand *coup,* you understand; but I saw they were not quite ready for it, and so continued,—always in illustration of the general principle I had laid down.]

Yes, odd things come out in ways that nobody thinks of. There was a legend, that, when the Danish pirates made descents upon the English coast, they caught a few Tartars occasionally, in the shape of Saxons, who would not let them go,—on the contrary, insisted on their staying, and, to make sure of it, treated them as Apollo treated Marsyas, or as Bartholinus has treated a fellow-creature in his title-page, and, having divested them of the one essential and perfectly fitting garment, indispensable in the mildest climates, nailed the same on the church-door as we do the banns of marriage, *in terrorem.*

[There was a laugh at this among some of the young folks; but as I looked at our landlady, I saw that "the

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6 **Pactolian,** from Pactolus, a small Lydian stream, celebrated in antiquity for golden sands, the source of the wealth of Croesus. Holmes refers to an imaginary magazine, giving it a name which helps develop his point • 34 **dévalisé,** plundered • 35 **Excusez,** beg pardon • 35 **sergent-de-ville,** bailiff • 40 **Vogue la galère!** Come what will! • 43 **Voleur,** thief • 65 **coup,** stroke • 75 **Apollo,** after defeating Marsyas in a musical contest, flayed him alive • 75 **Bartholinus,** Thomas Bartholinus (1619-1680), Danish physician, author of a number of works on anatomy • 79 **in terrorem,** in terror

water stood in her eyes," as it did in Christiana's when the interpreter asked her about the spider, and I fancied, but wasn't quite sure that the schoolmistress blushed, as Mercy did in the same conversation, as you remember.]

That sounds like a cock-and-bull-story,—said the young fellow whom they call John. I abstained from making Hamlet's remark to Horatio, and continued.

Not long since, the church-wardens were repairing and beautifying an old Saxon church in a certain English village, and among other things thought the doors should be attended to. One of them particularly, the front-door, looked very badly, crusted, as it were, and as if it would be all the better for scraping. There happened to be a microscopist in the village who had heard the old pirate story, and he took it into his head to examine the crust on this door. There was no mistake about it; it was a genuine historical document, of the Ziska drum-head pattern,—a real *cutis humana,* stripped from some old Scandinavian filibuster, and the legend was true.

My friend, the Professor, settled an important historical and financial question once by the aid of an exceedingly minute fragment of a similar document. Behind the pane of plate-glass which bore his name and title burned a modest lamp, signifying to the passers-by that at all hours of the night the slightest favors (or fevers) were welcome. A youth who had freely partaken of the cup which cheers and likewise inebriates, following a moth-like impulse very natural under the circumstances, dashed his fist at the light and quenched the meek luminary,—breaking through the plate-glass, of course, to reach it. Now I don't want to go into *minutiæ* at table, you know, but a naked hand can no more go through a pane of thick glass without leaving some of its cuticle, to say the least, behind it, than a butterfly can go through a sausage-machine without looking the worse for it. The Professor gathered up the fragments of glass, and with them certain very minute but entirely satisfactory documents which would have identified and hanged any rogue in Christendom who had parted with them.—The historical question, *Who did it?* and the financial question, *Who paid for it?* were both settled before the new lamp was lighted the next evening.

You see, my friends, what immense conclusions, touching our lives, our fortunes, and our sacred honor, may be reached by means of very insignificant premises. This is eminently true of manners and forms of speech; a movement or a phrase often tells you all you want to know about a person. Thus, "How's your health?" (commonly pronounced *haälth)* instead of, How do you do? or, How are you? Or calling your little dark entry a "hall," and your old rickety one-horse wagon a "kerridge." Or telling a person who has been trying to please you that he has given you pretty good "sahtisfahction." Or saying that you "remember of" such a thing, or that you have been "stoppin'" at Deacon Somebody's,—and other such expressions. One of my friends had a little marble statuette of Cupid in the parlor of his country-house,—bow, arrows, wings, and all complete. A visitor, indigenous to the region, looking pensively at the figure, asked the lady of the house "if that was a statoo of her deceased infant?" What a delicious, though somewhat voluminous biography, social, educational, and aesthetic, in that brief question!

[Please observe with what Machiavellian astuteness I smuggled in the particular offence which it was my object to hold up to my fellow-boarders, without too personal an attack on the individual at whose door it lay.]

That was an exceedingly dull person who made the remark, *Ex pede Herculem.* He might as well have said, "from a peck of apples you may judge of the barrel." *Ex* PEDE, to be sure! Read, instead, *Ex ungue minimi digiti pedis, Herculem, ejusque patrem, matrem, avos et proavos, filios, nepotes et pronepotes!* Talk to me about your δὸς ποῦ στῶ! Tell me about Cuvier's getting up a megatherium from a tooth, or Agassiz's drawing a portrait of an undiscovered fish from a single scale! As the

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1 **Christiana,** wife of Christian in Pilgrim's Progress • 7 **Hamlet's remark.** Act I, Scene v, ll. 166-167:

> There are more things in heaven and earth, Horatio,
> Than are dreamt of in our philosophy.

• 17 **Ziska drum-head,** so named after John Ziska (1360?-1424), Bohemian Hussite leader who was frequently cruel in the punishment of his foes • 18 **cutis humana,** human skin • 25 **the slightest favors (or fevers),** a pun of which Holmes himself had been guilty in the early days of his medical career • 31 **minutiæ,** minutive, minor details • 44 **touching . . . honor,** the conclusion of the **Declaration of Independence** • 64 **Machiavellian.** See note, p. 312 • 69 **Ex pede Herculem**—"By the foot alone of Hercules," you may know him • 71 **Ex . . . pronepotes.** By the nail of the smallest toe of Hercules, [you may know] his father, mother, his nephews and his great-nephews, his sons • 74 δὸς ποῦ στῶ refers to the famous remark of Archimedes, "Give me a place where I can stand, and I will move the world" • 74 **Cuvier,** Georges Léopold Cuvier. See note, p. 688 • 75 **Agassiz,** Louis John Rudolph Agassiz (1807-1873), Swiss naturalist who taught at Harvard

"O" revealed Giotto,—as the one word "moi" betrayed the Stratford atte-Bowe-taught Anglais,—so all a man's antecedents and possibilities are summed up in a single utterance which gives at once the gauge of his education and his mental organization.

Possibilities, Sir?—said the divinity-student; can't a man who says *Haöw?* arrive at distinction?

Sir,—I replied,—in a republic all things are possible. But the man *with a future* has almost of necessity sense enough to see that any odious trick of speech or manners must be got rid of. Doesn't Sydney Smith say that a public man in England never gets over a false quantity uttered in early life? *Our* public men are in little danger of this fatal misstep, as few of them are in the habit of introducing Latin into their speeches,—for good and sufficient reasons. But they are bound to speak decent English,—unless, indeed, they are rough old campaigners, like General Jackson or General Taylor; in which case, a few scars on Priscian's head are pardoned to old fellows who have quite as many on their own, and a constituency of thirty empires is not at all particular, provided they do not swear in their Presidential Messages.

However, it is not for me to talk. I have made mistakes enough in conversation and print. I never find them out until they are stereotyped, and then I think they rarely escape me. I have no doubt I shall make half a dozen slips before this breakfast is over, and remember them all before another. How one does tremble with rage at his own intense momentary stupidity about things he knows perfectly well, and to think how he lays himself open to the impertinences of the *captatores verborum,* those useful but humble scavengers of the language, whose business it is to pick up what might offend or injure, and remove it, hugging and feeding on it as they go! I don't want to speak too slightingly of these verbal critics; —how can I, who am so fond of talking about errors and vulgarisms of speech? Only there is a difference between those clerical blunders which almost every man commits, knowing better, and that habitual grossness or meanness of speech which is unendurable to educated persons, from anybody that wears silk or broadcloth.

[I write down the above remarks this morning, January 26th, making this record of the date that nobody may think it was written in wrath, on account of any particular grievance suffered from the invasion of any *individual scarabœus grammaticus.*]

—I wonder if anybody ever finds fault with anything I say at this table when it is repeated? I hope they do, I am sure. I should be very certain that I had said nothing of much significance, if they did not.

Did you never, in walking in the fields, come across a large flat stone, which had lain, nobody knows how long, just where you found it, with the grass forming a little hedge, as it were, all round it, close to its edges,—and have you not, in obedience to a kind of feeling that told you it had been lying there long enough, insinuated your stick or your foot or your fingers under its edge and turned it over as a housewife turns a cake, when she says to herself, "It's done brown enough by this time"? What an odd revelation, and what an unforeseen and unpleasant surprise to a small community, the very existence of which you had not suspected, until the sudden dismay and scattering among its members produced by your turning the old stone over! Blades of grass flattened down, colorless, ironed; hideous crawling creatures, some of them coleopterous or horny-shelled,—turtle-bugs one wants to call them, some of them softer, but cunningly spread out and compressed like Lepine watches; (Nature never loses a crack or a crevice, mind you, or a joint in a tavern bedstead, but she always has one of her flat-pattern live timekeepers to slide into it); black glossy crickets, with their long filaments sticking out like the whips of four-horse stage-coaches; motionless, slug-like creatures, young larvæ, perhaps more horrible in their pulpy stillness than even in the infernal wriggle of maturity. But no sooner is the stone turned and the wholesome light of day let upon this compressed and blinded community of creeping things, than all of them which enjoy the luxury of legs—and some of them have a good many—rush

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1 **Giotto** (1276?-1337?), Florentine painter and architect who reputedly could draw, free hand, a perfect circle • 2 **Stratford . . . Anglais.** The reference is to the prioress in the **Canterbury Tales,** of whom Chaucer said:

> And Frenssh she spak ful faire and fetishly [neatly]
> After the acole [school] of Stratford-atte-Bowe . . . .

Stratford-atte-Bowe was a Benedictine nunnery at Stratford, London, E. The French taught there was Anglo-French, which differed from that of Paris. Therefore, the way she pronounced "moi" would show her training • 11 **Sydney Smith** (1771-1845), English divine, writer, and wit • 18 **General Jackson,** Andrew Jackson (1767-1845), seventh President (1829-1837) of the United States • 18 **General Taylor,** Zachary Taylor (1784-1850), twelfth President (1849-1850) • 19 **Priscian,** Latin grammarian of the sixth century • 31 **captatores verborum,** word hunters • 46 **scarabœus grammaticus,** grammar beetle, or bookworm • 66 **coleopterous,** belonging to the beetle species of insects

round wildly, butting each other and everything in their way, and end in a general stampede for underground retreats from the region poisoned by sunshine. *Next year* you will find the grass growing tall and green where the stone lay; the ground-bird builds her nest where the beetle had his hole; the dandelion and the buttercup are growing there, and the broad fans of insect-angels open and shut over their golden disks, as the rhythmic waves of blissful consciousness pulsate through their glorified being.

—The young fellow whom they call John saw fit to say, in his very familiar way,—at which I do not choose to take offence, but which I sometimes think it necessary to repress, that I was coming it rather strong on the butterflies.

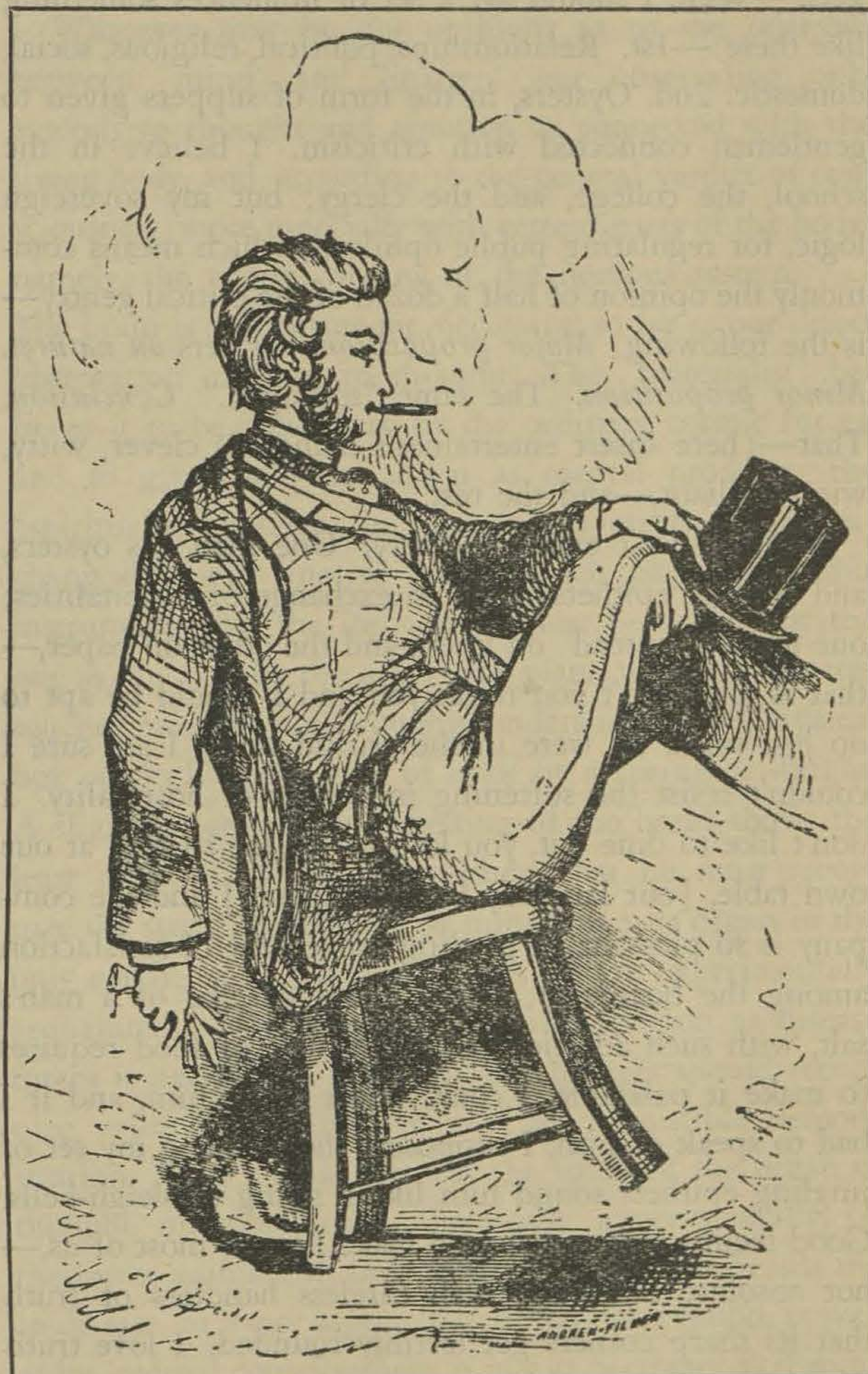
No, I replied; there is meaning in each of those images,—the butterfly as well as the others. The stone is ancient error. The grass is human nature borne down and bleached of all its colour by it. The shapes which are found beneath are the crafty beings that thrive in darkness, and the weaker organisms kept helpless by it. He who turns the stone over is whosoever puts the staff of truth to the old lying incubus, no matter whether he do it with a serious face or a laughing one. The next year stands for the coming time. Then shall the nature which had lain blanched and broken rise in its full stature and native hues in the sunshine. Then shall God's minstrels build their nests in the hearts of a newborn humanity. Then shall beauty—Divinity taking outlines and color—light upon the souls of men as the butterfly, image of the beatified spirit rising from the dust, soars from the shell that held a poor grub, which would never have found wings, had not the stone been lifted.

You never need think you can turn over any old falsehood without a terrible squirming and scattering of the horrid little population that dwells under it.

—Every real thought on every subject knocks the wind out of somebody or other. As soon as his breath comes back, he very probably begins to expend it in hard words. These are the best evidence a man can have that he has said something it was time to say. Dr. Johnson was disappointed in the effect of one of his pamphlets. "I think I have not been attacked enough for it," he said;—"attack is the reaction; I never think I have hit hard unless it rebounds."

—If a fellow attacked my opinions in print, would I reply? Not I. Do you think I don't understand what my friend, the Professor, long ago called *the hydrostatic paradox of controversy?*

Don't know what that means?—Well, I will tell you. You know, that, if you had a bent tube, one arm of which was of the size of a pipe-stem, and the other big enough to hold the ocean, water would stand at the same height in one as in the other. Controversy equalizes fools and wise men in the same way,—*and the fools know it.*



The young fellow whom they call John.

—No, but I often read what they say about other people. There are about a dozen phrases which all come tumbling along together, like the tongs, and the shovel, and the poker, and the brush, and the bellows, in one of those domestic avalanches that everybody knows. If you get one, you get the whole lot.

What are they?—Oh, that depends a good deal on

latitude and longitude. Epithets follow the isothermal lines pretty accurately. Grouping them in two families, one finds himself a clever, genial, witty, wise, brilliant, sparkling, thoughtful, distinguished, celebrated, illustrious scholar and perfect gentleman, and first writer of the age; or a dull, foolish, wicked, pert, shallow, ignorant, insolent, traitorous, black-hearted outcast, and disgrace to civilization.

What do I think determines the set of phrases a man gets?—Well, I should say a set of influences something like these:—1st. Relationships, political, religious, social, domestic. 2nd. Oysters, in the form of suppers given to gentlemen connected with criticism. I believe in the school, the college, and the clergy; but my sovereign logic, for regulating public opinion—which means commonly the opinion of half a dozen of the critical gentry—is the following. *Major proposition.* Oysters *au naturel.* *Minor proposition.* The same "scalloped." *Conclusion.* That—(here insert entertainer's name) is clever, witty, wise, brilliant,—and the rest.

—No, it isn't exactly bribery. One man has oysters, and another epithets. It is an exchange of hospitalities; one gives a "spread" on linen, and the other on paper,—that is all. Don't you think you and I should be apt to do just so, if we were in the critical line? I am sure I couldn't resist the softening influences of hospitality. I don't like to dine out, you know,—I dine so well at our own table, [our landlady looked radiant,] and the company is so pleasant [a rustling movement of satisfaction among the boarders]; but if I did partake of a man's salt, with such additions as that article of food requires to make it palatable, I could never abuse him, and if I had to speak of him, I suppose I should hang my set of jingling epithets round him like a string of sleigh-bells. Good feeling helps society to make liars of most of us,—not absolute liars, but such careless handlers of truth that its sharp corners get terribly rounded. I love truth as chiefest among the virtues; I trust it runs in my blood; but I would never be a critic, because I know I could not always tell it. I might write a criticism of a book that happened to please me; that is another matter.

—Listen, Benjamin Franklin! This is for you, and such others of tender age as you may tell it to.

When we are as yet small children, long before the time when those two grown ladies offer us the choice of Hercules, there comes up to us a youthful angel, holding in his right hand cubes like dice, and in his left spheres like marbles. The cubes are of stainless ivory, and on each is written in letters of gold—TRUTH. The spheres are veined and streaked and spotted beneath, with a dark crimson flush above, where the light falls on them, and in a certain aspect you can make out upon every one of them the three letters L, I, E. The child to whom they are offered very probably clutches at both. The spheres are the most convenient things in the world; they roll with the least possible impulse just where the child would have them. The cubes will not roll at all; they have a great talent for standing still, and always keep right side up. But very soon the young philosopher finds that things which roll so easily are very apt to roll into the wrong corner, and to get out of his way when he most wants them, while he always knows where to find the others, which stay where they are left. Thus he learns—thus we learn—to drop the streaked and speckled globes of falsehood and to hold fast the white angular blocks of truth. But then comes Timidity, and after her Good-nature, and last of all Polite-behavior, all insisting that truth must *roll,* or nobody can do anything with it; and so the first with her coarse rasp, and the second with her broad file, and the third with her silken sleeve, do so round off and smooth and polish the snow-white cubes of truth, that, when they have got a little dingy by use, it becomes hard to tell them from the rolling spheres of falsehood.

The schoolmistress was polite enough to say that she was pleased with this, and that she would read it to her little flock the next day. But she should tell the children, she said, that there were better reasons for truth than could be found in mere experience of its convenience and the inconvenience of lying.

Yes,—I said,—but education always begins through the senses, and works up to the idea of absolute right and wrong. The first thing the child has to learn about this matter is, that lying is unprofitable,—afterwards, that it is against the peace and dignity of the universe.

1858

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17 **au naturel,** in a natural state • 45 **choice of Hercules.** As a youth, according to legend, Hercules had to choose, at a meeting of the ways, between two women—Pleasure and Duty

From

Mechanism in Thought and Morals

"Mechanism in Thought and Morals," an address delivered June 29, 1870, before the Phi Beta Kappa Society of Harvard University, summarizes as well as any other single piece by Holmes his ideas, radical for the time, on moral responsibility. Conservative in his social attitudes, in his conception of what was worth while in literature, Holmes was led by scientific study and speculation to attack fiercely the current attitudes toward sin and its punishment. The deterministic doctrines here advanced figure importantly in many of his writings—in some of his breakfast-table papers, in several essays, and in his "medicated" novels, the most notable of which is **Elsie Venner.** It was perhaps in the advocacy of these views that Holmes had his most profound and widespread effect upon the thought of his time.

Limitations of space have made it necessary to present this wandering essay in a somewhat abbreviated form. The opening two paragraphs and other passages, at the points indicated, have been omitted.

I ask your attention to some considerations on the true mechanical relations of the thinking principle, and to a few hints as to the false mechanical relations which have intruded themselves into the sphere of moral self-determination.

I call that part of mental and bodily life mechanical which is independent of our volition. The beating of our hearts and the secretions of our internal organs will go on, without and in spite of any voluntary effort of ours, as long as we live. Respiration is partially under our control: we can change the rate and special mode of breathing, and even hold our breath for a time; but the most determined suicide cannot strangle himself without the aid of a noose or other contrivance which shall effect what his mere will cannot do. The flow of thought is, like breathing, essentially mechanical and necessary, but incidentally capable of being modified to a greater or less extent by conscious effort. Our natural instincts and tastes have a basis which can no more be reached by the will than the sense of light and darkness, or that of heat and cold. All these things we feel justified in referring to the great First Cause: they belong to the "laws of Nature," as we call them, for which we are not accountable.

Whatever may be our opinions as to the relations between "mind" and "matter," our observation only extends to thought and emotion as connected with the living body, and, according to the general verdict of consciousness, more especially with certain parts of the body; namely, the central organs of the nervous system. . . . The brain is an instrument, necessary, so far as our direct observation extends, to thought. The "materialist" believes it to be wound up by the ordinary cosmic forces, and to give them out again as mental products: the "spiritualist" believes in a conscious entity, not interchangeable with motive force, which plays upon this instrument. But the instrument must be studied by the one as much as by the other: the piano which the master touches must be as thoroughly understood as the musical box or clock which goes of itself by a spring or weight. A slight congestion or softening of the brain shows the least materialistic of philosophers that he must recognize the strict dependence of mind upon its organ in the only condition of life with which we are experimentally acquainted. And what all recognize as soon as disease forces it upon their attention, all thinkers should recognize, without waiting for such an irresistible demonstration. They should see that the study of the organ of thought, microscopically, chemically, experimentally, on the lower animals, in individuals and races, in health and in disease, in every aspect of external observation, as well as by internal consciousness, is just as necessary as if mind were known to be nothing more than a function of the brain, in the same way as digestion is of the stomach. . . .

The resemblance of the act of intelligence to that of vision is remarkably shown in the terms we borrow from one to describe the other. We *see* a truth; we *throw light* on a subject; we *elucidate* a proposition; we *darken* counsel; we are *blinded* by prejudice; we take a *narrow view* of things; we look at our neighbor with a

jaundiced eye. These are familiar expressions; but we can go much farther. We have intellectual myopes, near-sighted specialists, and philosophers who are purblind to all but the distant abstract. We have judicial intellects as nearly achromatic as the organ of vision, eyes that are color-blind, and minds that seem hardly to have the sense of beauty. The old brain thinks the world grows worse, as the old retina thinks the eyes of needles and the fractions in the printed sales of stocks grow smaller. Just as the eye seeks to refresh itself by resting on neutral tints after looking at brilliant colors, the mind turns from the glare of intellectual brilliancy to the solace of gentle dulness; the tranquillizing green of the sweet human qualities, which do not make us shade our eyes like the spangles of conversational gymnasts and *figurantes. . . .*

The more we examine the mechanism of thought, the more we shall see that the automatic, unconscious action of the mind enters largely into all its processes. Our definite ideas are stepping-stones; how we get from one to the other, we do not know: something carries us; we do not take the step. A creating and informing spirit which is with us, and not of us, is recognized everywhere in real and in storied life. It is the Zeus that kindled the rage of Achilles; it is the Muse of Homer; it is the Daimon of Socrates; it is the inspiration of the seer; it is the mocking devil that whispers to Margaret as she kneels at the altar; and the hobgoblin that cried, "Sell him, sell him!" in the ear of John Bunyan: it shaped the forms that filled the soul of Michael Angelo when he saw the figure of the great Lawgiver in the yet unhewn marble, and the dome of the world's yet unbuilt basilica against the blank horizon; it comes to the least of us, as a voice that will be heard; it tells us what we must believe; it frames our sentences; it lends a sudden gleam of sense or eloquence to the dullest of us all, so that, like Katterfelto with his hair on end, we wonder at ourselves, or rather not at ourselves, but at this divine visitor, who chooses our brain as his dwelling-place, and invests our naked thought with the purple of the kings of speech or song.

After all, the mystery of unconscious mental action is exemplified, as I have said, in every act of mental association. What happens when one idea brings up another? Some internal movement, of which we are wholly unconscious, and which we only know by its effect. What is this action, which in Dame Quickly agglutinates contiguous circumstances by their surfaces; in men of wit and fancy, connects remote ideas by partial resemblances; in men of imagination, by the vital identity which underlies phenomenal diversity; in the man of science, groups the objects of thought in sequences of maximum resemblance? Not one of them can answer. There is a Delphi and a Pythoness in every human breast.

The poet sits down to his desk with an odd conceit in his brain; and presently his eyes fill with tears, his thought slides into the minor key, and his heart is full of sad and plaintive melodies. Or he goes to his work, saying, "To-night I would have tears;" and, before he rises from his table he has written a burlesque, such as he might think fit to send to one of the comic papers, if these were not so commonly cemeteries of hilarity interspersed with cenotaphs of wit and humor. These strange hysterics of the intelligence, which make us pass from weeping to laughter, and from laughter back again to weeping, must be familiar to every impressible nature; and all is as automatic, involuntary, as entirely self-evolved by a hidden organic process, as are the changing moods of the laughing and crying woman. The poet always recognizes a dictation *ab extra;* and we hardly think it a figure of speech when we talk of his inspiration.

The mental attitude of the poet while writing, if I may venture to define it, is that of the "nun breathless with adoration." Mental stillness is the first condition of the listening state; and I think my friends the poets will recognize that the sense of effort, which is often felt, accompanies the mental spasm by which the mind is maintained in a state at once passive to the influx from without, and active in seizing only that which will serve its purpose. It is not strange that remembered ideas should often take advantage of the crowd of thoughts, and smuggle themselves in as original. Honest thinkers are always stealing unconsciously from each other. Our minds are full of waifs and estrays which we think are

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24 **Achilles,** Trojan hero in the battle of Troy, was inspired to wrath by Zeus • 24 **Daimon, Daemon**—a transliteration of the Greek—an inspiring demon • 26 **Margaret,** the heroine of Faust • 30 **great Lawgiver,** Moses, pictured in one of Michelangelo's most famous murals • 35 **Katterfelto.** See Cowper, The Task, Bk. IV, "Winter Evening," l. 86: "Katterfelto with his hair on end" • 45 **Dame Quickly,** scatterbrained hostess of a tavern in Eastcheap, a character in **Henry IV** and **The Merry Wives of Windsor** • 51 **Delphi,** dwelling place of the Greek oracle • 52 **Pythoness,** the oracle of Delphi • 68 **ab extra,** from without

our own. Innocent plagiarism turns up everywhere. Our best musical critic tells me that a few notes of the air of "Shoo Fly" are borrowed from a movement in one of the magnificent harmonies of Beethoven.

And so the orator,—I do not mean the poor slave of a manuscript, who takes his thought chilled and stiffened from its mould, but the impassioned speaker who pours it forth as it flows coruscating from the furnace,—the orator only becomes our master at the moment when he himself is surprised, captured, taken possession of, by a sudden rush of fresh inspiration. How well we know the flash of the eye, the thrill of the voice, which are the signature and symbol of nascent thought,—thought just emerging into consciousness, in which condition, as is the case with the chemist's elements, it has a combining force at other times wholly unknown!

But we are all more or less improvisators. We all have a double, who is wiser and better than we are, and who puts thoughts into our heads, and words into our mouths. Do we not all commune with our own hearts upon our beds? Do we not all divide ourselves, and go to buffets on questions of right or wrong, of wisdom or folly? Who or what is it that resolves the stately parliament of the day, with all its forms and conventionalities and pretences, and the great Me presiding, into the committee of the whole, with Conscience in the chair, that holds its solemn session through the watches of the night? . . .

The mechanical co-efficient of mental action may be therefore considered a molecular movement in the nervous centres, attended with waste of material conveyed thither in the form of blood,—not a mere tremor like the quiver of a bell, but a process more like combustion; the blood carrying off the oxidated particles, and bringing in fresh matter to take their place.

This part of the complex process must, of course, enter into the category of the correlated forces. The brain must be fed in order to work; and according to the amount of waste of material will be that of the food required to repair losses. So much logic, so much beef; so much poetry, so much pudding: and, as we all know that growing things are but sponges soaked full of old sunshine, Apollo becomes as important in the world of letters as ever.

But the intellectual product does not belong to the category of force at all, as defined by physicists. It does not answer their definition as "that which is expended in producing or resisting motion." It is not reconvertible into other forms of force. One cannot lift a weight with a logical demonstration, or make a tea-kettle boil by writing an ode to it. A given amount of molecular action in two brains represents a certain equivalent of food, but by no means an equivalent of intellectual product. Bavius and Mævius were very probably as good feeders as Virgil and Horace, and wasted as much brain-tissue in producing their *carmina* as the two great masters wasted in producing theirs. It may be doubted whether the present Laureate of England consumed more oxidable material in the shape of nourishment for every page of "Maud" or of "In Memoriam" than his predecessor Nahum Tate, whose masterpiece gets no better eulogy than that it is "the least miserable of his productions," in eliminating an equal amount of verse.

As mental labor, in distinction from the passive flow of thought, implies an exercise of will, and as mental labor is shown to be attended by an increased waste, the presumption is that this waste is in some degree referable to the material requirements of the act of volition. We see why the latter should be attended by a sense of effort, and followed by a feeling of fatigue. . . .

The connection between thought and the structure and condition of the brain is evidently so close that all we have to do is to study it. It is not in this direction that materialism is to be feared: we do not find Hamlet and Faust, right or wrong, the valor of men and the purity of women, by testing for albumen, or examining fibres in microscopes.

It is in the moral world that materialism has worked the strangest confusion. In various forms, under imposing names and aspects, it has thrust itself into the moral relations, until one hardly knows where to look for any first principles without upsetting everything in searching for them.

The moral universe includes nothing but the exercise of choice: all else is machinery. What we can help and what we cannot help are on two sides of a line which separates the sphere of human responsibility from that

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3 Shoo Fly, a popular song with a catchy air, the burden of its lyrics being that the fly is not to bother the singer • **41 Apollo,** patron of music and poetry • **51 Bavius and Mævius,** minor Latin poets • **52 Virgil and Horace,** major Latin poets • **54 carmina,** blood • **56 Laureate,** Tennyson • **58 Nahum Tate** (1652-1715), poet laureate (1692-1715), of whose verse Pope said, "It is not poetry, but prose run mad"

of the Being who has arranged and controls the order of things.

The question of the freedom of the will has been an open one, from the days of Milton's demons in conclave to the recent most noteworthy essay of Mr. Hazard, our Rhode Island neighbor. It still hangs suspended between the seemingly exhaustive strongest motive argument and certain residual convictions. The sense that we are, to a limited extent, self-determining; the sense of effort in willing; the sense of responsibility in view of the future, and the verdict of conscience in review of the past, —all of these are open to the accusation of fallacy; but they all leave a certain undischarged balance in most minds. We can invoke the strong arm of the *Deus ex machina,* as Mr. Hazard, and Kant and others, before him, have done. Our will may be a primary initiating cause or force, as unexplainable, as unreducible, as indecomposable, as impossible if you choose, but as real to our belief, as the *æternitas a parte ante.* The divine foreknowledge is no more in the way of delegated choice than the divine omnipotence is in the way of delegated power. The Infinite can surely slip the cable of the finite if it choose so to do.

It is one thing to prove a proposition like the doctrine of necessity in terms, and another thing to accept it as an article of faith. There are cases in which I would oppose to the *credo quia impossibile est* a paradox as bold and as serviceable,—*nego quia probatum est.* Even Mr. Huxley, who throws quite as much responsibility on protoplasm as it will bear, allows that "our volition counts for something as a condition of the course of events."

I reject, therefore, the mechanical doctrine which makes me the slave of outside influences, whether it work with the logic of Edwards, or the averages of Buckle; whether it come in the shape of the Greek's destiny, or the Mahometan's fatalism; or in that other aspect, dear to the band of believers, whom Beesly of Everton, speaking in the character of John Wesley, characterized as

"The crocodile crew that believe in election."

But I claim the right to eliminate all mechanical ideas which have crowded into the sphere of intelligent choice between right and wrong. The pound of flesh I will grant to Nemesis; but, in the name of human nature, not one drop of blood,—not one drop.

Moral chaos began with the idea of transmissible responsibility. It seems the stalest of truisms to say that every moral act, depending as it does on choice, is in its nature exclusively personal; that its penalty, if it have any, is payable, not to bearer, not to order, but only to the creditor himself. To treat a mal-volition, which is inseparably involved with an internal condition, as capable of external transfer from one person to another, is simply to materialize it. When we can take dimensions of virtue by triangulation; when we can literally weigh Justice in her own scales; when we can speak of specific gravity of truth, or the square root of honesty; when we can send a statesman his integrity in a package to Washington, if he happen to have left it behind,—then we may begin to speak of the moral character of inherited tendencies, which belong to the machinery for which the Sovereign Power alone is responsible. The misfortune of perverse instincts, which adhere to us as congenital inheritances, should go to our side of the account, if the books of heaven are kept, as the great Church of Christendom maintains they are, by double entry. But the absurdity which has been held up to ridicule in the nursery has been enforced as the highest reason upon older children. Did our forefathers tolerate Æsop among them? "I cannot trouble the water where you are," says the lamb to the wolf: "don't you see that I am farther down the stream?" —"But a year ago you called me ill names."—"Oh sir! a year ago I was not born."—"Sirrah," replies the wolf, "if it was not you, it was your father, and that is all one;" and finishes with the usual practical application.

If a created being has no rights which his Creator is bound to respect, there is an end to all moral relations between them. Good Father Abraham thought he had, and did not hesitate to give his opinion. "Far be it from Thee," he says, to do so and so. And Pascal, whose

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14 **Deus ex machina,** a god out of a machine; the supernatural assistant of man in classical drama • 19 **æternitas . . . ante,** before eternity • 27 **credo . . . est.** I believe because it is impossible • 28 **nego . . . est.** I disbelieve because it has been proved • 28 **Huxley,** Thomas Henry Huxley (1825-1895), famous exponent of the Darwinian hypothesis • 35 **Buckle,** Henry Thomas Buckle (1821-1862), English historian • 38 **John Wesley** (1703-1791), English preacher and founder of Methodism • 40 **The crocodile crew,** "Southey's **Life of Wesley,** Vol. II, note 28."—Holmes • 44 **Nemesis,** the righteous anger of the gods • 66 **the absurdity . . . nursery,** in the fable of Æsop cited at the end of the paragraph • 80 **Pascal,** Blaise Pascal (1623-1662), French philosopher

reverence amounted to theophobia, could treat of the duties of the Supreme to the dependent being. If we suffer for anything except our own wrong-doing, to call it punishment is like speaking of a yard of veracity or a square inch of magnanimity.

So to rate the gravity of a mal-volition by its consequences is the merest sensational materialism. A little child takes a prohibited friction-match: it kindles a conflagration with it, which burns down the house, and perishes itself in the flames. Mechanically, this child was an incendiary and a suicide; morally, neither. Shall we hesitate to speak as charitably of multitudes of weak and ignorant grown-up children, moving about on a planet whose air is a deadly poison, which kills all that breathe it four or five scores of years?

Closely allied to this is the pretence that the liabilities incurred by any act of mal-volition are to be measured on the scale of the Infinite, and not on that of the total moral capacity of the finite agent,—a mechanical application of the Oriental way of dealing with offences. The sheik or sultan chops a man's head off for a look he does not like: it is not the amount of wrong, but the importance of the personage who has been outraged. We have none of those moral relations with power, as such, which the habitual Eastern modes of speech seem to imply.

The next movement in moral materialism is to establish a kind of scale of equivalents between perverse moral choice and physical suffering. Pain often cures *ignorance,* as we know,—as when a child learns not to handle fire by burning its fingers,—but it does not change the moral nature. Children may be whipped into obedience, but not into virtue; and it is not pretended that the penal colony of heaven has sent back a single reformed criminal. We hang men for our convenience or safety; sometimes shoot them for revenge. Thus we come to associate the infliction of injury with offences as their satisfactory settlement,—a kind of neutralization of them, as of an acid with an alkali: so that we feel as if a jarring moral universe would be all right if only suffering enough were added to it. This scheme of chemical equivalents seems to me, I confess, a worse materialism than making protoplasm master of arts and doctor of divinity.

Another mechanical notion is that which treats moral evil as bodily disease has so long been treated,—as being a distinct entity, a demon to be expelled, a load to be got rid of, instead of a condition, or the result of a condition. But what is most singular in the case of moral disease is, that it has been forgotten that it is a living creature in which it occurs, and that all living creatures are the subjects of natural and spontaneous healing processes. A broken vase cannot mend itself; but a broken bone can. Nature, that is, the Divinity, in his every-day working methods, will soon make it as strong as ever.

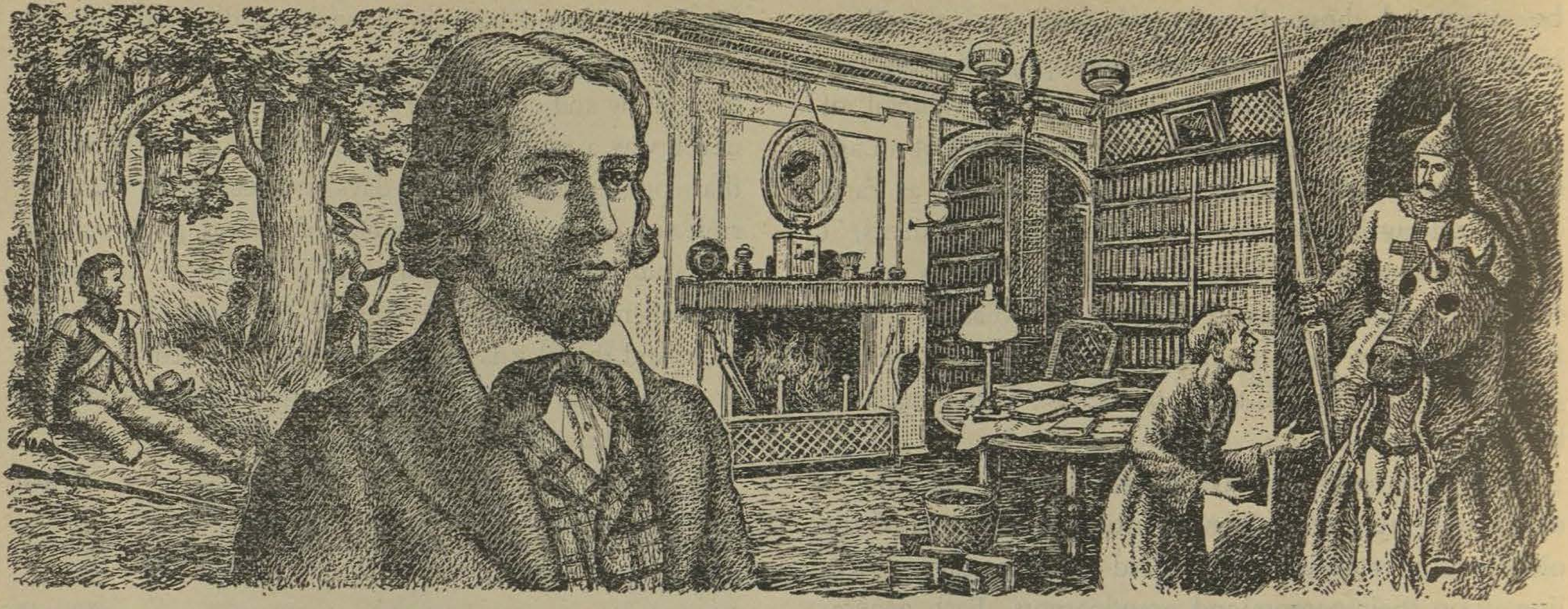
Suppose the beneficent self-healing process to have repaired the wound in the moral nature: is it never to become an honest scar, but always liable to be reopened? Is there no outlawry of an obsolete self-determination? If the President of the Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals impaled a fly on a pin when he was ten years old, is it to stand against him, crying for a stake through his body, *in sæcula sæculorum?* The most popular hymn of Protestantism, and the "Dies Iræ" of Romanism, are based on this assumption: *Nil inultum remanebit.* So it is that a condition of a conscious being has been materialized into a purely inorganic brute fact, —not merely dehumanized, but deanimalized and devitalized.

Here it was that Swedenborg, whose whole secret I will not pretend to have fully opened, though I have tried with the key of a thinker whom I love and honor,—that Swedenborg, I say, seems to have come in, if not with a new revelation, at least infusing new life into the earlier ones. *What we are* will determine the company we are to keep, and not the avoirdupois weight of our moral exuviæ, strapped on our shoulders like a porter's burden.

Having once materialized the whole province of self-determination and its consequences, the next thing is, of course, to materialize the methods of avoiding these consequences. We are all, more or less, idolaters, and believers in quackery. We love specifics better than regimen, and observances better than self-government. The moment our belief divorces itself from character,

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1 **theophobia.** "I use this term to designate a state of mind thus described by Jeremy Taylor: 'There are some persons so miserable and scrupulous, such perpetual tormentors of themselves with unnecessary fears, that their meat and drink is a snare to their consciences. These persons do not believe noble things of God.' "—Holmes • 62 **in sæcula sæculorum,** for ages of ages • 63 **Dies Iræ,** Day of Wrath • 64 **Nil inultum remanebit.** Nothing will remain unavenged • 69 **Swedenborg,** Emanuel Swedenborg. See note, p. 662



to express himself in political essays, criticism, and poetry to the time of his death, at Elmwood, August 12, 1891. The wide range of activity represented in his life is paralleled by the wide range in the writings of this most versatile of the Cambridge authors.

In the years before his appointment at Harvard, Lowell, largely because of the influence of his first wife, Maria White, became a leading writer in behalf of abolition. His *Biglow Papers* (first series, 1848; second series, 1867) in Yankee dialect were his chief contribution to anti-slavery literature. These writings, in the crackerbox philosopher tradition of Jack Downing (see p. 1054) and others, effectively argued for Lowell's beliefs on the basis of common sense. Most notable of his other political writings are *On a Certain Condescension in Foreigners* (1869) and *Democracy* (1884), which have a mannered elegance strikingly different from the Yankee diatribes.

In the field of belles-lettres, Lowell wrote both criticism and poetry. His earliest criticism was largely a report of enthusiasms for various literary works. It was frankly subjective and impressionistic, deriving whatever value it had from Lowell's sensitivity and his ability to state his reactions in striking phrases. In *A Fable for Critics* (1848) brilliantly rhymed and witty commentaries on his contemporaries marked the height of this kind of criticism. Beginning in the 1850's, however, his study of the classic critics, of Goethe, and of Coleridge led him to adopt less impressionistic methods when he dealt with authors. His later criticism, stressing the relationship between the period and the author, between the author and his work, and between the details and the whole composition, was best represented in such collections of critical essays as *Among My Books* (first series, 1870; second series, 1876) and *My Study Windows* (1871). The essays in these volumes deal with the great authors of various lands and periods from the Middle Ages to the nineteenth century—Dante, Chaucer, Shakespeare, Milton, Wordsworth, Swinburne, and others. They not only communicate Lowell's judgments in memorable terms but also employ rather systematic tests of literary excellence and many illuminating comparisons or contrasts.

Lowell's students declare that his literary essays and his classroom talk were quite similar. Professor Will D. Howe in his "Introduction" to *Selected Literary Essays from James Russell Lowell* (Boston, 1914) quotes Barrett Wendell's testimony: "Now and again, some word or some passage would suggest to him a line of thought —sometimes very earnest, sometimes paradoxically comical—that it would never have suggested to any one else. And he would lean back in his chair and talk away across country till he felt like stopping; or he would thrust his hands into the pockets of his rather shabby sack-coat, and pace the end of the room in his heavy laced boots, and look at nothing in particular, and discourse of things in general." A learned man, he was at ease with his learn-

Panel (l. to r.): Birdofredum Sawin, of **The Biglow Papers** • James Russell Lowell at 25 • His study at Elmwood • Sir Launfal encounters the leper

ing; a scholar, he did not let pedantry overwhelm either his sense of humor or his saltiness of phrase.

Much of the poetry which Lowell wrote might have been written by either Longfellow or Holmes: it had similar material, a similar arrangement, and a similar form. In some of his other poems, though, he showed his kinship with the new generation, which included such writers as Emily Dickinson and Walt Whitman, by departing more frequently than his famous fellow townsmen from the well-established verse patterns. His versification, for example, like that of both British and American poets of the day, often fell into lines of uneven length and of varied meters. As a poet Lowell was versatile enough to publish the rustic Biglow verses, the sparklingly witty *Fable for Critics,* and the moralizing metrical romance, *The Vision of Sir Launfal,* all in one year. Although his versatility somewhat diffused his energies, he did write some good poetry. Lowell was at his poetic best, perhaps, in some of his nature poems and in some of his odes—notably "Ode Recited at the Harvard Commemoration" (1865).

The Writings of James Russell Lowell, 10 vols., Boston, 1890 • F. H. Underwood, The Poet and the Man, Boston, 1893 • H. E. Scudder, James Russell Lowell, Boston, 1906 • Letters of James Russell Lowell, ed. C. E. Norton, 2 vols., New York, 1906

To the Dandelion

America, in the early forties, developed a great passion for democracy—a passion shared by Lowell and his bride of 1844. In the early days of their marriage this couple had astonished some of their neighbors by insisting that old family servants sit at the table with them at mealtime. Lowell worked sentences praising democracy into his critical articles and into his editorials. Expressive of his current enthusiasm for democracy, this song uses the humble flower as a symbol of the glory of the common man. The choice of imagery, except perhaps in part of the fourth stanza, is highly appropriate to the development of the thought. In this poem, published in Graham's Magazine in January 1845, Lowell showed that now and then he could write a lyric poem which had both richness and unity.

Dear common flower, that grow'st beside the way,
Fringing the dusty road with harmless gold,
First pledge of blithesome May,
Which children pluck, and, full of pride, uphold,
High-hearted buccaneers, o'erjoyed that they
An Eldorado in the grass have found,
Which not the rich earth's ample round
May match in wealth,—thou art more dear to me
Than all the prouder summer-blooms may be.

Gold such as thine ne'er drew the Spanish prow
Through the primeval hush of Indian seas,
Nor wrinkled the lean brow
Of age, to rob the lover's heart of ease,
'Tis the spring's largess, which she scatters now
To rich and poor alike, with lavish hand,
Though most hearts never understand
To take it at God's value, but pass by
The offered wealth with unrewarded eye.

Thou art my tropics and mine Italy;
To look at thee unlocks a warmer clime;
The eyes thou givest me
Are in the heart, and heed not space or time:
Not in mid June the golden cuirassed bee
Feels a more summer-like warm ravishment
In the white lily's breezy tent,
His fragrant Sybaris, than I, when first
From the dark green thy yellow circles burst.

Then think I of deep shadows on the grass,
Of meadows where in sun the cattle graze,
Where, as the breezes pass,
The gleaming rushes lean a thousand ways,
Of leaves that slumber in a cloudy mass,
Or whiten in the wind, of waters blue
That from the distance sparkle through
Some woodland gap, and of a sky above,
Where one white cloud like a stray lamb doth move.

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26 **Sybaris,** an ancient Greek city famous for its luxury and for the voluptuousness which flourished in its mild climate

My childhood's earliest thoughts are linked with thee;
The sight of thee calls back the robin's song,
Who, from the dark old tree
Beside the door, sang clearly all day long,
And I, secure in childish piety,
Listened as if I heard an angel sing
With news from heaven, which he could bring
Fresh every day to my untainted ears,
When birds and flowers and I were happy peers.

How like a prodigal doth nature seem,
When thou, for all thy gold, so common art!
Thou teachest me to deem
More sacredly of every human heart,
Since each reflects in joy its scanty gleam
Of heaven and, could some wondrous secret show
Did we but pay the love we owe,
And with a child's undoubting wisdom look
On all these living pages of God's book.

1845

From

A Fable for Critics

Lowell wrote that "this jeu d'esprit was extemporized, I may say, so rapidly was it written. . . . I sent daily installments to a friend in New York, the late Charles Briggs. He urged me to let it be printed, and I at last consented to its anonymous publication."

As Lowell said at the outset of the poem, its plot,

> . . . like an icicle, 's slender and slippery,
> Every moment more slender, and likely to slip awry. . . .

In the main, it presents a critic explaining to Apollo what American authors of the period were like. The passages below (the titles were supplied by the editors) are the critic's remarks about the leading figures dealt with in the poem, as well as those about two minor authors famous at the time, Dana and Neal.

A long line of ancestors might be cited for the poem, notably Byron's "English Bards and Scotch Reviewers" and a poem which Lowell had enjoyed reading not long before 1847—Leigh Hunt's "Feast of the Poets." For discernment, liveliness, and wit, Lowell's poem compares very favorably with these predecessors.

EMERSON

"There comes Emerson first, whose rich words, every one,
Are like gold nails in temples to hang trophies on,
Whose prose is grand verse, while his verse, the Lord knows,
Is some of it pr— No, 't is not even prose;
I'm speaking of metres; some poems have welled
From those rare depths of soul that have ne'er been excelled;
They're not epics, but that doesn't matter a pin,
In creating, the only hard thing's to begin;
A grass-blade's no easier to make than an oak;
If you've once found the way, you've achieved the grand stroke;
In the worst of his poems are mines of rich matter,
But thrown in a heap with a crash and a clatter;
Now it is not one thing nor another alone
Makes a poem, but rather the general tone,
The something pervading, uniting the whole,
The before unconceived, unconceivable soul,
So that just in removing this trifle or that, you
Take away, as it were, a chief limb of the statue;
Roots, wood, bark, and leaves singly perfect may be,
But, clapt hodge-podge together, they don't make a tree.

"But, to come back to Emerson (whom, by the way,
I believe we left waiting),—his is, we may say,

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2 gold nails. See Ecclesiastes 12:11: "The words of the wise are as . . . nails fastened by the masters of assemblies . . ." • 5 metres, a reference to Emerson's rather bumpy versification

A Greek head on right Yankee shoulders, whose range
Has Olympus for one pole, for t'other the Exchange;
He seems, to my thinking (although I'm afraid
The comparison must, long ere this, have been made),
A Plotinus-Montaigne, where the Egyptian's gold mist
And the Gascon's shrewd wit cheek-by-jowl coexist;
All admire, and yet scarcely six converts he's got
To I don't (nor they either) exactly know what;
For though he builds glorious temples, 'tis odd
He leaves never a doorway to get in a god.
'T is refreshing to old-fashioned people like me
To meet such a primitive Pagan as he,
In whose mind all creation is duly respected
As parts of himself—just a little projected;
And who's willing to worship the stars and the sun,
A convert to—nothing but Emerson.
So perfect a balance there is in his head,
That he talks of things sometimes as if they were dead;
Life, nature, love, God, and affairs of that sort,
He looks at as merely ideas; in short,
As if they were fossils stuck round in a cabinet,
Of such vast extent that our earth's a mere dab in it;
Composed just as he is inclined to conjecture her,
Namely, one part pure earth, ninety-nine parts pure lecturer;
You are filled with delight at his clear demonstration,
Each figure, word, gesture, just fits the occasion,
With the quiet precision of science he'll sort 'em,
But you can't help suspecting the whole a *post mortem*.

"There are persons, mole-blind to the soul's make and style,
Who insist on a likeness 'twixt him and Carlyle;
To compare him with Plato would be vastly fairer,
Carlyle's the more burly, but E. is the rarer;
He sees fewer objects, but clearlier, truelier,
If C.'s as original, E.'s more peculiar;
That he's more of a man you might say of the one,
Of the other he's more of an Emerson;
C.'s the Titan, as shaggy of mind as of limb,—
E. the clear-eyed Olympian, rapid and slim;
The one's two thirds Norseman, the other half Greek,
Where the one's most abounding, the other's to seek;
C.'s generals require to be seen in the mass,—
E.'s specialties gain if enlarged by the glass;
C. gives nature and God his own fits of the blues,
And rims common-sense things with mystical hues,—
E. sits in a mystery calm and intense,
And looks coolly around him with sharp common-sense;
C. shows you how every-day matters unite
With the dim transdiurnal recesses of night,—
While E., in a plain, preternatural way,
Makes mysteries matters of mere every day;
C. draws all his characters quite *a la* Fuseli,—
Not sketching their bundles of muscles and thews illy,
He paints with a brush so untamed and profuse,
They seem nothing but bundles of muscles and thews;
E. is rather like Flaxman, lines strait and severe,
And a colorless outline, but full, round, and clear;—
To the men he thinks worthy he frankly accords
The design of a white marble statue in words.
C. labors to get at the centre, and then
Take a reckoning from there of his actions and men;
E. calmly assumes the said centre as granted,
And, given himself, has whatever is wanted.

"He has imitators in scores, who omit
No part of the man but his wisdom and wit,—
Who go carefully o'er the sky-blue of his brain,
And when he has skimmed it once, skim it again;
If at all they resemble him, you may be sure it is
Because their shoals mirror his mists and obscurities,
As a mud-puddle seems deep as heaven for a minute,
While a cloud that floats o'er is reflected within it.

BRYANT

"There is Bryant, as quiet, as cool, and as dignified,
As a smooth, silent iceberg, that never is ignified,
Save when by reflection 'tis kindled o' nights

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24 **Olympus**, dwelling place of the Grecian gods. Here Lowell is referring to Emerson's Platonic idealism • 24 **Exchange**, symbol of Emerson's practicality. When a typical Brahmin praised a Transcendentalist, he was likely to laud him for not being too impractical • 27 **Plotinus-Montaigne** repeats the claim that Emerson was a happy mixture of idealism and practicality. Plotinus (205?-270?) was the most famous of the neo-Platonic philosophers. Michel Eyquem de Montaigne (1553-1592) was a French skeptic, essayist, and moralist • 59 **Titan**, earth-born giant, contrasted here with the heaven-born Olympian • 63 **generals**, generalizations • 73 **Fuseli.** Heinrich Fuseli (1742?-1825), a German-Swiss painter, was noted for his distortions of form and the extravagance of his colors • 77 **Flaxman**, John Flaxman (1755-1826), an English sculptor who followed classic models

With a semblance of flame by the chill Northern Lights.
He may rank (Griswold says so) first bard of your nation
(There's no doubt that he stands in supreme ice-olation),
Your topmost Parnassus he may set his heel on,
But no warm applauses come, peal following peal on,—
He's too smooth and too polished to hang any zeal on:
Unqualified merits, I'll grant, if you choose, he has 'em,
But he lacks the one merit of kindling enthusiasm;
If he stir you at all, it is just, on my soul,
Like being stirred up with the very North Pole.

"He is very nice reading in summer, but *inter*
Nos, we don't want *extra* freezing in winter,
Take him up in the depth of July, my advice is,
When you feel an Egyptian devotion to ices.
But, deduct all you can, there's enough that's right good in him,
He has a true soul for field, river, and wood in him;
And his heart, in the midst of brick walls, or where'er it is,
Glows, softens, and thrills with the tenderest charities—
To you mortals that delve in this trade-ridden planet?
No, to old Berkshire's hills, with their limestone and granite.
If you're one who *in loco* (add *foco* here) *desipis,*
You will get of his outermost heart (as I guess) a piece;
But you'd get deeper down if you came as a precipice,
And would break the last seal of its inwardest fountain,
If you only could palm yourself off for a mountain.
Mr. Quivis, or somebody quite as discerning,
Some scholar who's hourly expecting his learning,
Calls B. the American Wordsworth; but Wordsworth
May be rated at more than your whole tuneful herd's worth.
No, don't be absurd, he's an excellent Bryant;
But, my friends, you'll endanger the life of your client,
By attempting to stretch him up into a giant:
If you choose to compare him, I think there are two persons fit for a parallel—Thompson and Cowper;
I don't mean exactly—there's something of each,
There's T.'s love of nature, C.'s penchant to preach;
Just mix up their minds so that C.'s spice of craziness
Shall balance and neutralize T.'s turn for laziness,
And it gives you a brain cool, quite frictionless, quiet,
Whose internal police nips the buds of all riot,—
A brain like a permanent straight-jacket put on
The heart that strives vainly to burst off a button,—
A brain which, without being slow or mechanic,
Does more than a larger less drilled, more volcanic;
He's a Cowper condensed, with no craziness bitten,
And the advantage that Wordsworth before him had written.

"But, my dear little bardlings, don't prick up your ears
Nor suppose I would rank you and Bryant as peers;
If I call him an iceberg, I don't mean to say
There is nothing in that which is grand in its way;
He is almost the one of your poets that knows
How much grace, strength, and dignity lie in Repose;
If he sometimes fall short, he is too wise to mar
His thought's modest fulness by going too far;
'T would be well if your authors should all make a trial
Of what virtue there is in severe self-denial,
And measure their writings by Hesiod's staff,
Which teaches that all has less value than half.

WHITTIER

"There is Whittier, whose swelling and vehement heart
Strains the strait-breasted drab of the Quaker apart,
And reveals the live Man, still supreme and erect,
Underneath the bemummying wrappers of sect;
There was ne'er a man born who had more of the swing
Of the true lyric bard and all that kind of thing;
And his failures arise (though he seem not to know it)
From the very same cause that has made him a poet,—
A fervor of mind which knows no separation
'Twixt simple excitement and pure inspiration,
As my Pythoness erst sometimes erred from not knowing
If 'twere I or mere wind through her tripod was blowing;

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97 **Griswold,** Rufus Griswold (1815-1857), a leading nineteenth-century anthologist • 106 **inter Nos,** between ourselves • 116 **in . . . desipis.** You can be foolish in a particular place. The "add **foco** here" adds a rather complicated pun, referring not only to "one's own fireside" but also to the then-famous Locofoco political party • 121 **Mr. Quivis,** Mr. Anybody • 129 **Thompson,** properly spelled Thomson, James (1700-1748), author of **The Seasons** • 129 **Cowper,** William Cowper (1731-1800), author of **The Task.** At this point Lowell wrote this rhymed footnote:

To demonstrate quickly and easily how per-
versely absurd 'tis to sound his **Cowper**
As people in general call him named **super**
I remark that he rhymes it himself with horse-trooper.

• 152 **Hesiod** (fl. 766 B.C.), a Greek poet, author of **Works and Days** • 164 **Pythoness.** See note, p. 826

Let his mind once get head in its favorite direction
And the torrent of verse bursts the dams of reflection,
While, borne with the rush of the metre along,
The poet may chance to go right or go wrong,
Content with the whirl and delirium of song;
Then his grammar's not always correct, nor his rhymes,
And he's prone to repeat his own lyrics sometimes,
Not his best, though, for those are struck off at white-heats
When the heart in his breast like a trip-hammer beats,
And can ne'er be repeated again any more
Than they could have been carefully plotted before:
Like old what's-his-name there at the battle of Hastings
(Who, however, gave more than mere rhythmical bastings),
Our Quaker leads off metaphorical fights
For reform and whatever they call human rights,
Both singing and striking in front of the war,
And hitting his foes with the mallet of Thor;
Anne haec, one exclaims, on beholding his knocks,
Vestis filii tui, O leather-clad Fox?
Can that be thy son, in the battle's mid din,
Preaching brotherly love and then driving it in
To the brain of the tough old Goliath of sin,
With the smoothest of pebbles from Castaly's spring
Impressed on his hard moral sense with a sling?

"All honor and praise to the right-hearted bard
Who was true to The Voice when such service was hard,
Who himself was so free he dared sing for the slave
When to look but a protest in silence was brave;
All honor and praise to the women and men
Who spoke out for the dumb and the down-trodden then!
It needs not to name them, already for each
I see History preparing the statue and niche;
They were harsh, but shall *you* be so shocked at hard words
Who have beaten your pruning-hooks up into swords,
Whose rewards and hurrahs men are surer to gain
By the reaping of men and of women than grain?
Why should *you* stand aghast at their fierce wordy war, if
You scalp one another for Bank or for Tariff?
Your calling them cut-throats and knaves all day long
Doesn't prove that the use of hard language is wrong;
While the World's heart beats quicker to think of such men
As signed Tyranny's doom with a bloody steel-pen,
While on Fourth-of-Julys beardless orators fright one
With hints at Harmodius and Aristogeiton,
You need not look shy at your sisters and brothers
Who stab with sharp words for the freedom of others;—
No, a wreath, twine a wreath for the the loyal and true
Who, for sake of the many, dared stand with the few,
Not of blood-spattered laurel for enemies braved,
But of broad, peaceful oak-leaves for citizens saved!

DANA

"Here comes Dana, abstractedly loitering along,
Involved in a paulo-post-future of song,
Who'll be going to write what'll never be written
Till the Muse, ere he think of it, gives him the mitten,—
Who is so well aware of how things should be done,
That his own works displease him before they're begun,—
Who so well all that makes up good poetry knows,
That the best of his poems is written in prose;
All saddled and bridled stood Pegasus waiting,
He was booted and spurred, but he loitered debating;
In a very grave question his soul was immersed,—
Which foot in the stirrup he ought to put first;
And, while this point and that he judicially dwelt on,
He, somehow or other, had written Paul Felton,
Whose beauties or faults, whichsoever you see there,
You'll allow only genius could hit upon either.
That he once was the Idle Man none will deplore,
But I fear he will never be anything more;
The ocean of song heaves and glitters before him,
The depth and the vastness and longing sweep o'er him,

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177 **old what's-his-name,** Taillefer, a minstrel who rode into battle at Hastings (1066) singing of Roland • 182 **Thor,** Norse god of war and thunder • 183 **Anne haec . . . tui.** Is this indeed the robe of thy son? • 184 **Fox,** George Fox (1624-1691), English founder of the Society of Friends or Quakers • 188 **Castaly's spring,** a spring on Mount Parnassus • 191 **The Voice**—of God • 203 **Bank or for Tariff.** Two of the hottest political issues of the period were the United States Bank and the protective tariff • 209 **Harmodius and Aristogeiton,** sixth-century Greeks who slew Hipparchus, tyrant of Athens • 216 **Dana.** Richard Henry Dana, Sr. (1787-1879) is an author whose fame has been eclipsed by that of his son, Richard Henry, Jr., author of **Two Years Before the Mast.** Poet and essayist, the elder Dana, somewhat too academic to win widespread fame, was important for his work on the influential **North American Review** • 229 **Paul Felton,** a tale by Dana • 232 **Idle Man,** a periodical edited by Dana in 1824. Lowell mentions the pseudonym in connection with Dana's retirement from literary work in 1840

He knows every breaker and shoal on the chart,
He has the Coast Pilot and so on by heart,
Yet he spends his whole life, like the man in the fable,
In learning to swim on his library-table.

NEAL

"There swaggers John Neal, who has wasted in Maine
The sinews and cords of his pugilist brain,
Who might have been poet, but that, in its stead, he
Preferred to believe that he was so already;
Too hasty to wait till Art's ripe fruit should drop,
He must pelt down an unripe and colicky crop;
Who took to the law, and had this sterling plea for it,
It required him to quarrel, and paid him a fee for it;
A man who's made less than he might have, because
He always has thought himself more than he was,—
Who, with very good natural gifts as a bard,
Broke the strings of his lyre out by striking too hard,
And cracked half the notes of a truly fine voice,
Because song drew less instant attention than noise.
Ah, men do not know how much strength is in poise,
That he goes the farthest who goes far enough,
And that all beyond that is just bother and stuff.
No vain man matures, he makes too much new wood;
His blooms are too thick for the fruit to be good;
'Tis the modest man ripens, 'tis he that achieves,
Just what's needed of sunshine and shade he receives;
Grapes, to mellow, require the cool dark of their leaves;
Neal wants balance; he throws his mind always too far,
Whisking out flocks of comets, but never a star;
He has so much muscle, and loves so to show it,
That he strips himself naked to prove he's a poet,
And, to show he could leap Art's wide ditch, if he tried,
Jumps clean o'er it, and into the hedge t' other side.
He has strength, but there's nothing about him in keeping;
One gets surelier onward by walking than leaping;
He has used his own sinews himself to distress,
And had done vastly more had he done vastly less;
In letters, too soon is as bad as too late;
Could he only have waited he might have been great;
But he plumped into Helicon up to the waist,
And muddied the stream ere he took his first taste.

HAWTHORNE

"There is Hawthorne, with genius so shrinking and rare
That you hardly at first see the strength that is there;
A frame so robust, with a nature so sweet,
So earnest, so graceful, so lithe and so fleet,
Is worth a descent from Olympus to meet;
'Tis as if a rough oak that for ages had stood,
With his gnarled bony branches like ribs of the wood,
Should bloom, after cycles of struggle and scathe,
With a single anemone trembly and rathe;
His strength is so tender, his wildness so meek,
That a suitable parallel sets one to seek,—
He's a John Bunyan Fouqué, a Puritan Tieck;
When Nature was shaping him, clay was not granted
For making so full-sized a man as she wanted,
So, to fill out her model, a little she spared
From some finer-grained stuff for a woman prepared,
And she could not have hit a more excellent plan
For making him fully and perfectly man.
The success of her scheme gave her so much delight,
That she tried it again, shortly after, in Dwight;
Only, while she was kneading and shaping the clay,
She sang to her work in her sweet childish way,
And found, when she'd put the last touch to his soul,
That the music had somehow got mixed with the whole.

COOPER

"Here's Cooper, who's written six volumes, to show
He's as good as a lord: well, let's grant that he's so;
If a person prefer that description of praise,
Why, a coronet's certainly cheaper than bays;
But he need take no pains to convince us he's not
(As his enemies say) the American Scott.
Choose any twelve men, and let C. read aloud
That one of his novels of which he's most proud,
And I'd lay any bet that, without ever quitting

Neal, John Neal (1793-1876), a hasty and highly productive author famous in his time as an outspoken critic of other American writers • 287 **John Bunyan Fouqué,** a combination of John Bunyan (1628-1688), author of the allegorical Pilgrim's Progress, and Baron de la Motte Fouqué (1777-1843), who wrote imaginative romances • 287 **Tieck,** Ludwig Tieck. See note, p. 662 • 295 **Dwight,** John Sullivan Dwight (1813-1893), a Boston composer and music critic

Their box, they'd be all, to a man, for acquitting.
He has drawn you one character, though, that is new,
One wildflower he's plucked that is wet with the dew
Of this fresh Western world, and, the thing not to mince,
He has done naught but copy it ill ever since;
His Indians, with proper respect be it said,
Are just Natty Bumppo, daubed over with red,
And his very Long Toms are the same useful Nat,
Rigged up in duck pants and a sou'wester hat
(Though once in a Coffin, a good chance was found
To have slipped the old fellow away underground).
All his other men-figures are clothes upon sticks,
The *dernière chemise* of a man in a fix
(As a captain besieged, when his garrison's small
Sets up caps upon poles to be seen o'er the wall);
And the women he draws from one model don't vary,
All sappy as maples and flat as a prairie.
When a character's wanted, he goes to the task
As a cooper would do in composing a cask;
He picks out the staves, of their qualities heedful,
Just hoops them together as tight as is needful,
And, if the best fortune should crown the attempt, he
Has made at the most something wooden and empty.

"Don't suppose I would underrate Cooper's abilities;
If I thought you'd do that, I should feel very ill at ease;
The men who have given to *one* character life
And objective existence are not very rife;
You may number them all, both prose-writers and singers,
Without overrunning the bounds of your fingers,
And Natty won't go to oblivion quicker
Than Adams the parson or Primrose the vicar.

"There is one thing in Cooper I like, too, and that is
That on manners he lectures his countrymen gratis;
Not precisely so either, because, for a rarity,
He is paid for his tickets in unpopularity.
Now he may overcharge his American pictures,
But you'll grant there's a good deal of truth in his strictures;
And I honor the man who is willing to sink
Half his present repute for the freedom to think,
And, when he has thought, be his cause strong or weak,
Will risk t' other half for the freedom to speak,
Caring naught for what vengeance the mob has in store,
Let that mob be the upper ten thousand or lower.

POE

"There comes Poe, with his raven, like Barnaby Rudge,
Three fifths of him genius and two fifths sheer fudge,
Who talks like a book of iambs and pentameters,
In a way to make people of common sense damn metres,
Who has written some things quite the best of their kind,
But the heart somehow seems all squeezed out by the mind,
Who—But hey-day! What's this? Messieurs Mathews and Poe,
You mustn't fling mud-balls at Longfellow so,
Does it make a man worse that his character's such
As to make his friends love him (as you think) too much?
Why, there is not a bard at this moment alive
More willing than he that his fellows should thrive;
While you are abusing him thus, even now
He would help either one of you out of a slough;
You may say that he's smooth and all that till you're hoarse,
But remember that elegance also is force;
After polishing granite as much as you will,
The heart keeps its tough old persistency still;
Deduct all you can, *that* still keeps you at bay;
Why, he'll live till men weary of Collins and Gray.
I'm not over-fond of Greek metres in English,
To me rhyme's a gain, so it be not too jinglish,
And your modern hexameter verses are no more
Like Greek ones than sleek Mr. Pope is like Homer;
As the roar of the sea to the coo of a pigeon is,
So, compared to your moderns, sounds old Melesigenes;
I may be too partial, the reason, perhaps, o't is
That I've heard the old blind man recite his own rhapsodies,
And my ear with that music impregnate may be,
Like the poor exiled shell with the soul of the sea,

316 **Long Toms.** Long Tom Coffin was the American sailor in **The Pilot** (1823) • 321 **dernière chemise**, last shirt • 339 **Adams**, Parson Adams, a memorable character in Fielding's **Joseph Andrews** • 339 **Primrose**, the amiable, garrulous Dr. Primrose in Goldsmith's **The Vicar of Wakefield** • 352 **Barnaby Rudge** (1841), a novel by Dickens in which a raven was important. See note, p. 650 • 358 **Mathews**, Cornelius Mathews (1817-1889), a New York author who, like Poe, created quite a stir by attacking Longfellow • 371 **Collins**, William Collins (1721-1759), English lyrical poet • 371 **Gray**, Thomas Gray (1716-1771), English poet, author of the famous elegy • 377 **Melesigenes**, Homer

Or as one can't bear Strauss when his nature is cloven
To its deeps within deeps by the stroke of Beethoven;
But, set that aside, and 'tis truth that I speak,
Had Theocritus written in English, not Greek,
I believe that his exquisite sense would scarce change a line
In that rare, tender, virgin-like pastoral Evangeline.
That's not ancient nor modern, its place is apart
Where time has no sway, in the realm of pure Art,
'Tis a shrine of retreat from Earth's hubbub and strife
As quiet and chaste as the author's own life.

IRVING

"What! Irving? thrice welcome, warm heart and fine brain,
You bring back the happiest spirit from Spain,
And the gravest sweet humor, that ever was there
Since Cervantes met death in his gentle despair;
Nay, don't be embarrassed, nor look so beseeching,
I sha'n't run directly against my own preaching,
And having just laughed at their Raphaels and Dantes,
Go to setting you up beside matchless Cervantes;
But allow me to speak what I honestly feel,—
To a true poet-heart add the fun of Dick Steele,
Throw in all of Addison *minus* the chill,
With the whole of that partnership's honest good-will,
Mix well, and while stirring, hum o'er, as a spell,
The fine *old* English Gentleman, simmer it well,
Sweeten just to your own private liking, then strain,
That only the finest and clearest remain,
Let it stand out of doors till a soul it receives
From the warm lazy sun loitering down through green leaves,
And you'll find a choice nature, not wholly deserving
A name either English or Yankee,—just Irving.

HOLMES

"There's Holmes, who is matchless among you for wit;
A Leyden-jar always full-charged, from which flit
The electrical tingles of hit after hit;
In long poems 'tis painful sometimes, and invites
A thought of the way the new Telegraph writes,
Which pricks down its little sharp sentences spitefully
As if you got more than you'd title to rightfully,
And you find yourself hoping its wild father Lightning
Would flame in for a second and give you a fright'ning.
He has perfect sway of what *I* call a sham metre,
But many admire it, the English pentameter,
And Campbell, I think, wrote most commonly worse,
With less nerve, swing, and fire in the same kind of verse,
Nor e'er achieved aught in't so worthy of praise
As the tribute of Holmes to the grand *Marseillaise.*
You went crazy last year over Bulwer's New Timon;—
Why, if B., to the day of his dying, should rhyme on,
Heaping verses on verses and tomes upon tomes,
He could ne'er reach the best point and vigor of Holmes.
His are just the fine hands, too, to weave you a lyric
Full of fancy, fun, feeling, or spiced with satiric
In a measure so kindly, you doubt if the toes
That are trodden upon are your own or your foes'.

LOWELL

"There is Lowell, who's striving Parnassus to climb
With a whole bale of *isms* tied together with rhyme,
He might get on alone, spite of brambles and boulders,
But he can't with that bundle he has on his shoulders,
The top of the hill he will ne'er come nigh reaching
Till he learns the distinction 'twixt singing and preaching;
His lyre has some chords that would ring pretty well,
But he'd rather by half make a drum of the shell,
And rattle away till he's old as Methusalem,
At the head of a march to the last new Jerusalem."

1847-1848 • 1848

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382 **Strauss,** Johann Strauss (1804-1849), Viennese "Waltz King" • 383 **Beethoven,** Ludwig van Beethoven (1770-1827), German composer • 385 **Theocritus,** a third-century Greek pastoral poet • 393 **from Spain** refers to Irving's return from that country in 1846 • 395 **Cervantes,** Miguel de Cervantes Saavedra (1547-1616), author of **Don Quixote.** Cervantes, at the time of his death, was a monk • 398 **Raphael** (1483-1520), Italian painter • 398 **Dante** (1265-1321), Italian poet • 405 **English Gentleman,** an essay by Irving • 413 **Leyden-jar,** a glass jar which condenses electricity • 416 **new Telegraph,** the Morse code • 423 **Campbell,** Thomas Campbell (1777-1844), a British poet. Holmes' early poems are frequently reminiscent of his poems • 426 **tribute,** in Section II of Holmes' **Poetry: A Metrical Essay** (1836) • 427 **Bulwer's New Timon,** a satirical poem which had appeared in 1846 • 443 **Methusalem,** or Methuselah, according to Genesis, died at "nine hundred sixty and nine years"

From

The Biglow Papers, First Series

Written as a protest against the Mexican War and various political events connected with it, this series of poems had a success in the years of their appearance (1847-1848) which surprised and delighted their author. Lowell's earlier poems had been relatively unpopular. These he saw pinned up in workshops; he heard them quoted everywhere and their authorship debated. They were effective propaganda.

They were effective partly because, like the writings of numerous humorists of New England at the time (notably Seba Smith, creator of Jack Downing), they appealed to the Yankee liking for Down East horse-sense philosophers who could voice their ideas—ideas of any sort arrived at by down-to-earth thinking—in amusing phrases. Chief among the characters exhibited by the papers was Hosea Biglow, intended by Lowell to represent New England's "homely common-sense vivified and heated by conscience." Biglow's rural way of feeling, thinking, and expressing himself was sure-fire appeal to an audience of Americans who had supreme respect for the intelligence of common men.

Other characters developed in the papers—a pedantic parson, for instance—were invented to serve in various ways as foils for the chief character and to attack Lowell's foes in ways impossible for the puritanical and unlearned Hosea. Birdofredum Sawin, to cite one more instance, was another Yankee farmer whom Lowell invented as "a mouth-piece of the mere drollery . . . meant to embody . . . that half-conscious unmorality which I have noticed as the recoil in gross natures from . . . puritanism." Sawin, unlike Biglow, was persuaded to join the army, and both during the War and after it his horrible experiences dragged him deeper and deeper into degradation. And the Rev. Homer Wilbur, Hosea's pastor, who edited his parishioner's poems, wrote in a learned, pedantic style which was amusingly incongruous with the earthy patois of the poems.

Because of their style and their fictional excellence the verses have had an appeal more lasting than much political satire. An accomplished linguist, Lowell appreciated and reproduced accurately the native idiom, which he praised as "racy with life and vigor and originality, bucksome . . . to our new occasions." A keen observer of life in Yankeedom, he created characters, according to critic J. R. Dennet, writing in the **Nation** (November 15, 1866, III, 397), "so life-like and, in the main, so true to nature—so good as individuals and as types that we know not where in literature to look for . . . others that excel them."

No. I
A LETTER

From Mr. Ezekiel Biglow of Jaalam to the Hon. Joseph T. Buckingham, Editor of the Boston Courier, Enclosing A Poem of His Son, Mr. Hosea Biglow

Jaylem, june 1846

Mister Eddyter:—Our Hosea wuz down to Boston last week, and he see a cruetin Sarjunt a struttin round as popler as a hen with 1 chicking, with 2 fellers a drummin and fifin arter him like all nater. the sarjunt he thout Hosea hedn't gut his i teeth cut cos he looked a kindo 's though he'd jest com down, so he cal'lated to hook him in, but Hosy woodn't take none o' his sarse for all he hed much as 20 Rooster's tales stuck onto his hat and eenamost enuf brass a bobbin up and down on his shoulders and figureed onto his coat and trousis, let alone wut nater hed sot in his featers, to make a 6 pounder out on.

wal, Hosea he com home considerabal riled, and arter I'd gone to bed I heern Him a thrashin round like a short-tailed Bull in flitime. The old Woman ses she to me ses she, Zekle, ses she, our Hosee's gut the chollery or suthin anuther ses she, don't you Bee skeered, ses

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2 cruetin Sarjunt, recruiting sergeant. Lowell was angered into writing this paper when, like Hosea, he saw a sergeant of the sort described trying to enlist men in Boston • 4 **nater,** nature • 9 **brass.** Ezekiel is pointing out that, both literally and figuratively, the sergeant had "a lot of brass"

I, he's oney amaking pottery [*Aut insanit, aut versos facit.*—H.W.] ses i, he's ollers on hand at that ere busynes like Da & martin, and shure enuf, cum mornin, Hosy he cum down stares full chizzle, hare on eend and cote tales flyin, and sot rite of to go reed his varses to Parson Wilbur bein he haint aney grate shows o' book larnin himself, bimeby he cum back and sed the parson wuz dreffle tickled with 'em as i hoop you will Be, and said they wuz True grit.

Hosea ses taint hardly fair to call 'em hisn now, cos the parson kind o' slicked off sum O' the last varses, but he told Hosee he didn't want to put his ore in to tetch to the Rest on 'em, bein they wuz verry well As thay wuz, and then Hosy ses he sed suthin a nuther about Simplex Mundishes or sum such feller, but I guess Hosea kind o' didn't hear him, for I never hearn o' nobody o' that name in this village, and I've lived here man and boy 76 year cum next tater diggin, and thair aint no wheres a kitting spryer'n I be.

If you print 'em I wish you'd jest let folks know who hosy's father is, cox my ant Keziah used to say it's nater to be curus ses she, she aint livin though and he's a likely kind o' lad.

EZEKIEL BIGLOW

Thrash away, you'll *hev* to rattle
  On them kittle-drums o' yourn,—
'Taint a knowin' kind o' cattle
  Thet is ketched with moldy corn;
Put in stiff, you fifer feller,
  Let folks see how spry you be,—
Guess you'll toot till you are yeller
  'Fore you git ahold o' me!

Thet air flag's a leetle rotten,
  Hope it aint your Sunday's best;—
Fact! it takes a sight o' cotton
  To stuff out a soger's chest:
Sence we farmers hev to pay fer't,
  Ef you must wear humps like these,
Sposin' you should try salt hay fer't,
  It would du ez slick ez grease.

'Twouldn't suit them Southun fellers,
  They're a dreffle graspin' set,
We must ollers blow the bellers
  Wen they want their irons het;
May be it's all right ez preachin',
  But *my* narves it kind o' grates,
Wen I see the overreachin'
  O' them nigger-drivin' States.

Them thet rule us, them slave-traders,
  Haint they cut a thunderin' swarth,
(Helped by Yankee renegaders,)
  Thru the vartu o' the North!
We begin to think it's nater
  To take sarse an' not be riled;—
Who'd expect to see a tater
  All on eend at bein' biled?

Ez fer war, I call it murder,—
  There you hev it plain an' flat;
I don't want to go no furder
  Than my Testyment fer that;
God hez sed so plump an' fairly,
  It's ez long ez it is broad,
An' you've gut to git up airly
  If you want to take in God.

'Taint your eppyletts an' feathers
  Make the thing a grain more right;
'Taint afollerin' your bell-wethers
  Will excuse ye in His sight;
Ef you take a sword an' dror it,
  An' go stick a feller thru,
Guv'ment aint to answer for it,
  God'll send the bill to you.

Wut's the use o' meetin'-goin'
  Every Sabbath, wet or dry,
Ef it's right to go amowin'
  Feller-men like oats an' rye?

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1 **pottery**, poetry. Here, as elsewhere, the bad spelling makes possible a pun • 1 **Aut . . . facit.** "He is either mad or is making verses." This is a note inserted by H. W., Parson Homer Wilbur, the pedantic editor of the text for book publication • 3 **Da & martin**, Day & Martin, who published rhymed advertisements of their shoeblacking • 14 **Simplex Mundishes**, Hosea's inaccurate pronunciation of **simplex munditiis**—neat but not gaudy, unsophisticated

11 **takes . . . cotton.** The abolitionists charged that the real purpose of the Mexican War was to increase the cotton-growing territory

I dunno but wut it's pooty
  Trainin' round in bobtail coats,—
But it's curus Christian dooty
  This 'ere cuttin' folks's throats.

They may talk o' Freedom's airy
  Tell they'er pupple in the face,—
It's a grand gret cemetary
  Fer the barthrights of our race;
They jest want this Californy
  So's to lug new slave-states in
To abuse ye, an' to scorn ye,
  An' to plunder ye like sin.

Aint it cute to see a Yankee
  Take sech everlastin' pains,
All to git the Devil's thankee,
  Helpin' on 'em weld their chains?
Wy, it's jest ez clear ez figgers,
  Clear ez one an' one make two,
Chaps thet make black slaves o' niggers
  Want to make wite slaves o' you.

Tell ye jest the eend I've come to
  Arter cipherin' plaguy smart,
An' it makes a handy sum, tu,
  Any gump could larn by heart;
Laborin' man an' laborin' woman
  Hev one glory an' one shame,
Ev'y thin' thet's done inhuman
  Injers all on 'em the same.

'Taint by turnin' out to hack folks
  You're agoin' to git your right,
Nor by lookin' down on black folks
  Coz you're put upon by wite;
Slavery aint o' nary color,
  'Taint the hide thet makes it wus,
All it keers fer in a feller
  'S jest to make him fill its pus.

Want to tackle *me* in, du ye?
  I expect you'll hev to wait;
Wen cold lead puts daylight thru ye
  You'll begin to kal'late;
'Spose the crows wun't fall to pickin'
  All the carkiss from your bones,
Coz you helped to give a lickin'
  To them poor half-Spanish drones?

Jest go home an' ask our Nancy
  Whether I'd be sech a goose
Ez to jine ye,—guess you'd fancy
  The etarnal bung was loose!
She wants me fer home consumption,
  Let alone the hay's to mow,—
Ef you're arter folks o' gumption,
  You've a darned long row to hoe.

Take them editors thet's crowin'
  Like a cockerel three months old,—
Don't ketch any on 'em goin',
  Though they *be* so blasted bold;
Aint they a prime lot o' fellers?
  'Fore they think on't guess they'll sprout,
(Like a peach thet's got the yellers)
  With the meanness bustin' out.

Wal, go 'long to help 'em stealin'
  Bigger pens to cram with slaves,
Help the men thet's ollers dealin'
  Insults on your fathers' graves;
Help the strong to grind the feeble,
  Help the many agin the few,
Help the men thet call your people
  Witewashed slaves an' peddlin' crew!

Massachusetts, God forgive her,
  She's akneeling with the rest,
She thet ough' to ha' clung ferever
  In her grand old eagle-nest;
She thet ough' to stand so fearless
  Wile the wracks are round her hurled,
Holdin' up a beacon peerless
  To the oppressed of all the world!

---

61 **want this Californy** refers to the claim that California was to be admitted to statehood only in order that more slave states might be formed • 65 **Yankee . . . thankee.** The Yankees had a widespread reputation for striking good bargains • 88 **pus,** purse • 92 **kal'late,** calculate • 96 **half-Spanish drones,** the Mexicans • 111 **yellers,** a disease of peach trees accompanied by the sprouting of sterile shoots

Ha'n't they sold your colored seamen?
  Ha'n't they made your env'ys wi'z?
Wut'll make ye act like free men?
  Wut'll git your dander riz?
Come, I'll tell ye wut I'm thinkin'
  Is our dooty in this fix,
They'd ha' done 't ez quick ez winkin'
  In the days o' seventy-six.

Clang the bells in every steeple,
  Call all true men to disown
The tradoocers of our people,
  The enslavers o' their own;
Let our dear old Bay State proudly
  Put the trumpet to her mouth,
Let her ring this messidge loudly
  In the ears of all the South:—

"I'll return ye good for evil
  Much ez we frail mortils can,
But I won't go help the Devil
  Makin' man the cus o' man;
Call me coward, call me traiter,
  Jest ez suits your mean idees,—
Here I stand a tyrant-hater,
  An' the friend o' God an' Peace!"
Ef I'd *my* way I hed ruther
  We should go to work an' part,—
They take one way, we take t'other,—
  Guess it wouldn't break my heart;
Man hed ough' to put asunder
  Them thet God has noways jined;
An' I shouldn't gretly wonder
  Ef there's thousands o' my mind.

[The first recruiting sergeant on record I conceive to have been that individual who is mentioned in the Book of Job as *going to and fro in the earth, and walking up and down in it.* Bishop Latimer will have him to have been a bishop, but to me that other calling would appear more congenial. The sect of Cainites is not yet extinct, who esteemed the first-born of Adam to be the most worthy, not only because of that privilege of primogeniture, but inasmuch as he was able to overcome and slay his younger brother. That was a wise saying of the famous Marquis Pescara to the Papal Legate, that *it was impossible for men to serve Mars and Christ at the same time.* Yet in time past the profession of arms was judged to be κατ' ἐξοχὴν that of a gentleman, nor does this opinion want for strenuous upholders even in our day. Must we suppose, then, that the profession of Christianity was only intended for losels, or, at best, to afford an opening for plebeian ambition? Or shall we hold with that nicely metaphysical Pomeranian, Captain Vratz, who was Count Konigsmark's chief instrument in the murder of Mr. Thynne, that the Scheme of Salvation had been arranged with an especial eye to the necessities of the upper classes, and that "God would consider *a gentleman* and deal with him suitably to the condition and profession, he had placed him in"? It may be said of us all, *Exemplo plus quam ratione vivimus.*—H. W.]

1846

No. III

WHAT MR. ROBINSON THINKS

The gubernatorial campaign of 1847 in Massachusetts inspired Hosea to write these bitingly satirical lines. George Nixon Briggs (Guvener B. in the poem), who had been the state executive since 1844, was running for reëlection. His opponent was General Caleb Cushing (Gineral C.), then a brigadier general, serving in Mexico. John P. Robinson, who had been a past supporter of Briggs, wrote an open letter to the newspapers telling of his support for Cushing.

Guvener B. is a sensible man;
  He stays to his home an' looks arter his folks;
He draws his furrer ez straight ez he can,
  An' into nobody's tater-patch pokes;

---

130 **env'ys wi'z,** envoys whiz, a reference to the impolite treatment in the period of American envoys • 154 **We . . . part,** an interesting advocacy, by Lowell, of disunion

2 **that individual,** Satan. This note is Parson Wilbur's learned commentary on the poem • 4 **Bishop Latimer,** Hugh Latimer. See note, p. 129 • 6 **Cainites,** a second-century religious sect which held that Cain represented the higher power • 11 **Pescara,** Marquis Pescara (1489-1525), an Italian soldier • 14 κατ' ἐξοχὴν, especially 19 **Captain Vratz,** a murderer who was executed in 1682 • 26 **Exemplo . . . vivimus.** We live more by example than by reason

But John P.
Robinson he
Sez he wunt vote fer Guvener B.

My! aint it terrible! Wut shall we du?
We can't never choose him o' course,—thet's flat;
Guess we shall hev to come round, (don't you?)
An' go in fer thunder an' guns, an' all that;
Fer John B.
Robinson he
Sez he wunt vote fer Guvener B.

Gineral C. is a dreffle smart man:
He's ben on all sides thet give places or pelf;
But consistency still wuz a part of his plan,—
He's ben true to *one* party—an' thet is himself;—
So John P.
Robinson he
Sez he shall vote fer Gineral C.

Gineral C. he goes in fer the war;
He don't vally principle more 'n an old cud;
Wut did God make us raytional creeturs fer,
But glory an' gunpowder, plunder an' blood?
So John P.
Robinson he
Sez he shall vote for Gineral C.

We were gittin' on nicely up here to our village,
With good old idees o' wut's right an' wut aint,
We kind o' thought Christ went agin war an' pillage,
An' thet eppyletts worn't the best mark of a saint;
But John P.
Robinson he
Sez this kind o' thing's an exploded idee.

The side of our country must ollers be took,
An' Presidunt Polk, you know, *he* is our country.
An' the angel thet writes all our sins in a book
Puts the *debit* to him, an' to us the *per contry;*
An' John P.
Robinson he
Sez this is his view o' the thing to a T.

Parson Wilbur he calls all these argimunts lies;
Sez they 're nothin' on airth but jest *fee, faw, fum:*
An' thet all this big talk of our destinies
Is half on it ign'ance, an' t' other half rum;
But John P.
Robinson he
Sez it aint no sech thing; an', of course, so must we.

Parson Wilbur sez *he* never heerd in his life
Thet th' Apostles rigged out in their swaller-tail coats,
An' marched round in front of a drum an' a fife,
To git some on 'em office, an' some on 'em votes;
But John P.
Robinson he
Sez they did n't know everythin' down in Judee.

Wal, it's a marcy we' ve gut folks to tell us
The rights an' the wrongs o' these matters, I vow,—
God sends country lawyers, an' other wise fellers,
To start the world's team wen it gits in a slough;
Fer John P.
Robinson he
Sez the world 'll go right, ef he hollers out Gee!

1847·1848

No. VIII

A SECOND LETTER FROM B. SAWIN, ESQ.

Birdofredum Sawin was a country boy who, unlike Hosea, had been lured into army service by the rattle of a drum and had marched off to Mexico. From time to time he wrote home to Hosea, and Hosea translated his letters into verse. Sawin soon lost his illusions and became a rascal—one of the most amusing ones in American humor.

The Whig candidate for the Presidency in 1848 was Zachary Taylor, who was not very articulate on the great issues of the day—particularly slavery—but who had won fame as the hero of Buena Vista. Birdofredum Sawin likewise based his political claims upon his military record. In this letter, a take-off on Old Zach's candidacy, Birdofredum tells of his own situation after the war.

I spose you wonder ware I be; I can't tell, fer the soul o' me,
Exactly ware I be myself,—meanin' by thet the holl o' me.

Wen I left hum, I hed two legs, an' they worn't bad ones neither,
(The scaliest trick they ever played wuz bringin' on me hither,)
Now one on 'em's I dunno ware;—they thought I wuz adyin',
An' sawed it off because they said 't wuz kin' o' mortifyin';
I'm willin' to believe it wuz, an' yit I don't see, nuther,
Wy one shoud take to feelin' cheap a minnit sooner 'n t' other,
Sence both wuz equilly to blame; but things is ez they be;
It took on so they took it off, an' thet's enough fer me:
There's one good thing, though, to be said about my wooden new one,—
The liquor can't git into it ez 't used to in the true one;
So it saves drink; an' then, besides, a feller could n't beg
A gretter blessin' then to hev one ollers sober peg;
It's true a chap 's in want o' two fer follerin' a drum,
But all the march I'm up to now is jest to Kingdom Come.

I've lost one eye, but thet's a loss it's easy to supply
Out o' the glory that I 've gut, fer thet is all my eye;
An' one is big enough, I guess, by diligently usin' it,
To see all I shall ever git by way o' pay fer losin' it;
Off'cers I notice, who git paid fer all our thumps an' kickins,
Du wal by keepin' single eyes arter the fattest pickins;
So, ez the eye 's put fairly out, I'll larn to go without it,
An' not allow *myself* to be no gret put out about it.
Now, le' me see, thet is n't all; I used, 'fore leavin' Jaalam,
To count things on my finger-eends, but sutthin' seems to ail 'em:
Ware's my left hand? O, darn it, yes, I recollect wut 's come on 't;
I haint no left arm but my right, an' thet 's gut jest a thumb on 't;
It aint so hendy ez it wuz to cal'late a sum on 't.
I've hed some ribs broke,—six (I bl'ieve) ,—I haint kep' no account on 'em;
Wen pensions git to be the talk, I'll settle the amount on 'em.
An' now I'm speakin' about ribs, it kin' o' brings to mind
One thet I could n't never break,—the one I lef' behind;
Ef you should see her, jest clear out the spout o' your invention
An' pour the longest sweetnin' in about an annooal pension,
An' kin' o' hint (in case, you know, the critter should refuse to be
Consoled) I aint so 'xpensive now to keep ez wut I used to be;
There 's one arm less, ditto one eye, an' then the leg thet 's wooden
Can be took off an' sot away wenever ther 's a puddin.'

I spose you think I'm comin' back ez opperlunt ez thunder,
With shiploads o' gold images an' varus sorts o' plunder;
Wal, 'fore I vullinteered, I thought this country wuz a sort o'
Canaan, a reg'lar Promised Land flowin' with rum an' water,
Ware propaty growed up like time, without no cultivation,
An' gold wuz dug ez taters be among our Yankee nation,
Ware nateral advantages were pufficly amazin',
Ware every rock there wuz about with precious stuns wuz blazin',
Ware mill-sites filled the country up ez thick ez you could cram 'em
An' desput rivers run about a beggin' folks to dam 'em;
Then there were meetinhouses, tu, chockful o' gold an' silver
Thet you could take, an' no one could n't hand ye in no bill fer;—
Thet's wut I thought afore I went, thet 's wut them fellers told us
Thet stayed to hum an' speechified an' to the buzzards sold us;
I thought thet gold-mines could be gut cheaper than Chiny asters,
An' see myself acomin' back like sixty Jacob Astors;
But sech idees soon melted down an' did n't leave a grease-spot;

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25 Jaalam, home town of Hosea and Birdofredum • 55 Jacob Astor (1763-1848), a German-American merchant, one of the richest men of the time

I vow my holl sheer o' the spiles would n't come nigh a V spot;
Although, most anywares we 've ben, you need n't break no locks,
Nor run no kin' o' risks, to fill your pocket full o' rocks.
I 'xpect I mentioned in my last some o' the nateral feeturs
O' this all-fiered buggy hole in th' way o' awfle creeturs,
But I fergut to name (new things to speak on so abounded)
How one day you 'll most die o' thust, an' 'fore the next git drownded.
The clymit seems to me jest like a teapot made o' pewter
Our Preudence hed, thet would n't pour (all she could du) to suit her;
Fust place the leaves 'ould choke the spout, so 's not a drop 'ould dreen out,
Then Prude 'ould tip an' tip an' tip, till the holl kit bust clean out,
The kiver-hinge-pin bein' lost, tea-leaves an' tea an' kiver
'ould all come down *kerswosh!* ez though the dam bust in a river.
Jest so 't is here; holl months there aint a day o' rainy weather,
An' jest ez th' officers 'ould be a layin' heads together
Ez t' how they 'd mix their drink at sech a milingtary deepot,—
'T would pour ez though the lid wuz off the everlastin' teapot.
The cons'quence is, thet I shall take, wen I 'm allowed to leave here,
One piece o' propaty along, an' thet 's the shakin' fever;
It's reggilar employment, though, an' thet aint thought to harm one,
Nor 't aint so tiresome ez it wuz with t' other leg an' arm on;
An' it 's a consolation, tu, although it doos n't pay,
To hev it said you 're some gret shakes in any kin' o' way.
'T worn't very long, I tell ye wut, I thought o' fortin-makin',—
One day a reg'lar shiver-de-freeze, an' next ez good ez bakin',—
One day abrilin' in the sand, then smoth'rin' in the mashes,—
Git up all sound, be put to bed a mess o' hacks an' smashes.
But then, thinks I, at any rate there 's glory to be hed,—
Thet's an investment, arter all, thet may n't turn out so bad;
But somehow, wen we'd fit an' licked, I ollers found the thanks
Gut kin' o' lodged afore they come ez low down ez the ranks;
The Gin'rals gut the biggest sheer, the Cunnles next, an' so on,—
We never gut a blasted mite o' glory ez I know on;
An' spose we hed, I wonder how you 're goin' to contrive its
Division so 's to give a piece to twenty thousand privits;
Ef you should multiply by ten the portion o' the brav'st one,
You would n't git more 'n half enough to speak of on a grave-stun;
We git the licks,—we're jest the grist thet 's put into War's hoppers;
Leftenants is the lowest grade thet helps pick up the coppers.
It may suit folks thet go agin a body with a soul in 't,
An' aint contented with a hide without a bagnet hole in 't;
But glory is a kin' o' thing *I* sha' n't pursue no furder,
Coz thet 's the off'cers parquisite,—yourn 's on'y jest the murder.

Wal, arter I gin glory up, thinks I at least there 's one
Thing in the bills we aint hed yit, an' thet 's the GLORIOUS FUN;
Ef once we git to Mexico, we fairly may persume we
All day an' night shall revel in the halls o' Montezumy.
I'll tell ye wut *my* revels wuz, an' see how you would like 'em;
We never gut inside the hall: the nighest ever *I* come
Wuz stan'in sentry in the sun (an', fact, it *seemed* a cent'ry)
A ketchin' smells o' biled an' roast thet come out thru the entry,
An' hearin' ez I sweltered thru my passes an' repasses,

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97 bagnet, bayonet

A rat-tat-too o' knives an' forks, a clinkty-clink o' glasses:
I can't tell off the bill o' fare the Ginrals hed inside;
All I know is, thet out o' doors a pair o' soles wuz fried,
An' not a hunderd miles away frum ware this child wuz posted,
A Massachusetts citizen wuz baked an' biled an' roasted;
The on'y thing like revellin' thet ever come to me
Wuz bein' routed out o' sleep by thet darned revelee.

They say the quarrel 's settled now; fer my part I 've some doubt on 't,
't 'll take more fish-skin than folks think to take the rile clean out on 't;
At any rate I 'm so used up I can't do no more fightin',
The on'y chance thet 's left to me is politics or writin';
Now, ez the people 's gut to hev a milingtary man,
An' I aint nothin' else jest now, I've hit upon a plan;
The can'idatin' line, you know, 'ould suit me to a T,
An' ef I lose, 't wunt hurt my ears to lodge another flea;
So I 'll set up ez can'idate fer any kin' o' office,
(I mean fer any thet includes good easy-cheers an' soffies;
Fer ez tu runnin' fer a place ware work 's the time o' day,
You know thet 's wut I never did,—except the other way;)
Ef it 's the Presidential cheer fer wich I 'd better run,
Wut two legs anywares about could keep up with my one?
There aint no kin' o' quality in can'idates, it 's said,
So useful ez a wooden leg,—except a wooden head;
There's nothin' aint so poppylar—(wy, it 's a parfect sin
To think wut Mexico hez paid fer Santy Anny's pin;)—
Then I haint gut no princerples, an', sence I wuz knee-high,
I never *did* hev any gret, ez you can testify;
I 'm a decided peace-man, tu, an' go agin the war,—
Fer now the holl on 't 's gone an' past, wut is there to go *for?*
Ef, wile you 're 'lectioneerin' round, some curus chaps should beg
To know my views o' state affairs, jest answer WOODEN LEG!
Ef they aint settisfied with thet, an' kin' o' pry an' doubt
An' ax fer sutthin' deffynit, jest say ONE EYE PUT OUT!
Thet kin' o' talk I guess you 'll find 'll answer to a charm,
An' wen you 're druv tu nigh the wall, hol' up my missin' arm;
Ef they should nose round fer a pledge, put on a vartoous look
An' tell 'em thet's percisely wut I never gin nor—took!

Then you can call me "Timbertoes,"—thet 's wut the people likes;
Sutthin' combinin' morril truth with phrases sech ez strikes;
Some say the people 's fond o' this, or thet, or wut you please,—
I tell ye wut the people want is jest correct idees;
"Old Timbertoes," you see, 's a creed it 's safe to be quite bold on,
There 's nothin' in 't the other side can any ways git hold on;
It's a good tangible idee, a sutthin' to embody
Thet valooable class o' men who look thru brandy-toddy;
It gives a Party Platform, tu, jest level with the mind
Of all right-thinkin', honest folks thet mean to go it blind;
Then there air other good hooraws to dror on ez you need 'em,
Sech ez the ONE-EYED SLARTERERER, the BLOODY BIRDOFREDUM:
Them 's wut takes hold o' folks thet think, ez well ez o' the masses,
An' makes you sartin o' the aid o' good men of all classes.

There 's one thing I 'm in doubt about; in order to be Presidunt,
It's absolutely ne'ssary to be a Southern residunt;
The Constitution settles thet, an' also thet a feller
Must own a nigger o' some sort, jet black, or brown, or yeller.
Now I haint no objections agin particklar climes,
Nor agin ownin' anythin' (except the truth sometimes),
But, ez I haint no capital, up there among ye, maybe,

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133 Santy Anny, General A. L. de Santa Anna, leader of the Mexican army • 146 Timbertoes refers not only to Sawin's wooden leg but also to one Enoch Timbertoes, humorous character of the day who wrote humor of the sort characterized in l. 147

You might raise funds enough fer me to buy a low-priced
baby,
An' then to suit the No'thern folks, who feel obleeged
to say
They hate an' cuss the very thing they vote fer every day,
Say you 're assured I go full butt fer Libbaty's diffusion
An' made the purchis on'y jest to spite the Institootion;—
But, golly! there 's the curriers hoss upon the pavement
pawin'!
I 'll be more 'xplicit in my next.

Yourn,

BIRDOFREDUM SAWIN

1848

From

Keats

This essay on Keats was written in 1854, not long after study in Europe (1851-1852) had led Lowell to new perceptions of critical standards and procedures. He begins (in the portion of the essay not here printed) with a presentation of "those essential facts which underlie the life and make the individual man," noting particularly that Keats is a poet "in whom the moral seems to have so perfectly interfused the physical man, that you might almost say he could feel sorrow with his hands."

He then launches upon the evaluation here reprinted. In considering Keats' diction, he praises the poet for his eventual achievement of "the perfect mean of diction" —the "costly plainness" which combines richness with economy of language. Then he turns to a consideration of the poet himself, and describes his nature and his influence by contrasting him with Wordsworth and Byron. The paragraph of comparison which discriminates among the three poets offers an example of Lowell's precise though sometimes complex way of drawing distinctions. Keats, he notes, was remarkable for his "penetrative and sympathetic imagination," one which caused him, like Shakespeare, "to assimilate at a touch whatever could serve his purpose"—the things of the world as well as wisdom. Thus Keats had a sort of insight which serves a poet well. In addition, he had "the shaping faculty" which made his expression accord perfectly with his thought.

The faults of Keats' poetry are obvious enough, but it should be remembered that he died at twenty-five, and that he offends by superabundance and not poverty. That he was overlanguaged at first there can be no doubt, and in this was implied the possibility of falling back to the perfect mean of diction. It is only by the rich that the costly plainness, which at once satisfies the taste and the imagination, is attainable.

Whether Keats was original or not, I do not think it useful to discuss until it has been settled what originality is. Lord Houghton tells us that this merit [whatever it be] has been denied to Keats, because his poems take the color of the authors he happened to be reading at the time he wrote them. But men have their intellectual ancestry, and the likeness of some one of them is forever unexpectedly flashing out in the features of a descendant; it may be after a gap of several generations. In the parliament of the present every man represents a constituency of the past. It is true that Keats has the accent of the men from whom he learned to speak, but this is to make originality a mere question of externals, and in this sense the author of a dictionary might bring an action of trover against every author who used his words. It is the man behind the words that gives them value, and if Shakespeare help himself to a verse or a phrase, it is with ears that have learned of him to listen that we feel the harmony of the one, and it is the mass of his intellect that makes the other weighty with meaning. Enough that we recognize in Keats that indefinable newness and

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11 **Lord Houghton.** Richard Monckton Milnes, Lord Houghton (1809-1885), English poet and prose writer, published his **Life of Keats** in 1848 • 25 **Shakespeare** was regarded by Lowell as one of the peerless poets of all time. Here Lowell notes that Shakespeare could borrow a line or a phrase from a predecessor and still give the expression new values indicative of his own personality

unexpectedness which we call genius. The sunset is original every evening, though for thousands of years it has built out of the same light and vapor its visionary cities with domes and pinnacles, and its delectable mountains which night shall utterly abase and destroy.

Three men, almost contemporaneous with each other, —Wordsworth, Keats, and Byron,—were the great means of bringing back English poetry from the sandy deserts of rhetoric, and recovering for her her triple inheritance of simplicity, sensuousness, and passion. Of these, Wordsworth was the only conscious reformer, and his hostility to the existing formalism injured his earlier poems by tingeing them with something of iconoclastic extravagance. He was the deepest thinker, Keats the most essentially a poet, and Byron the most keenly intellectual of the three. Keats had the broadest mind, or at least his mind was open on more sides, and he was able to understand Wordsworth and judge Byron, equally conscious, through his artistic sense, of the greatnesses of the one and the many littlenesses of the other; while Wordsworth was isolated in a feeling of his prophetic character, and Byron had only an uneasy and jealous instinct of contemporary merit. The poems of Wordsworth, as he was the most individual, accordingly reflect the moods of his own nature; those of Keats, from sensitiveness of organization, the moods of his own taste and feeling; and those of Byron, who was impressible chiefly through the understanding, the intellectual and moral wants of the time in which he lived. Wordsworth has influenced most the ideas of succeeding poets; Keats, their forms; and Byron, interesting to men of imagination less for his writings than for what his writings indicate, reappears no more in poetry, but presents an ideal to youth made restless with vague desires not yet regulated by experience nor supplied with motives by the duties of life.

Keats certainly had more of the penetrative and sympathetic imagination which belongs to the poet, of that imagination which identifies itself with the momentary object of its contemplation, than any man of these later days. It is not merely that he has studied the Elizabethans and caught their turn of thought, but that he really sees things with their sovereign eye, and feels them with their electrified senses. His imagination was his bliss and bane. Was he cheerful, he "hops about the gravel with the sparrows"; was he morbid, he "would reject a Petrarcal coronation,—on account of my dying-day, and because women have cancers." So impressible was he as to say that he "had no nature" meaning character. But he knew what the faculty was worth, and says finely, "The imagination may be compared to Adam's dream: he awoke and found it truth." He had an unerring instinct for the poetic uses of things, and for him they had no other use. We are apt to talk of the classic *renaissance* as of a phenomenon long past, nor ever to be renewed, and to think the Greeks and Romans alone had the mighty magic to work such a miracle. To me one of the most interesting aspects of Keats is that in him we have an example of the *renaissance* going on almost under our own eyes, and that the intellectual ferment was in him kindled by a purely English leaven. He had properly no scholarship, any more than Shakespeare had, but like him he assimilated at a touch whatever could serve his purpose. His delicate senses absorbed culture at every pore. Of the self-denial to which he trained himself [unexampled in one so young] the second draft of *Hyperion* as compared with the first is a conclusive proof. And far indeed is his "Lamia" from the lavish indiscrimination of "Endymion." In his Odes he showed a sense of form and proportion which we seek vainly in almost any other English poet, and some of his sonnets (taking all qualities into consideration) are the most perfect in our language. No doubt there is something tropical and of strange overgrowth in his sudden maturity, but it *was* maturity nevertheless. Happy the young poet who has the saving fault of exuberance, if he have also the shaping faculty that sooner or later will amend it!

As every young person goes through all the world-old

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7 **Wordsworth.** William Wordsworth (1770-1850) rebelled against eighteenth-century poetry in his Preface to the 1800 edition of Lyrical **Ballads**. In 1875, Lowell was to note that throughout his two long, philosophical poems, "The Prelude" and "The Excursion," Wordsworth "seems striving to bind the wizard Imagination with the sand-ropes of dry disquisition." Nevertheless, Lowell ranked him fifth among the great English poets • 7 **Byron.** George Gordon Byron, Lord Byron (1788-1824), English poet, was famous for brilliant satires upon the life of his period • 41 **the Elizabethans,** authors of the period of Queen Elizabeth of England (1533-1603)—notably Shakespeare and Spenser, both of whom Keats admired greatly • 46 **Petrarcal coronation** refers to Francesco Petrarca, or Petrarch (1304-1374), Italian poet • 67 **Hyperion,** a poem left uncompleted, though partly revised, at Keats' death in 1821 • 68 **Lamia,** a narrative poem by Keats, published in 1820 • 69 **Endymion,** an early, rather formless poem by Keats, published in 1818

experiences, fancying them something peculiar and personal to himself, so it is with every new generation, whose youth always finds its representatives in its poets. Keats rediscovered the delight and wonder that lay enchanted in the dictionary. Wordsworth revolted at the poetic diction which he found in vogue, but his own language rarely rises above it, except when it is upborne by the thought. Keats had an instinct for fine words, which are in themselves pictures and ideas, and had more of the power of poetic expression than any modern English poet. And by poetic expression I do not mean merely a vividness in particulars, but the right feeling which heightens or subdues a passage or a whole poem to the proper tone, and gives entireness to the effect. There is a great deal more than is commonly supposed in this choice of words. Men's thoughts and opinions are in a great degree vassals of him who invents a new phrase or reapplies an old epithet. The thought or feeling a thousand times repeated becomes his at last who utters it best. This power of language is veiled in the old legends which make the invisible powers the servants of some word. As soon as we have discovered the word for our joy or sorrow we are no longer its serfs, but its lords. We reward the discoverer of an anaesthetic for the body and make him member of all the societies, but him who finds a nepenthe for the soul we elect into the small academy of the immortals.

The poems of Keats mark an epoch in English poetry; for, however often we may find traces of it in others, in them found its most unconscious expression that reaction against the barrel-organ style which had been reigning by a kind of sleepy divine right for half a century. The lowest point was indicated when there was such an utter confounding of the common and the uncommon sense that Dr. Johnson wrote verse and Burke prose. The most profound gospel of criticism was, that nothing was good poetry that could not be translated into good prose, as if one should say that the test of sufficient moonlight was that tallow-candles could be made of it. We find Keats at first going to the other extreme, and endeavoring to extract green cucumbers from the rays of tallow; but we see also incontestable proof of the greatness and purity of his poetic gift in the constant return toward equilibrium and repose in his later poems. And it is a repose always lofty and clear-aired, like that of the eagle balanced in incommunicable sunshine. In him a vigorous understanding developed itself in equal measure with the divine faculty; thought emancipated itself from expression without becoming in turn its tyrant; and music and meaning floated together, accordant as swan and shadow, on the smooth element of his verse. Without losing its sensuousness, his poetry refined itself and grew more inward, and the sensational was elevated into the typical by the control of that finer sense which underlies the senses and is the spirit of them.

1854

35 **Dr. Johnson,** Samuel Johnson (1709-1785), English author, whose verse was notable for its common sense rather than any noteworthy passion • 35 **Burke,** Edmund Burke (1729-1797), political writer, many of whose speeches were eloquent and poetic

A Review of "The Courtship of Miles Standish and Other Poems"

Representative of a number of considerations of contemporary authors which Lowell wrote as editor of the **Atlantic Monthly,** this review appeared in the issue for January 1858. Since Lowell, when a student, had worked under Longfellow, and since he was now a neighbor and friend of the poet, he was probably predisposed in the author's favor. Nevertheless his review shows real sensitivity and perception. He states the objections to the verse form used by Longfellow and deplores the poet's unfortunate tendency to descend now and then into prose. His estimate is favorable as a whole, though, because of the narrative skill, the characterization, and the artistic feeling with which many scenes are conceived. He praises Longfellow's poem, too, for its "simple and sustained beauty." Finally, Lowell inquires into the reasons for Longfellow's wide popularity and offers an interesting explanation.

The revival of the hexameter in modern poetry is due to Johann Heinrich Voss, a man of genius, an admirable metrist, and, Schlegel's sneer to the contrary notwithstanding, hitherto the best translator of Homer. His *Odyssey,* (1783,) his *Iliad,* (1791,) and his *Luise,* (1795,) were confessedly Goethe's teachers in this kind of verse. The *Hermann and Dorothea* of the latter (1798) was the first true poem written in modern hexameters. From Germany, Southey imported that and other classic metres into England, and we should be grateful to him, at least, for having given the model for Canning's "Knifegrinder." The exotic, however, again refused to take root, and for many years after we have no example of English hexameters. It was universally conceded that the temper of our language was unfriendly to them.

It remained for a man of true poetic genius to make them not only tolerated, but popular. Longfellow's translation of *The Children of the Lord's Supper* may have softened prejudice somewhat, but *Evangeline,* (1847,) though incumbered with too many descriptive irrelevancies, was so full of beauty, pathos, and melody, that it made converts by thousands to the hitherto ridiculed measure. More than this, it made Longfellow at once the most popular of contemporary English poets. Clough's *Bothie*—a poem whose singular merit has hitherto failed of the wide appreciation it deserves—followed not long after; and Kingsley's *Andromeda* is yet damp from the press.

While we acknowledge that the victory thus won by *Evangeline* is a striking proof of the genius of the author, we confess that we have never been able to overcome the feeling that the new metre is a dangerous and deceitful one. It is too easy to write, and too uniform for true pleasure in reading. Its ease sometimes leads Mr. Longfellow into prose,—as in the verse

> "Combed and wattled gules and all the rest of
> the blazon,"—

and into a prosaic phraseology which has now and then infected his style in other metres, as where he says

> "Spectral gleam their snow-white *dresses,*"—

using a word as essentially unpoetic as *surtout* or *pea-jacket.* We think one great danger of the hexameter is, that it gradually accustoms the poet to be content with a certain regular recurrence of accented sounds, to the neglect of the poetic value of language and intensity of phrase.

But while we frankly avow our infidelity as regards the metre, we as frankly confess our admiration of the high qualities of *Miles Standish.* In construction we think it superior to *Evangeline;* the narrative is more straightforward, and the characters are defined with a firmer touch. It is a poem of wonderful picturesqueness, tenderness, and simplicity, and the situations are all conceived with the truest artistic feeling. Nothing can be better, to our thinking, than the picture of Standish and Alden in the opening scene, tinged as it is with a delicate humor, which the contrast between the thoughts and characters of the two heightens almost to pathos. The pictures of Priscilla spinning, and the bridal procession, are also masterly. We feel charmed to see such exquisite imaginations conjured out of the little old familiar anecdote of John Alden's vicarious wooing. We are astonished, like the fisherman in the Arabian tale, that so much genius could be contained in so small and leaden a casket. Those who cannot associate sentiment with the fair Priscilla's maiden name of Mullins may be consoled by hearing that is only a corruption of the Huguenot Desmoulins,—as Barnum is of the Norman Vernon.

Indifferent poets comfort themselves with the notion that contemporary popularity is no test of merit, and that true poetry must always wait for a new generation to do it justice. The theory is not true in any general sense. With hardly an exception, the poetry that was ever to receive a wide appreciation has received it at once. Popularity in itself is no test of permanent literary fame, but the kind of it is and always has been a very

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1 **hexameter,** six-foot line • 2 **Johann Heinrich Voss** (1781-1826), a German poet who used the hexameter in translating the works mentioned by Lowell • 5 **Luise,** Voss' most famous poem, a long idyl written in hexameter • 9 **Southey,** Robert Southey (1774-1843), English poet and critic • 11 **Canning's "Knifegrinder."** George Canning (1770-1827) was an English statesman whose "Friend of Humanity and the Knife-Grinder," published in the **Anti-Jacobin Review,** parodied Southey and his school • 24 **Clough,** Arthur Hugh Clough (1819-1861), English author of "The Bothie of Tober na-Vuolich" (1848) • 27 **Kingsley,** Charles Kingsley (1819-1875), who wrote **Andromeda** in English hexameters

decided one. Mr. Longfellow has been greatly popular because he so greatly deserved it. He has the secret of all the great poets,—the power of expressing universal sentiments simply and naturally. A false standard of criticism has obtained of late, which brings a brick as a sample of the house, a line or two of condensed expression as a gauge of the poem. But it is only the whole poem that is a proof of the poem, and there are twenty fragmentary poets, for one who is capable of simple and sustained beauty. Of this quality Mr. Longfellow has given repeated and striking examples, and those critics are strangely mistaken who think that what he does is easy to be done, because he has the power to make it seem so. We think his chief fault is a too great tendency to moralize, or rather, a distrust of his readers, which leads him to point out the moral which he wishes to be drawn from any special poem. We wish, for example, that the last two stanzas could be cut off from *The Two Angels,* a poem which, without them, is as perfect as anything in the language.

Many of the pieces in this volume having already shone as captain jewels in Maga's carcanet, need no comment from us; and we should, perhaps, have avoided the delicate responsibility of criticizing one of our most precious contributors, had it not been that we have seen some very unfair attempts to depreciate Mr. Longfellow, and that, as it seemed to us, for qualities which stamp him as a true and original poet. The writer who appeals to more peculiar moods of mind, to more complex or more esoteric motives of emotion, may be a greater favorite with the few; but he whose verse is in sympathy with moods that are human and not personal, with emotions that do not belong to periods in the development of individual minds, but to all men in all years, wins the gratitude and love of whoever can read the language which he makes musical with solace and aspiration. The present volume, while it will confirm Mr. Longfellow's claim to the high rank he has won among lyric poets, deserves attention also as proving him to possess that faculty of epic narration which is rarer than all others in the nineteenth century. In our love of stimulants, and our numbness of taste, which craves the red pepper of a biting vocabulary, we of the present generation are apt to overlook this almost obsolete and unobtrusive quality; but we doubt if, since Chaucer, we have had an example of more purely objective narrative than in *The Courtship of Miles Standish.* Apart from its intrinsic beauty, this gives the poem a claim to higher and more thoughtful consideration; and we feel sure that posterity will confirm the verdict of the present in regard to a poet whose reputation is due to no fleeting fancy, but to an instinctive recognition by the public of that which charms now and charms always,—true power and originality, without grimace and distortion; for Apollo, and not Milo, is the artistic type of strength.

1859

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21 this volume, The Courtship of Miles Standish and Other Poems, published in September 1858 • 54 Apollo . . . Milo contrasts the healthful manliness of Apollo with the seductive femininity of Venus

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Emerson the Lecturer

Lowell's consideration of Emerson originated as a book review, published in the **Atlantic Monthly,** of Emerson's **The Conduct of Life.** As a junior at college, Lowell heard Emerson lecture; as a senior, "rusticated" in Concord for a college escapade, he met Emerson and talked with him. Quite a conservative young man at that time, Jamie Lowell had been distressed by what he considered the "radicalism" of the Concord author. A few years later, however, under the influence of his sweetheart Maria White and her philosophical friends, Lowell came to think more highly of Emerson and other Transcendentalists. The praise in this essay typifies several of Lowell's interests in his later period as critic. He is concerned a good deal with the author's power to reconcile opposites. For example, Emerson is

seen as both Yankee and mystic; his diction is both rich and homely—"homespun cloth-of-gold"; and his thought reconciles the local with the ideal—gives "ravishing glimpses of an ideal under the dry husk of our New England." Lowell is much concerned also with the discovery of the essential man in the work: "The whole life of the man is distilled in the drop of every sentence." He is interested in the structure of literary works, and he finds that, though the form of Emerson's composition is often chaotic, even at his worst the author achieves "a chaos full of shooting stars." Finally, he is eager to set forth in memorable phrases a description of the author's essential appeal and excellence.

It is a singular fact, that Mr. Emerson is the most steadily attractive lecturer in America. Into that somewhat cold-waterish region adventurers of the sensational kind come down now and then with a splash, to become disregarded King Logs before the next season. But Mr. Emerson always draws. A lecturer now for something like a third of a century, one of the pioneers of the lecturing system, the charm of his voice, his manner, and his matter has never lost its power over his earlier hearers, and continually winds new ones in its enchanting meshes. What they do not fully understand they take on trust and listen, saying to themselves, as the old poet of Sir Philip Sidney,—

> "A sweet, attractive kind of grace,
> A full assurance given by looks,
> Continual comfort in a face,
> The lineaments of gospel books."

We call it a singular fact, because we Yankees are thought to be fond of the spread-eagle style, and nothing can be more remote from that than his. We are reckoned a practical folk, who would rather hear about a new air-tight stove than about Plato; yet our favorite teacher's practicality is not in the least of the Poor Richard variety. If he have any Buncombe constituency, it is that unrealized commonwealth of philosophers which Plotinus proposed to establish; and if he were to make an almanac, his directions to farmers would be something like this: "OCTOBER: *Indian Summer;* now is the time to get in your early Vedas." What, then, is his secret? Is it not that he out-Yankees us all? that his range includes us all? that he is equally at home with the potato-disease and original sin, with pegging shoes and the Over-soul? that, as we try all trades, so has he tried all cultures? and above all, that his mysticism gives us a counterpoise to our super-practicality?

There is no man living to whom, as a writer, so many of us feel and thankfully acknowledge so great an indebtedness for ennobling impulses,—none whom so many cannot abide. What does he mean? ask these last. Where is his system? What is the use of it all? What have we to do with Brahma? I do not propose to write an essay on Emerson at this time. I will only say that one may find grandeur and consolation in a starlit night without caring to ask what it means save grandeur and consolation; one may like Montaigne, as some ten generations before us have done, without thinking him so systematic as some more eminently tedious (or shall we say tediously eminent?) authors; one may think roses as good in their way as cabbages, though the latter would make a better show in the witness-box if cross-examined as to their usefulness; and as for Brahma, why, he can take care of himself, and won't bite us at any rate.

The bother with Mr. Emerson is, that, though he writes in prose, he is essentially a poet. If you undertake to paraphrase what he says, and to reduce it to words of one syllable for infant minds, you will make as sad work of it as the good monk with his analysis of Homer in the *Epistolæ Obscurorum Virorum.* We look upon him as one of the few men of genius whom our age has produced, and there needs no better proof of it than his masculine faculty of fecundating other minds. Search for his eloquence in his books and you will perchance miss it,

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5 King Logs. Æsop tells in a fable how the frogs prayed to Jupiter for a king and accepted the ruler he sent until they found that the ruler was merely a log • 12 **old poet,** Matthew Roydon (1580-1622), whose "Elegie" paid tribute to Sidney • 13 **Sir Philip Sidney** (1554-1586), English poet and novelist • 24 **Buncombe** derived from the name of a county in North Carolina famed in legend for empty speechmaking. Sometimes it is spelled "bunkum"; it is often abbreviated to "bunk" • 25 **Plotinus.** See note, p. 835 • 29 **Vedas,** the ancient sacred literature of the Hindus. The phrase which Lowell fancifully creates combines the practical directions of the almanac with mysticism • 41 **Brahma,** the first member of the Hindu trinity. See Emerson's poem, "Brahma," p. 936 • 45 **Montaigne.** See note, p. 835 • 58 **Epistolæ Obscurorum Virorum, Letters of Obscure Men,** a book by some anonymous monk which appeared in the sixteenth century

but meanwhile you will find that it has kindled all your thoughts. For choice and pith of language he belongs to a better age than ours, and might rub shoulders with Fuller and Browne,—though he does use that abominable word *reliable.* His eye for a fine, telling phrase that will carry true is like that of a backwoodsman for a rifle; and he will dredge you up a choice word from the mud of Cotton Mather himself. A diction at once so rich and so homely as his I know not where to match in these days of writing by the page; it is like homespun cloth-of-gold. The many cannot miss his meaning, and only the few can find it. It is the open secret of all true genius. It is wholesome to angle in those profound pools, though one be rewarded with nothing more than the leap of a fish that flashes his freckled side in the sun, and as suddenly absconds in the dark and dreamy waters again. There is keen excitement, though there be no ponderable acquisition. If we carry nothing home in our baskets, there is ample gain in dilated lungs and stimulated blood. What does he mean, quotha? He means inspiring hints, a divining-rod to your deeper nature. No doubt Emerson, like all original men, has his peculiar audience, and yet I know none that can hold a promiscuous crowd in pleased attention so long as he. As in all original men, there is something for every palate. "Would you know," says Goethe, "the ripest cherries? Ask the boys and the blackbirds."

The announcement that such a pleasure as a new course of lectures by him is coming, to people as old as I am, is something like those forebodings of spring that prepare us every year for a familiar novelty, none the less novel, when it arrives, because it is familiar. We know perfectly well what we are to expect from Mr. Emerson, and yet what he says always penetrates and stirs us, as is apt to be the case with genius, in a very unlooked-for fashion. Perhaps genius is one of the few things which we gladly allow to repeat itself,—one of the few that multiply rather than weaken the force of their impression by iteration. Perhaps some of us hear more than the mere words, are moved by something deeper than the thoughts. If it be so, we are quite right, for it is thirty years and more of "plain living and high thinking" that speak to us in this altogether unique lay-preacher. We have shared in the beneficence of this varied culture, this fearless impartiality in criticism and speculation, this masculine sincerity, this sweetness of nature which rather stimulates than cloys, for a generation long. If ever there was a standing testimonial to the cumulative power and value of Character (and we need it sadly in these days), we have it in this gracious and dignified presence. What an antiseptic is a pure life! At sixty-five (or two years beyond his grand climacteric, as he would prefer to call it) he has that privilege of soul which abolishes the calendar, and presents him to us always the unwasted contemporary of his own prime. I do not know if he seem old to his younger hearers, but we who have known him so long wonder at the tenacity with which he maintains himself even in the outposts of youth. I suppose it is not the Emerson of 1868 to whom we listen. For us the whole life of the man is distilled in the clear drop of every sentence, and behind each word we divine the force of a noble character, the weight of a large capital of thinking and being. We do not go to hear what Emerson says so much as to hear Emerson. Not that we perceive any falling off in anything that ever was essential to the charm of Mr. Emerson's peculiar style of thought or phrase. The first lecture, to be sure, was more disjointed even than common. It was as if, after vainly trying to get his paragraphs into sequence and order, he had at last tried the desperate expedient of *shuffling* them. It was chaos come again, but it was a chaos full of shooting-stars, a jumble of creative forces. The second lecture, on *Criticism and Poetry,* was quite up to the level of old times, full of that power of strangely subtle association whose indirect approaches startle the mind into almost painful attention, of those flashes of mutual understanding between speaker and hearer that are gone ere one can say it lightens. The vice of Emerson's criticism seems to be, that while no man is so sensitive to what is poetical, few men are less sensible than he of what makes a poem. He values the solid meaning of thought above the subtler meaning of style. He would prefer Donne, I suspect, to Spenser, and sometimes mistakes the queer for the original.

To be young is surely the best, if the most precarious,

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4 **Fuller,** Thomas Fuller (1608-1661), English essayist noted for his style • 4 **Browne,** Sir Thomas Browne (1605-1682), English essayist and philosopher, famed for his mannered prose • 25 **Goethe,** Johann Wolfgang von Goethe (1749-1832), German author and philosopher whose writing greatly influenced German literature • 41 **plain . . . thinking.** The phrase, used in Emerson's essay "Domestic Life," is from Wordsworth's sonnet XIII: "plain living and high thinking are no more:" • 81 **Donne,** John Donne (1573-1631), English poet and theologian, whose poetry is complex in thought • 82 **Spenser,** Edmund Spenser (1552?-1599), one of the most melodious of the Elizabethan poets

gift of life; yet there are some of us who would hardly consent to be young again, if it were at the cost of our recollection of Mr. Emerson's first lectures during the consulate of Van Buren. We used to walk in from the country to the Masonic Temple (I think it was), through the crisp winter night, and listen to that thrilling voice of his, so charged with subtle meaning and subtle music, as shipwrecked men on a raft to the hail of a ship that came with unhoped-for food and rescue. Cynics might say what they liked. Did our own imaginations transfigure dry remainder-biscuit into ambrosia? At any rate, he brought us *life,* which, on the whole, is no bad thing. Was it all transcendentalism? magic-lantern pictures on mist? As you will. Those, then, were just what we wanted. But it was not so. The delight and the benefit were that he put us in communication with a larger style of thought, sharpened our wits with a more pungent phrase, gave us ravishing glimpses of an ideal under the dry husk of our New England; made us conscious of the supreme and everlasting originality of whatever bit of soul might be in any of us; freed us, in short, from the stocks of prose in which we had sat so long that we had grown wellnigh contented in our cramps. And who that saw the audience will ever forget it, where every one still capable of fire, or longing to renew in them the half-forgotten sense of it, was gathered? Those faces, young and old, agleam with pale intellectual light, eager with pleased attention, flash upon me once more from the deep recesses of the years with an exquisite pathos. Ah, beautiful young eyes, brimming with love and hope, wholly vanished now in that other world we call the Past, or peering doubtfully through the pensive gloaming of memory, your light impoverishes these cheaper days! I hear again that rustle of sensation, as they turned to exchange glances over some pithier thought, some keener flash of that humor which always played about the horizon of his mind like heat-lightning, and it seems now like the sad whisper of the autumn leaves that are whirling around me. But would my picture be complete if I forgot that ample and vegete countenance of Mr. R——of W——,—how, from its regular post at the corner of the front bench, it turned in ruddy triumph to the profaner audience as if he were the inexplicably appointed fugleman of appreciation? I was reminded of him by those hearty cherubs in Titian's Assumption that look at you as who should say, "Did you ever see a Madonna like *that?* Did you ever behold one hundred and fifty pounds of womanhood mount heavenward before like a rocket?"

To some of us that long past experience remains as the most marvellous and fruitful we have ever had. Emerson awakened us, saved us from the body of this death. It is the sound of the trumpet that the young soul longs for, careless what breath may fill it. Sidney heard it in the ballad of *Chevy Chase,* and we in Emerson. Nor did it blow retreat, but called to us with assurance of victory. Did they say he was disconnected? So were the stars, that seemed larger to our eyes, still keen with that excitement, as we walked homeward with prouder stride over the creaking snow. And were *they* not knit together by a higher logic than our mere sense could master? Were we enthusiasts? I hope and believe we were, and am thankful to the man who made us worth something for once in our lives. If asked what was left? what we carried home? we should not have been careful for an answer. It would have been enough if we had said that something beautiful had passed that way. Or we might have asked in return what one brought away from a symphony of Beethoven? Enough that he had set that ferment of wholesome discontent at work in us. There is one, at least, of those old hearers, so many of whom are now in the fruition of that intellectual beauty of which Emerson gave them both the desire and the foretaste, who will always love to repeat:

"Che in la mente m'è fitta, ed or m' accuora
La cara e buona immagine paterna
Di voi, quando nel mondo ad ora ad ora
M' insegnavaste come l'uom s' eterna."

I am unconsciously thinking, as I write, of the third lecture of the present course, in which Mr. Emerson gave some delightful reminiscences of the intellectual

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4 **Van Buren,** Martin Van Buren (1782-1862), eighth President (1837-1841) of the United States • 45 **Titian,** Tiziano Vecellio (1477-1576), Venetian painter of religious scenes. "The Assumption" is a painting which shows Mary ascending to heaven while rejoicing angels look on • 55 **ballad of Chevy Chase,** an old English ballad. Sidney said that this old song, chanted by some blind fiddler, caused him to feel his heart more moved "than with a trumpet" • 75 **Che . . . eterna.** Dante's "Inferno," Bk. XV, ll. 82-85, thus translated by Longfellow:

For in my mind is fixed, and touches now
My heart, the dear and good paternal image
Of you, when in the world from hour to hour
You taught me how a man becomes eternal.

influences in whose movement he had shared. It was like hearing Goethe read some passages of the *Wahrheit aus seinem Leben.* Not that there was not a little *Dichtung,* too, here and there, as the lecturer built up so lofty a pedestal under certain figures as to lift them into a prominence of obscurity, and seem to masthead them there. Everybody was asking his neighbor who this or that recondite great man was, in the faint hope that somebody might once have heard of him. There are those who call Mr. Emerson cold. Let them revise their judgment in presence of this loyalty of his that can keep warm for half a century, that never forgets a friendship, or fails to pay even a fancied obligation to the uttermost farthing. This substantiation of shadows was but incidental, and pleasantly characteristic of the man to those who know and love him. The greater part of the lecture was devoted to reminiscences of things substantial in themselves. He spoke of Everett, fresh from Greece and Germany; of Channing; of the translations of Margaret Fuller, Ripley, and Dwight; of the Dial and Brook Farm. To what he said of the latter an undertone of good-humored irony gave special zest. But what every one of his hearers felt was that the protagonist in the drama was left out. The lecturer was no Æneas to babble the *quorum magna pars fui,* and, as one of his listeners, I cannot help wishing to say how each of them was commenting the story as it went along, and filling up the necessary gaps in it from his own private store of memories. His younger hearers could not know how much they owed to the benign impersonality, the quiet scorn of everything ignoble, the never sated hunger of self-culture, that were personified in the man before them. But the older knew how much the country's intellectual emancipation was due to the stimulus of his teaching and example, how constantly he had kept burning the beacon of an ideal life above our lower region of turmoil. To him more than to all other causes together did the young martyrs of our civil war owe the sustaining strength of thoughtful heroism that is so touching in every record of their lives. Those who are grateful to Mr. Emerson, as many of us are, for what they feel to be most valuable in their culture, or perhaps I should say their impulse, are grateful not so much for any direct teachings of his as for that inspiring lift which only genius can give, and without which all doctrine is chaff.

This was something like the *caret* which some of us older boys wished to fill up on the margin of the master's lecture. Few men have been so much to so many, and through so large a range of aptitudes and temperaments, and this simply because all of us value manhood beyond any or all other qualities of character. We may suspect in him, here and there, a certain thinness and vagueness of quality, but let the waters go over him as they list, this masculine fibre of his will keep its lively color and its toughness of texture. I have heard some great speakers and some accomplished orators, but never any that so moved and persuaded men as he. There is a kind of undertow in that rich baritone of his that sweeps our minds from their foothold into deeper waters with a drift we cannot and would not resist. And how artfully (for Emerson is a long-studied artist in these things) does the deliberate utterance, that seems waiting for the fit word, appear to admit us partners in the labor of thought, and make us feel as if the glance of humor were a sudden suggestion, as if the perfect phrase lying written there on the desk were as unexpected to him as to us! In that closely-filed speech of his at the Burns centenary dinner every word seemed to have just dropped down to him from the clouds. He looked far away over the heads of his hearers, with a vague kind of expectation, as into some private heaven of invention, and the winged period came at last obedient to his spell. "My dainty Ariel!" he seemed murmuring to himself as he cast down his eyes as if in deprecation of the frenzy of approval, and caught another sentence from the Sibyl-

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2 **Wahrheit . . . Leben,** Goethe's autobiography, **Aus meinem Leben: Dichtung und Wahrheit** • 4 **Dichtung,** poetry • 18 **Everett,** Edward Everett (1794-1865), professor of Greek at Harvard (1819-1826) • 19 **Channing,** William Ellery Channing (1780-1842), a leading advocate of Unitarianism. (See p. 416) • 19 **Margaret Fuller** (1810-1850), a New England Transcendentalist, friend of the leading authors of ante-bellum New England, editor of The Dial (1840-1842) • 20 **Ripley,** George Ripley (1802-1880), Massachusetts religious leader and reformer, associated with the leading intellectuals of the period • 20 **Dwight,** John S. Dwight. See note, p. 838 • 20 **Brook Farm,** a coöperative community operated by the Transcendentalists and kindred spirits near West Roxbury, Massachusetts (1841-1847) • 24 **Æneas,** son of Venus and Anchises, a leader on the side of the Trojans in the Trojan war • 25 **quorum . . . fui,** events in which I had a great part (Æneid, Bk. II, l. 6) • 68 **Burns,** Robert Burns (1759-1796), Scottish poet. Emerson had given the address on January 25, 1859 • 74 **Ariel,** in Shakespeare's **The Tempest,** is an airy spirit who changed shape at the will of his master, Prospero • 76 **Sibylline leaves,** prophetic utterances

line leaves that lay before him ambushed behind a dish of fruit and seen only by nearest neighbors. Every sentence brought down the house, as I never saw one brought down before,—and it is not so easy to hit Scotsmen with a sentiment that has no hint of native brogue in it. I watched, for it was an interesting study, how the quick sympathy ran flashing from face to face, down the long tables, like an electric spark thrilling as it went, and then exploded in a thunder of plaudits. I watched till tables and faces vanished, for I, too, found myself caught up in the common enthusiasm, and my excited fancy set me under the *bema* listening to him who fulmined over Greece. I can never help applying to him what Ben Jonson said of Bacon: "There happened in my time one noble speaker, who was full of gravity in his speaking. His language was nobly censorious. No man ever spake more neatly, more pressly, more weightily, or suffered less emptiness, less idleness, in what he uttered. No member of his speech but consisted of his own graces. His hearers could not cough, or look aside from him, without loss. He commanded where he spoke." Those who heard him while their natures were yet plastic, and their mental nerves trembled under the slightest breath of divine air, will never cease to feel and say:

"Was never eye did see that face,
Was never ear did hear that tongue,
Was never mind did mind his grace,
That ever thought the travail long;
But eyes, and ears, and every thought,
Were with his sweet perfections caught."

1861

12 **bema,** rostrum • 14 **Ben Jonson** (1573?-1637), English dramatist and poet • 14 **Bacon,** Francis Bacon (1561-1626), English philosopher and essayist • 26 **Was . . . caught,** another quotation from Roydon's "Elegie"

From • The Biglow Papers, Second Series

The Courtin'

This most famous of the **Biglow Papers** appeared in at least three versions. In the first, written to fill in a page of the book version of the first series, it contained what are now stanzas 2, 5, 4, 6, 14, and 15, in that order. In the second, these verses were supplemented with stanzas 16, 17, 19, 20, 21, and 24. Later, said Lowell, "I added other verses, into some of which I infused a little more sentiment in a homely way, and after a fashion completed the poem by sketching in the characters and making a connected story. Most likely I have spoiled it. . . ." The version below is the third.

The illustrations which so admirably catch the spirit of the poem—one of Lowell's most graceful and amusing achievements in Yankee dialect—were drawn by the artist Hoppin and were reproduced with version two of the poem in **Harper's Weekly** in 1858.

God makes sech nights, all white an' still
Fur 'z you can look or listen,
Moonshine an' snow on field an' hill,
All silence an' all glisten.

Zekle crep' up quite unbeknown
An' peeked in thru' the winder,
An' there sot Huldy all alone,
'ith no one nigh to hender.

A fireplace filled the room's one side
With half a cord o' wood in—
There warn't no stoves (tell comfort died)
To bake ye to a puddin'.

The wa'nut logs shot sparkles out
Towards the pootiest, bless her,



"She heered a foot, an' knowed it tu"

An' leetle flames danced all about
  The chiny on the dresser.

Agin the chimbley crook-necks hung,
  An' in amongst 'em rusted
The ole queen's-arm thet gran'ther Young
  Fetched back from Concord busted.

The very room, coz she was in,
  Seemed warm from floor to ceilin',
An' she looked full ez rosy agin
  Ez the apples she was peelin'.

'Twas kin' o' kingdom-come to look
  On sech a blessed cretur,
A dogrose blushin' to a brook
  Ain't modester nor sweeter.

He was six foot o' man, A-1,
  Clear grit an' human natur';
None couldn't quicker pitch a ton
  Nor dror a furrer straighter.

He'd sparked it with full twenty gals,
  Hed squired 'em, danced 'em, druv 'em,
Fust this one, an' then thet, by spells—
  All is, he couldn't love 'em.

But long o' her his veins 'ould run
  All crinkly like curled maple,
The side she breshed felt full o' sun
  Ez a south slope in Ap'il.

She thought no v'ice hed sech a swing
  Ez hisn in the choir;
My! when he made Ole Hunderd ring,
  She *knowed* the Lord was nigher.

An' she'd blush scarlit, right in prayer,
  When her new meetin'-bunnet
Felt somehow thru' its crown a pair
  O' blue eyes sot upun it.

Thet night, I tell ye, she looked *some!*
  She seemed to've gut a new soul,

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17 crook-necks, gourds • 19 queen's-arm, musket • 43 Ole Hunderd, "Old Hundred." See note, p. 526



"'You want to see my Pa, I s'pose?'
'Wal . . . . no . . . . I come dasignin'.'"



"An'. . . . Wal, he up an' kist her"

For she felt sartin-sure he'd come,
  Down to her very shoe-sole.

She heered a foot, an' knowed it tu,
  A-raspin' on the scraper,—
All ways to once her feelin's flew
  Like sparks in burnt-up paper.

He kin' o' l'itered on the mat
  Some doubtfle o' the sekle,
His heart kep' goin' pity-pat
  But hern went pity Zekle.

An' yet she gin her cheer a jerk
  Ez though she wished him furder,
An' on her apples kep' to work,
  Parin' away like murder.

"You want to see my Pa, I s'pose?"
  "Wal. . . . no. . . . I come dasignin' "—
"To see my Ma? She's sprinklin' clo'es
  Agin to-morrer's i'nin'."

To say why gals acts so or so,
  Or don't, 'ould be presumin';
Mebby to mean *yes* an' say *no*
  Comes nateral to women.

He stood a spell on one foot fust,
  Then stood a spell on t'other,
An' on which one he felt the wust
  He couldn't ha' told ye nuther.

Says he, "I'd better call agin";
  Says she, "Think likely, Mister":
Thet last word pricked him like a pin,
  An'. . . . Wal, he up an' kist her.

When Ma bimeby upon 'em slips,
  Huldy sot pale ez ashes,
All kin' o' smily roun' the lips
  An' teary roun' the lashes.

For she was jes' the quiet kind
  Whose naturs never vary,
Like streams that keep a summer mind
  Snowhid in Jenooary.

The blood clost roun' her heart felt glued
  Too tight for all expressin',
Tell mother see how metters stood,
  An' gin 'em both her blessin'.

Then her red come back like the tide
  Down to the Bay o' Fundy,
An' all I know is they was cried
  In meetin' come nex' Sunday.

1861

Sunthin' in the Pastoral Line

Parson Wilbur, in his introductory letter, asserts that the Puritans "showed remarkable practical sagacity as statesmen and founders." Hosea's poem, after a brilliant series of descriptive passages about the New England scene,

93 **like the tide** alludes to the huge tide in the Bay of Fundy

tells of a dream. In this dream he is visited by "a Pilgrim Father," his ancestor, who advises him to battle against the injustice of slavery as the Puritans of old had battled against King Charles I.

To the Editors of the Atlantic Monthly

JAALAM, 17 May, 1862

Gentlemen,—At the special request of Mr. Biglow, I intended to inclose, together with his own contribution, (into which, at my suggestion, he has thrown a little more of pastoral sentiment than usual,) some passages from my sermon on the day of the National Fast, from the text, "Remember them that are in bonds, as bound with them," *Heb.* xiii. 3. But I have not leisure sufficient at present for the copying of them, even were I altogether satisfied with the production as it stands. I should prefer, I confess, to contribute the entire discourse to the pages of your respectable miscellany, if it should be found acceptable upon perusal, especially as I find the difficulty in selection of greater magnitude than I had anticipated. What passes without challenge in the fervour of oral delivery, cannot always stand the colder criticism of the closet. I am not so great an enemy of Eloquence as my friend Mr. Biglow would appear to be from some passages in his contribution for the current month. I would not, indeed, hastily suspect him of covertly glancing at myself in his somewhat caustick animadversions, albeit some of the phrases he girds at are not entire strangers to my lips. I am a more hearty admirer of the Puritans than seems now to be the fashion, and believe that, if they Hebraized a little too much in their speech, they showed remarkable practical sagacity as statesmen and founders. But such phenomena as Puritanism are the results rather of great religious than of merely social convulsions, and do not long survive them. So soon as an earnest conviction has cooled into a phrase, its work is over, and the best than can be done with it is to bury it. *Ite, missa est.* I am inclined to agree with Mr. Biglow that we cannot settle the great political questions which are now presenting themselves to the nation by the opinions of Jeremiah or Ezekiel as to the wants and duties of the Jews in their time, nor do I believe that an entire community with their feelings and views would be practicable or even agreeable at the present day. At the same time I could wish that their habit of subordinating the actual to the moral, the flesh to the spirit, and this world to the other, were more common. They had found out, at least, the great military secret that soul weighs more than body.—But I am suddenly called to a sick-bed in the household of a valued parishioner.

With esteem and respect,

Your obedient servant,
HOMER WILBUR

Once git a smell o' musk into a draw,
An' it clings hold like precerdents in law:
Your gra'ma'am put it there,—when, goodness knows,—
To jes' this-worldify her Sunday-clo'es;
But the old chist wun't sarve her gran'son's wife,
(For, 'thout new funnitoor, wut good in life?)
An' so ole clawfoot, from the precinks dread
O' the spare chamber, slinks into the shed,
Where, dim with dust, it fust or last subsides
To holdin' seeds an' fifty things besides;
But better days stick fast in heart an husk,
An' all you keep in 't gits a scent o' musk.

Jes' so with poets: wut they've airly read
Gits kind o' worked into their heart an' head,
So 's 't they can't seem to write but jest on sheers
With furrin countries or played-out ideers,
Nor hev a feelin', ef it doos n't smack
O' wut some critter chose to feel 'way back:
This makes 'em talk o' daisies, larks, an' things,
Ez though we 'd nothin' here that blows an' sings,—
(Why, I 'd give more for one live bobolink
Than a square mile o' larks in printer's ink,)—
This makes 'em think our fust o' May is May,
Which 't ain't, for all the almanicks can say.

O little city-gals, don't never go it
Blind on the word o' noospaper or poet!
They 're apt to puff, an' May-day seldom looks
Up in the country ez it doos in books;
They're no more like than hornets'-nests an' hives,
Or printed sarmons be to holy lives.

I, with my trousers perched on cowhide boots,
Tuggin' my foundered feet out by the roots,
Hev seen ye come to fling on April's hearse
Your muslin nosegays from the milliner's,
Puzzlin' to find dry ground your queen to choose,
An' dance your throats sore in morocker shoes:
I 've seen ye an' felt proud, thet, come wut would,
Our Pilgrim stock wus pethed with hardihood.
Pleasure doos make us Yankees kind o' winch,
Ez though 't wuz sunthin' paid for by the inch;
But yit we du contrive to worry thru,
Ef Dooty tells us thet the thing 's to du,
An' kerry a hollerday, ef we set out,
Ez stiddily ez though 't wuz a redoubt.

I, country-born an' bred, know where to find
Some blooms thet make the season suit the mind,
An' seem to metch the doubtin' blue-bird's notes,—
Half-vent'rin' liverworts in furry coats,
Bloodroots, whose rolled-up leaves ef you oncurl,
Each on 'em 's cradle to a baby-pearl,—
But these are jes' Spring's pickets; sure ez sin,
The rebble frosts 'll try to drive 'em in;
For half our May 's so awfully like May n't,
't would rile a Shaker or an evrige saint;
Though I own up I like our back'ard springs
Thet kind o' haggle with their greens an' things,
An' when you 'most give up, 'uthout more words
Toss the fields full o' blossoms, leaves, an' birds:
Thet 's Northun natur', slow an' apt to doubt,
But when it *doos* git stirred, ther' 's no gin-out!

Fust come the blackbirds clatt'rin' in tall trees,
An' settlin' things in windy Congresses,—
Queer politicians, though, for I 'll be skinned
Ef all on 'em don't head aginst the wind.
'fore long the trees begin to show belief,—
The maple crimsons to a coral-reef.
Then saffern swarms swing off from all the willers
So plump they look like yaller caterpillars,
Then gray hossches'nuts leetle hands unfold
Softer 'n a baby's be at three days old:
Thet 's robin-redbreast's almanick; he knows
Thet arter this ther' 's only blossom-snows;
So, choosin' out a handy crotch an' spouse,
He goes to plast'rin' his adobë house.

Then seems to come a hitch,—things lag behind,
Till some fine mornin' Spring makes up her mind,
An' ez, when snow-swelled rivers cresh their dams
Heaped-up with ice thet dovetails in an' jams,
A leak comes spirtin' thru some pin-hole cleft,
Grows stronger, fercer, tears out right an' left,
Then all the waters bow themselves an' come,
Suddin, in one gret slope o' shedderin' foam,
Jes' so our Spring gits everythin' in tune
An' gives one leap from Aperl into June:
Then all comes crowdin'; afore you think,
Young oak-leaves mist the side-hill woods with pink;
The catbird in the laylock-bush is loud;
The orchards turn to heaps o' rosy cloud;
Red-cedars blosom tu, though few folks know it,
An' look all dipt in sunshine like a poet;
The lime-trees pile their solid stacks o' shade
An' drows'ly simmer with the bees' sweet trade;
In ellum-shrouds the flashin' hangbird clings
An' for the summer vy'ge his hammock slings;
All down the loose-walled lanes in archin' bowers
The barb'ry droops its strings o' golden flowers,
Whose shrinkin' hearts the school-gals love to try
With pins,—they 'll worry yourn so, boys, bimeby!
But I don't love your cat'logue style,—do you?—
Ez ef to sell off Natur' by vendoo;
One word with blood in 't 's twice ez good ez two:
'nuff sed, June's bridesman, poet o' the year,
Gladness on wings, the bobolink, is here;
Half-hid in tip-top apple-blooms he swings,
Or climbs aginst the breeze with quiverin' wings,
Or, givin' way to 't in a mock despair,
Runs down, a brook o' laughter, thru the air.

I ollus feel the sap start in my veins
In Spring, with curus heats an' prickly pains,
Thet drive me, when I git a chance, to walk
Off by myself to hev a privit talk
With a queer critter thet can't seem to 'gree
Along o' me like most folks,—Mister Me.
Ther' 's times when I'm unsoshle ez a stone,
An' sort o' suffercate to be alone,—
I 'm crowded jes' to think thet folks are nigh,
An' can't bear nothin' closer than the sky;
Now the wind 's full ez shifty in the mind
Ez wut it is ou'-doors, ef I ain't blind,

An' sometimes, in the fairest sou'west weather,
My innard vane pints east for weeks together,
My natur' gits all goose-flesh, an' my sins
Come drizzlin' on my conscience sharp ez pins:
Wal, et sech times I jes' slip out o' sight
An' take it out in a fair stan'-up fight
With the one cuss I can't lay on the shelf,
The crook'dest stick in all the heap,—Myself.

'T wuz so las' Sabbath arter meetin'-time:
Findin' my feelin's would n't noways rhyme
With nobody's, but off the hendle flew
An' took things from an east-wind pint o' view,
I started off to lose me in the hills
Where the pines be, up back o' 'Siah's Mills:
Pines, ef you 're blue, are the best friends I know,
They mope an' sigh an' sheer your feelin's so,—
They hesh the ground beneath so, tu, I swan,
You half-forgit you 've gut a body on.
Ther' 's a small school'us' there where four roads meet,
The door-steps hollered out by little feet,
An' side-posts carved with names whose owners grew
To gret men, some on 'em, an' deacons, tu;
't ain't used no longer, coz the town hez gut
A high-school, where they teach the Lord knows wut:
Three-story larnin' 's pop'lar now; I guess
We thriv' ez wal on jes' two stories less,
For it strikes me ther' 's sech a thing ez sinnin'
By overloadin' children's underpinnin':
Wal, here it wuz I larned my A B C,
An' it 's a kind o' favorite spot with me.

We 're curus critters: Now ain't jes' the minute
Thet ever fits us easy while we 're in it;
Long ez 't wuz futur', 't would be perfect bliss,—
Soon ez it 's past, *thet* time 's wuth ten o' this;
An' yit there ain't a man thet need be told
Thet Now 's the only bird lays eggs o' gold.
A knee-high lad, I used to plot an' plan
An' think 't wuz life's cap-sheaf to be a man;
Now, gittin' gray, there's nothin' I enjoy
Like dreamin' back along into a boy:
So the ole school'us' is a place I choose
Afore all others, ef I want to muse;
I set down where I used to set, an' git
My boyhood back, an' better things with it,—
Faith, Hope, an' sunthin', ef it is n't Cherrity,
It's want o' guile, an' thet 's ez gret a rerrity,—
While Fancy's cushin', free to Prince and Clown,
Makes the hard bench ez soft ez milkweed-down.
Now, 'fore I knowed, thet Sabbath arternoon
When I sot out to tramp myself in tune,
I found me in the school'us' on my seat,
Drummin' the march to No-wheres with my feet.
Thinkin' o' nothin', I 've heerd ole folks say
Is a hard kind o' dooty in its way:
It 's thinkin' everythin' you ever knew,
Or ever hearn, to make your feelin's blue.
I sot there tryin' thet on for a spell:
I thought o' the Rebellion, then o' Hell,
Which some folks tell ye now is jest a metterfor
(A the'ry, p'raps, it wun't *feel* none the better for);
I thought o' Reconstruction, wut we 'd win
Patchin' our patent self-blow-up agin:
I thought ef this 'ere milkin' o' the wits,
So much a month, warn't givin' Natur' fits,—
Ef folks warn't druv, findin' their own milk fail,
To work the cow thet hez an iron tail,
An' ef idees 'thout ripenin' in the pan
Would send up cream to humor ary man:
From this to thet I let my worryin' creep,
Till finally I must ha' fell asleep.

Our lives in sleep are some like streams thet glide
'twixt flesh an' sperrit boundin' on each side,
Where both shores' shadders kind o' mix an' mingle
In sunthin' thet ain't jes' like either single;
An' when you cast off moorin's from To-day,
An' down towards To-morrer drift away,
The imiges thet tengle on the stream
Make a new upside-down'ard world o' dream:
Sometimes they seem like sunrise-streaks an' warnin's
O' wut 'll be in Heaven on Sabbath-mornin's,
An', mixed right in ez ef jest out o' spite,
Sunthin' thet says your supper ain't gone right.
I 'm gret on dreams, an' often when I wake,
I 've lived so much it makes my mem'ry ache,
An' can't skurce take a cat-nap in my cheer
'thout hevin' 'em, some good, some bad, all queer.

Now I wuz settin' where I 'd ben, it seemed,
An' ain't sure yit whether I r'ally dreamed,

Nor, ef I did, how long I might ha' slep',
When I hearn some un stompin' up the step,
An' lookin' 'round, ef two an' two make four,
I see a Pilgrim Father in the door.
He wore a steeple-hat, tall boots, an' spurs
With rowels to 'em big ez ches'nut-burrs,
An' his gret sword behind him sloped away
Long 'z a man's speech thet dunno wut to say.—
"Ef your name 's Biglow, an' your given-name
Hosee," sez he, "it 's arter you I came;
I 'm your gret-gran'ther multiplied by three."—
"My *wut?*" sez I.—"Your gret-gret-gret," sez he:
"You would n't ha' never ben here but for me.
Two hundred an' three year ago this May
The ship I come in sailed up Boston Bay;
I 'd been a cunnle in our Civil War,—
But wut on airth hev *you* gut up one for?
Coz we du things in England, 't ain't for you
To git a notion you can du 'em tu:
I 'm told you write in public prints: ef true,
It 's nateral you should know a thing or two."—
"Thet air 's an argymunt I can't endorse,—
't would prove, coz you wear spurs, you kep' a horse:
For brains," sez I, "wutever you may think,
Ain't boun' to cash the drafs o' pen-an'-ink,—
Though mos' folks write ez ef they hoped jes' quickenin'
The churn would argoo skim-milk into thickenin';
But skim-milk ain't a thing to change its view
O' wut it's meant for more'n a smoky flue.
But du pray tell me, 'fore we furder go,
How in all Natur' did you come to know
'bout our affairs," sez I, "in Kingdom-Come?"—
"Wal, I worked round at sperrit-rappin' some,
An' danced the tables till their legs wuz gone,
In hopes o' larnin' wut wuz goin' on,"
Sez he, "but mejums lie so like all-split
Thet I concluded it wuz best to quit.
But, come now, ef you wun't confess to knowin',
You 've some conjectures how the thing 's a-goin'."—
"Gran'ther," sez I, "a vane warnt never known
Nor asked to hev a jedgment of its own;
An' yit, ef 't ain't gut rusty in the jints,
It 's safe to trust its say on certin pints:
It knows the wind's opinions to a T,
An' the wind settles wut the weather 'll be."
"I never thought a scion of our stock
Could grow the wood to make a weather-cock;
When I wuz younger 'n you, skurce more 'n a shaver,
No airthly wind," sez he, "could make me waver!"
(Ez he said this, he clinched his jaw an' forehead,
Hitchin' his belt to bring his sword-hilt forrard.)—
"Jes so it wuz with me," sez I, "I swow,
When *I* wuz younger 'n wut you see me now,—
Nothin' from Adam's fall to Huldy's bonnet,
Thet I warn't full-cocked with my jedgment on it;
But now I 'm gittin' on in life, I find
It 's a sight harder to make up my mind,—
Nor I don't often try tu, when events
Will du it for me free of all expense.
The moral question 's ollus plain enough,—
It 's jes' the human-natur' side thet 's tough;
Wut 's best to think may n't puzzle me nor you,—
The pinch comes in decidin' wut to *du;*
Ef you *read* History, all runs smooth ez grease,
Coz there the men ain't nothin' more 'n idees,—
But come to *make* it, ez we must to-day,
Th' idees hev arms an' legs an' stop the way:
It 's easy fixin' things in facts an' figgers,—
They can't resist, nor warn't brought up with niggers;
But come to try your the'ry on,—why, then
Your facts an' figgers change to ign'ant men
Actin' ez ugly—" —"Smite 'em hip an' thigh!"
Sez gran'ther, "and let every man-child die!
Oh for three weeks o' Crommle an' the Lord!
Up, Isr'el, to your tents an' grind the sword!"—
"Thet kind o' thing worked wal in ole Judee,
But you forgit how long it 's ben A. D.;
You think thet 's ellerkence,—I call it shoddy,
A thing," sez I, "wun't cover soul nor body;
I like the plain all-wool o' common-sense,
Thet warms ye now, an' will a twelve-month hence.
"*You* took to follerin' where the Prophets beckoned,
An', fust you knowed on, back come Charles the Second;
Now wut I want 's to hev all *we* gain stick,
An' not to start Millennium too quick;
We hain't to punish only, but to keep,
An' the cure 's gut to go a cent'ry deep."
"Wal, milk-an'-water ain't the best o' glue,"

281 Crommle, Oliver Cromwell (1599-1658), Puritan general, Lord Protector of the commonwealth (1653-1658) during the Puritan rule • 290 Charles the Second (1630-1685), king of Great Britain and Ireland (1660-1685) after the period of Puritan rule.

Sez he, "an' so you 'll find before you 're thru;
Ef reshness venters sunthin', shilly-shally
Loses ez often wut 's ten times the vally.
Thet exe of ourn, when Charles's neck gut split,
Opened a gap thet ain't bridged over yit:
Slav'ry 's your Charles, the Lord hez gin the exe—"
"Our Charles," sez I, "hez gut eight million necks.
The hardest question ain't the black man's right,
The trouble is to 'mancipate the white;
One's chained in body an' can be sot free,
But t' other 's chained in soul to an idee:
It 's a long job, but we shall worry thru it;
Ef bagnets fail, the spellin'-book must du it."
"Hosee," sez he, "I think you 're goin' to fail:
The rettlesnake ain't dangerous in the tail;
This 'ere rebellion 's nothin but the rettle,—
You 'll stomp on thet an' think you 've won the bettle;
It 's Slavery thet 's the fangs an' thinkin' head,
An' ef you want selvation, cresh it dead,—
An' cresh it suddin, or you 'll larn by waitin'
Thet Chance wun't stop to listen to debatin'!"—
"God's truth!" sez I,—"an' ef *I* held the club,
An' knowed jes' where to strike,—but there's the rub!"—
"Strike soon," sez he, "or you 'll be deadly ailin',—
Folks thet 's afeard to fail are sure o' failin';
God hates your sneakin' creturs thet believe
He 'll settle things they run away an' leave!"
He brought his foot down fercely, ez he spoke,
An' give me sech a startle thet I woke.

1862

Ode Recited at the Harvard Commemoration

This poem was read on July 21, 1865, to a group of friends and alumni who, in a broad tent raised near the grounds of Harvard College, had gathered to pay tribute to the Harvard men who had served during the recently concluded Civil War. There can be no doubt that Lowell was speaking sincerely in the ode. Former students of his were among those honored, and he himself had lost three nephews in the war.

In what is considered his greatest serious poem Lowell grapples with a question which arises in all times of war—"What possible justification is there for the sacrifices of the men who served?" He praises the faith of men which is made whole by brave actions, and sees such faith made immortal not only in the lives of contemporaries but also in the race and the nation which such men have served. In the sixth stanza, he pays reverent tribute to Lincoln, whom he cites as a great example of American insight and bravery.

Lowell tells of experiments with verse forms and justifies the form which he employed in this account of the composition of the poem written to James B. Thayer in 1877: "A long series of uniform stanzas (I am always speaking of public recitation) with regularly recurring rhymes produces somnolence among the men and a desperate resort to their fans on the part of the women. . . . Now, my problem was to contrive a measure which should not be tedious by uniformity, but which should vary with varying moods, in which the transitions . . . should be managed without a jar. I at first thought of mixed rhymed and blank verses of unequal measures, like those in the chorus of 'Samson Agonistes'. . . . I wrote some stanzas . . . on this theory at first, leaving some verses without a rhyme to match. But my ear was better pleased when the rhyme, coming at a longer interval, as a far-off echo rather than instant reverberation, produced the same effect almost, and yet was grateful by unexpectedly recalling an association and faint reminiscence of consonance."

I

Weak-winged is song,
Nor aims at that clear-ethered height
Whither the brave deed climbs for light:
We seem to do them wrong,
Bringing our robin's-leaf to deck their hearse
Who in warm life-blood wrote their nobler verse,
Our trivial song to honor those who come
With ears attuned to strenuous trump and drum,
And shaped in squadron-strophes their desire,
Live battle-odes whose lines were steel and fire:

Yet sometimes feathered words are strong,
A gracious memory to buoy up and save
From Lethe's dreamless ooze, the common grave
Of the unventurous throng.

II

Today our Reverend Mother welcomes back
Her wisest Scholars, those who understood
The deeper teaching of her mystic tome,
And offered their fresh lives to make it good:
No lore of Greece or Rome,
No science peddling with the names of things,
Or reading stars to find inglorious fates,
Can lift our life with wings
Far from Death's idle gulf that for the many waits,
And lengthen out our dates
With that clear fame whose memory sings
In manly hearts to come, and nerves them and dilates:
Nor such thy teaching, Mother of us all!
Not such the trumpet-call
Of thy diviner mood,
That could thy sons entice
From happy homes and toils, the fruitful nest
Of those half-virtues which the world calls best,
Into War's tumult rude;
But rather far that stern device
The sponsors chose that round thy cradle stood
In the dim, unventured wood,
The VERITAS that lurks beneath
The letter's unprolific sheath,
Life of whate'er makes life worth living,
Seed-grain of high emprise, immortal food,
One heavenly thing whereof earth hath the giving.

III

Many loved Truth, and lavished life's best oil
Amid the dust of books to find her,
Content at last, for guerdon of their toil,
With the cast mantle she hath left behind her.
Many in sad faith sought for her,
Many with crossed hands sighed for her;
But these, our brothers, fought for her,
At life's dear peril wrought for her,
So loved her that they died for her,
Tasting the raptured fleetness
Of her divine completeness:
Their higher instinct knew
Those love her best who to themselves are true,
And what they dare to dream of dare to do;
They followed her and found her
Where all may hope to find,
Not in the ashes of the burnt-out mind,
But beautiful, with danger's sweetness round her.
Where faith made whole with deed
Breathes its awakening breath
Into the lifeless creed,
They saw her plumed and mailed,
With sweet, stern face unveiled,
And all-repaying eyes, look proud on them in death.

IV

Our slender life runs rippling by, and glides
Into the silent hollow of the past;
What is there that abides
To make the next age better for the last?
Is earth too poor to give us
Something to live for here that shall outlive us?
Some more substantial boon
Than such as flows and ebbs with Fortune's fickle moon?
The little that we see
From doubt is never free;
The little that we do
Is but half-nobly true;
With our laborious hiving
What men call treasure, and the gods call dross,
Life seems a jest of Fate's contriving,
Only secure in every one's conniving,
A long account of nothings paid with loss,
Where we poor puppets, jerked by unseen wires,
After our little hour of strut and rave,
With all our pasteboard passions and desires,
Loves, hates, ambitions, and immortal fires,
Are tossed pell-mell together in the grave.
But stay! no age was e'er degenerate,
Unless men held it at too cheap a rate,
For in our likeness still we shape our fate.
Ah, there is something here
Unfathomed by the cynic's sneer,

---

15 **Reverend Mother,** Harvard, personified as the alma mater • 37 **Veritas,** Truth—the motto of Harvard. The lines describe the university seal

Something that gives our feeble light
A high immunity from Night,
Something that leaps life's narrow bars
To claim its birthright with the hosts of heaven;
A seed of sunshine that can leaven
Our earthly dulness with the beams of stars,
And glorify our clay
With light from fountains elder than the Day;
A conscience more divine than we,
A gladness fed with secret tears,
A vexing, forward-reaching sense
Of some more noble permanence;
A light across the sea,
Which haunts the soul and will not let it be,
Still beaconing from the heights of undegenerate years.

V

Whither leads the path
To ampler fates that leads?
Not down through flowery meads,
To reap an aftermath
Of youth's vainglorious weeds,
But up the steep, amid the wrath
And shock of deadly-hostile creeds,
Where the world's best hope and stay
By battle's flashes gropes a desperate way,
And every turf the fierce foot clings to bleeds.
Peace hath her not ignoble wreath,
Ere yet the sharp, decisive word
Light the black lips of cannon, and the sword
Dreams in its easeful sheath;
But some day the live coal behind the thought,
Whether from Baäl's stone obscene,
Or from the shrine serene
Of God's pure altar brought,
Bursts up in flame; the war of tongue and pen
Learns with what deadly purpose it was fraught,
And, helpless in the fiery passion caught,
Shakes all the pillared state with shock of men:
Some day the soft Ideal that we wooed
Confronts us fiercely, foe-beset, pursued,
And cries reproachful: "Was it, then, my praise,
And not myself was loved? Prove now thy truth;
I claim of thee the promise of thy youth;
Give me thy life, or cower in empty phrase,
The victim of thy genius, not its mate!"
Life may be given in many ways,
And loyalty to Truth be sealed
As bravely in the closet as the field,
So bountiful is Fate;
But then to stand beside her,
When craven churls deride her,
To front a lie in arms and not to yield,
This shows, methinks, God's plan
And measure of a stalwart man,
Limbed like the old heroic breeds,
Who stands self-poised on manhood's solid earth,
Not forced to frame excuses for his birth,
Fed from within with all the strength he needs.

VI

Such was he, our Martyr-Chief,
Whom late the Nation he had led,
With ashes on her head,
Wept with the passion of an angry grief:
Forgive me, if from present things I turn
To speak what in my heart will beat and burn,
And hang my wreath on his world-honored urn.
Nature, they say, doth dote,
And cannot make a man
Save on some worn-out plan,
Repeating us by rote:
For him her Old-World moulds aside she threw,
And, choosing sweet clay from the breast
Of the unexhausted West,
With stuff untainted shaped a hero new,
Wise, steadfast in the strength of God, and true.
How beautiful to see
Once more a shepherd of mankind indeed,
Who loved his charge but never loved to lead;
One whose meek flock the people joyed to be,
Not lured by any cheat of birth,
But by his clear-grained human worth,
And brave old wisdom of sincerity!
They knew that outward grace is dust;
They could not choose but trust
In that sure-footed mind's unfaltering skill,

---

123 **Baäl's stone obscene,** idol worshiped by the idolatrous Baalites. See I Kings 18 • 150 **Martyr-Chief,** Lincoln, who had been assassinated April 14. This sixth section, perhaps the most famous in the poem, was added after the public recital

And supple-tempered will
That bent like perfect steel to spring again and thrust.
His was no lonely mountain-peak of mind,
Thrusting to thin air o'er our cloudly bars,
A sea-mark now, now lost in vapors blind;
Broad prairie rather, genial, level-lined,
Fruitful and friendly for all human kind,
Yet also nigh to heaven and loved of loftiest stars.
Nothing of Europe here,
Or, then, of Europe fronting mornward still,
Ere any names of Serf and Peer
Could Nature's equal scheme deface
And thwart her genial will;
Here was a type of the true elder race,
And one of Plutarch's men talked with us face to face.
I praise him not; it were too late;
And some innative weakness there must be
In him who condescends to victory
Such as the Present gives, and cannot wait,
Safe in himself as in a fate.
So always firmly he:
He knew to bide his time,
And can his fame abide,
Still patient in his simple faith sublime,
Till the wise years decide.
Great captains, with their guns and drums,
Disturb our judgment for the hour,
But at last silence comes;
These all are gone, and, standing like a tower,
Our children shall behold his fame,
The kindly-earnest, brave, foreseeing man,
Sagacious, patient, dreading praise, not blame,
New birth of our new soil, the first American.

VII

Long as man's hope insatiate can discern
Or only guess some more inspiring goal
Outside of Self, enduring as the pole,
Along whose course the flying axles burn
Of spirits bravely-pitched, earth's manlier brood;
Long as below we cannot find
The meed that stills the inexorable mind;
So long this faith to some ideal Good,
Under whatever mortal names its masks,
Freedom, Law, Country, this ethereal mood
That thanks the Fates for their severer tasks,
Feeling its challenged pulses leap
While others skulk in subterfuges cheap,
And, set in Danger's van, has all the boon it asks,
Shall win a man's praise and woman's love,
Shall be a wisdom that we set above
All other skills and gifts to culture dear,
A virtue round whose forehead we enwreathe
Laurels that with a living passion breathe
When other crowns grow, while we twine them, sear.
What brings us thronging these high rites to pay,
And seal these hours the noblest of our year,
Save that our brothers found this better way?

VIII

We sit here in the Promised Land
That flows with Freedom's honey and milk;
But 'twas they won it, sword in hand,
Making the nettle danger soft for us as silk.
We welcome back our bravest and our best—
Ah me! not all! some come not with the rest,
Who went forth brave and bright as any here!
I strive to mix some gladness with my strain,
But the sad strings complain,
And will not please the ear:
I sweep them for a pæan, but they wane
Again and yet again
Into a dirge and die away in pain.
In these brave ranks I only see the gaps,
Thinking of dear ones whom the dumb turf wraps,
Dark to the triumph which they died to gain:
Fitlier may others greet the living,
For me the past is unforgiving;
I with uncovered head
Salute the sacred dead,
Who went, and who return not.—Say not so!
'Tis not the grapes of Canaan that repay,
But the high faith that failed not by the way;
Virtue treads paths that end not in the grave;
No ban of endless night exiles the brave;
And to the saner mind
We rather seem the dead that stayed behind.
Blow, trumpets, all your exultations blow!
For never shall their aureoled presence lack:
I see them muster in a gleaming row,

---

190 **one of . . . men,** a man worthy of comparison with the heroic Greeks and Romans celebrated in Plutarch's *Lives* (first century, B.C.) • 232 **Promised Land,** the land sought by the chosen people. See Exodus 13:5

With ever-youthful brows that nobler show;
We find in our dull road their shining track;
In every nobler mood
We feel the orient of their spirit glow,
Part of our life's unalterable good,
Of all our saintlier aspiration;
They come transfigured back,
Secure from change in their high-hearted ways,
Beautiful evermore, and with the rays
Of morn on their white Shields of Expectation!

IX

But is there hope to save
Even this ethereal essence from the grave?
Whatever 'scaped Oblivion's subtle wrong
Save a few clarion names, or golden threads of song?
Before my musing eye
The mighty ones of old sweep by,
Disvoiced now and insubstantial things,
As noisy once as we; poor ghosts of kings,
Shadows of empire wholly gone to dust,
And many races, nameless long ago,
To darkness driven by that imperious gust
Of ever-rushing Time that here doth blow:
O visionary world, condition strange,
Where naught abiding is but only Change,
Where the deep-bolted stars themselves still shift
and range!
Shall we to more continuance make pretence?
Renown builds tombs; a life-estate is Wit;
And, bit by bit,
The cunning years steal all from us but woe;
Leaves are we, whose decays no harvest sow.
But, when we vanish hence,
Shall they lie forceless in the dark below,
Save to make green their little length of sods,
Or deepen pansies for a year or two,
Who now to us are shining-sweet as gods?
Was dying all they had the skill to do?
That were not fruitless: but the Soul resents
Such short-lived service, as if blind events
Ruled without her, or earth could so endure;
She claims a more divine investiture
Of longer tenure than Fame's airy rents;
Whate'er she touches doth her nature share;
Her inspiration haunts the ennobled air,
Gives eyes to mountains blind,
Ears to the deaf earth, voices to the wind,
And her clear trump sings succor everywhere
By lonely bivouacs to the wakeful mind;
For soul inherits all that soul could dare:
Yea, Manhood hath a wider span
And larger privilege of life than man.
The single deed, the private sacrifice,
So radiant now through proudly-hidden tears,
Is covered up erelong from mortal eyes
With thoughtless drift of the deciduous years;
But that high privilege that makes all men peers,
That leap of heart whereby a people rise
Up to a noble anger's height,
And, flamed on by the Fates, not shrink, but grow
more bright,
That swift validity in noble veins,
Of choosing danger and disdaining shame,
Of being set on flame
By the pure fire that flies all contact base
But wraps its chosen with angelic might,
These are imperishable gains,
Sure as the sun, medicinal as light,
These hold great futures in their lusty reins
And certify to earth a new imperial race.

X

Who now shall sneer?
Who dare again to say we trace
Our lines to a plebeian race?
Roundhead and Cavalier!
Dumb are those names erewhile in battle loud;
Dream-footed as the shadow of a cloud,
They flit across the ear:
That is best blood that hath most iron in't
To edge resolve with, pouring without stint
For what makes manhood dear.
Tell us not of Plantagenets,
Hapsburgs, and Guelfs, whose thin bloods crawl
Down from some victor in a border-brawl!
How poor their outworn coronets,
Matched with one leaf of that plain civic wreath
Our brave for honor's blazon shall bequeath,

---

332 **Roundhead and Cavalier,** the Puritans and the followers of Charles I, here representing the New Englanders and the Southerners • 339 **Plantagenets,** a line of English kings • 340 **Hapsburgs, and Guelfs,** respectively, the royal family which ruled the Holy Roman Empire and the papal party in medieval Italy

Through whose desert a rescued Nation sets
Her heel on treason, and the trumpet hears
Shout victory, tingling Europe's sullen ears
With vain resentments and more vain regrets!

XI

Not in anger, not in pride,
Pure from passion's mixture rude
Ever to base earth allied,
But with far-heard gratitude,
Still with heart and voice renewed,
To heroes living and dear martyrs dead,
The strain should close that consecrates our brave.
Lift the heart and lift the head!
Lofty be its mood and grave,
Not without a martial ring,
Not without a prouder tread
And a peal of exultation:
Little right has he to sing
Through whose heart in such an hour
Beats no march of conscious power,
Sweeps no tumult of elation!
'Tis no Man we celebrate,
By his country's victories great,
A hero half, and half the whim of Fate,
But the pith and marrow of a Nation
Drawing force from all her men,
Highest, humblest, weakest, all,
For her time of need, and then
Pulsing it again through them,
Till the basest can no longer cower,
Feeling his soul spring up divinely tall,
Touched but in passing by her mantle-hem.
Come back, then, noble pride, for 'tis her dower!
How could poet ever tower,
If his passions, hopes, and fears,
In his triumphs and his tears,
Kept not measure with his people?
Boom, cannon, boom to all the winds and waves!
Clash out, glad bells, from every rocking steeple!
Banners, advance with triumph, bend your staves!
And from every mountain-peak
Let beacon-fire to answering beacon speak,
Katahdin tell Monadnock, Whiteface he,
And so leap on in light from sea to sea,
Till the glad news be sent
Across a kindling continent,
Making earth feel more firm and air breathe braver:
"Be proud! for she is saved, and all have helped to save her!
She that lifts up the manhood of the poor,
She of the open soul and open door,
With room about her hearth for all mankind!
The fire is dreadful in her eyes no more;
From her bold front the helm she doth unbind,
Sends all her handmaid armies back to spin,
And bids her navies, that so lately hurled
Their crashing battle, hold their thunders in,
Swimming like birds of calm along the unharmful shore.
No challenge sends she to the elder world,
That looked askance and hated; a light scorn
Plays on her mouth, as round her mighty knees
She calls her children back, and waits the morn
Of nobler day, enthroned between her subject seas."

XII

Bow down, dear Land, for thou hast found release!
Thy God, in these distempered days,
Hath taught thee the sure wisdom of His ways,
And through thine enemies hath wrought thy peace!
Bow down in prayer and praise!
No poorest in thy borders but may now
Lift to the juster skies a man's enfranchised brow.
O Beautiful! my Country! ours once more!
Smoothing thy gold of war-dishevelled hair
O'er such sweet brows as never other wore,
And letting thy set lips,
Freed from wrath's pale eclipse,
The rosy edges of their smile lay bare,
What words divine of lover or of poet
Could tell our love and make thee know it,
Among the Nations bright beyond compare?
What were our lives without thee?
What all our lives to save thee?
We reck not what we gave thee;
We will not dare to doubt thee,
But ask whatever else, and we will dare!

1865

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386 Katahdin . . . Monadnock, Whiteface, mountains in Maine, New Hampshire, and New York, respectively

Auspex

My heart, I cannot still it,
Nest that had song-birds in it;
And when the last shall go,
The dreary days, to fill it,
Instead of lark or linnet,
Shall whirl dead leaves and snow.

Had they been swallows only,
Without the passion stronger
That skyward longs and sings,—
Woe's me, I shall be lonely
When I can feel no longer
The impatience of their wings!

A moment, sweet delusion,
Like birds the brown leaves hover,
But it will not be long
Before their wild confusion
Fall wavering down to cover
The poet and his song.

1879·1888

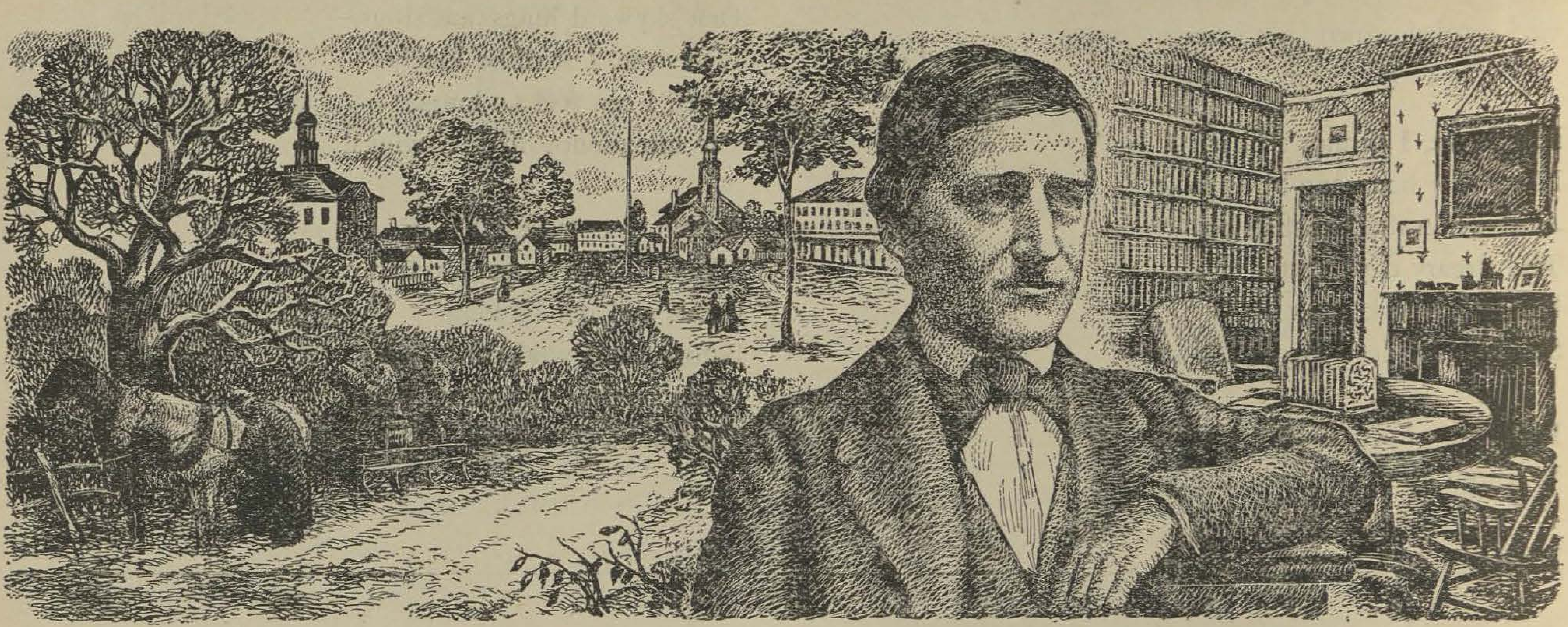
THE TRANSCENDENTALISTS: Emerson, Thoreau

Ralph Waldo Emerson

1803 · 1882

Ralph Waldo Emerson was descended from nine successive generations of ministers. His grandfather was a minister at Concord at the beginning of the American Revolution and gave encouragement to the embattled farmers who fired the shot heard around the world. His father, who was minister of the First Church, Unitarian, in Boston, Ralph Waldo's birthplace, died when Emerson was eight years old, leaving a widow and four sons in difficult financial circumstances. Nevertheless, all four sons went through Harvard, Ralph Waldo graduating in 1821. He taught school for a while, attended the Harvard Divinity School, spent a winter in Florida for his health, and, in 1829, became pastor of the Second Church of Boston and married Miss Ellen Tucker. His felicity at this time seemed perfect; in his journal he uneasily asked himself, "Can this hold?" It didn't hold, for in 1831 Ellen died, and in 1832 he resigned his pastorate because of his unwillingness to administer the Lord's Supper. In a remarkably candid sermon on the subject he said to his congregation: "It is my desire, in the office of a Christian minister, to do nothing which I cannot do with my whole heart. Having said this, I have said all. I have no hostility to this institution [the Lord's supper]; I am only stating my want of sympathy with it."

Emerson at twenty-nine possibly looked like a failure; but, as Bliss Perry has happily observed, "he pulled himself together, being of the old, unbeatable Puritan stuff." In 1833 he went abroad and visited Landor in Italy, Coleridge and Wordsworth in England, and (most important of all, because the meeting was the beginning of a lifelong friendship) Carlyle in Scotland, at Craigenputtock, "amid desolate heathery hills, where the lonely



Panel (l. to r.): "The sled and traveller stopped"; from "The Snow-Storm" • View of Concord in 1839 • Ralph Waldo Emerson at 51 • His Concord study

scholar nourished his mighty heart" (see *English Traits).* Upon his return to America, he bought a house and two acres of land in Concord, married Miss Lydia Jackson, and in 1836 published his first volume, *Nature,* which Henry Seidel Canby has called "the most seminal of all American books." Except among Transcendentalists, *Nature* met with a mild reception; but the two challenging addresses which followed soon after, *The American Scholar* in 1837 and *The Divinity School Address* in 1838, made Emerson famous. *Essays, First Series* appeared in 1841, and *Essays, Second Series,* in 1844. From 1840 to 1842, he assisted Margaret Fuller in editing *The Dial,* the chief magazine of New England Transcendentalism, and was himself editor from 1842 to 1844. He lectured extensively and successfully in England in 1847-1848. In 1847 *Poems* appeared; in 1850, *Representative Men;* in 1856, *English Traits;* in 1860, *The Conduct of Life.*

In the 1840's and 1850's Emerson was in ever increasing demand as a lecturer on Lyceum platforms in New England, the middle Atlantic states, and the "Northwest." He met this demand heroically. An entry in his journal dated Beloit, Wisconsin, January 9, 1856, reads as follows: "Mercury varying from 20° to 30° below zero for the last week. . . . This climate and people are a new test for the wares of a man of letters. All his thin, watery matter freezes; 'tis only the smallest portion of alcohol that remains good. At the Lyceum, the stout Illinoisan, after a short trial, walks out of the hall." And another entry dated Kalamazoo, Michigan, February 1860: "My chief adventure was the necessity of riding in a buggy forty-eight miles to Grand Rapids; then, after the lecture, twenty more on the return; and the next morning getting back to Kalamazoo in time for the train at twelve. So I saw Michigan and its forests and Wolverines pretty thoroughly." One marvels at Emerson's hardihood and adaptability. He was enthusiastic about the development of civilization in the West. When Bret Harte accused him of naïveté, Emerson replied that he "spoke from Pilgrim experience, and knew on good grounds the resistless culture that religion effects."

Emerson kept aloof from the slavery controversy in the 1830's and 1840's. Why "this incredible tenderness for black folk a thousand miles off?" he asked in 1841; and in 1846 he had "quite other slaves to free than those Negroes, to wit, imprisoned spirits, imprisoned thoughts." But later events drove him inexorably into the ranks of the radical abolitionists. When Webster, who had previously been something of a hero in Emerson's eyes, supported the Fugitive Slave Law as a part of the Compromise of 1850, Emerson wrote of him scathingly in his journal: "The word *liberty* in the mouth of Mr. Webster sounds like the word *love* in the mouth of a

courtezan." The law itself Emerson called a "filthy enactment," and he added, "I will not obey it, by God" (the only instance of profanity in his writings). In 1859 he took his stand publicly as a champion of John Brown. From 1861 to 1865 he was caught up in the general hysteria of war; "Emerson," Hawthorne said in 1861, "is breathing slaughter like the rest of us." On January 1, 1863, he read the "Boston Hymn" in the Boston Music Hall. Henry James remembered "the momentousness of the occasion, the vast excited multitude, the crowded platform, the tall spare figure of Emerson" and "the immense effect with which his beautiful voice pronounced the lines"—lines, it may be noted, expressing the most intransigent of positions—

> Pay ransom to the owner
> And fill the bag to the brim.
> Who is the owner? The slave is owner,
> And ever was. Pay *him!*

In April 1865 he objected in his journal that Grant's terms of surrender were "a little too easy." Perhaps the world is yet to see the philosopher whose philosophy is proof against the excitements of war.

In his personal relations, Emerson has seemed to many readers to have been a little remote. "True love," he wrote in the essay on "Friendship," "dwells and broods on the eternal"; friends "descend to meet." Because his thoughts were so habitually fixed on the ideal, "actual society" was to him "a perpetual disappointment"—an attitude sufficiently illustrated in the references in his journal to his Concord friendships. His conversations with Margaret Fuller were "strange, cold-warm, attractive-repelling." Of his long and fruitful friendship with Thoreau he wrote in 1856, "All his resources of wit and invention are lost to me, in every experiment, year after year, that I make to hold intercourse with his mind." After the death of Hawthorne, with whom he had much less in common, he regretted that he had been unable to "conquer a friendship"; to him, the fault seemed to lie in Hawthorne's "unwillingness and caprice." To the more worldly Hawthorne, on the other hand, Emerson was "the mystic, stretching his hand out of cloud-land, in vain search for something real."

But whatever his human limitations and whatever the limitations of his thinking—"I could never give much reality to evil," he frankly admitted—as an idealist who insisted always upon the "beneficent tendency" in human life and as an inspirer of youth, Emerson was unquestionably great. James Russell Lowell, who was inclined to be skeptical of Emerson's philosophy as such, testified to the inspiring quality of his discourses. "He brought us *life,*" Lowell said in "Emerson the Lecturer" (p. 855); "gave us ravishing glimpses of an ideal under the dry husk of our New England; made us conscious of the supreme and everlasting originality of whatever bit of soul might be in any of us." After a lecture by Emerson, his hearers "walked homeward with prouder stride over the creaking snow." To Matthew Arnold as an undergraduate at Oxford, Emerson was one of the four most stimulating contemporary "voices."

"In all my lectures," Emerson wrote, "I have taught one doctrine, namely, the infinitude of the private man." And again, he said, "I gain my point, gain all points, whenever I can reach the young man with any statement which teaches him his own worth." Emerson had a genius, in the words of Henry James ("Emerson" in *Partial Portraits*), for "seeing character as a real and supreme thing." "He serves," James continued, "and will not wear out . . . indeed, we cannot afford to drop him. . . . He did something better than anyone else; he had a particular faculty, which has not been surpassed, for speaking to the soul in a voice of direction and authority." Emerson should be judged and appreciated, then, not primarily as a metaphysical philosopher, but as a moral teacher. If his moral teachings seem to have lost some of their early force, if Emerson for almost a generation has been "unfashionable" (Mr. T. S. Eliot could speak of the essays in 1919 as "already an encumbrance"), it is by no means certain that with a change of intellectual and moral "climate"—such a change as now seems impending—Emerson may not regain much of his old authority and influence.

The Complete Works of Ralph Waldo Emerson, Centenary Edition, 12 vols., Boston, 1904 • The Journals of Ralph Waldo Emerson, 10 vols., Boston, 1909-1914 • The Heart of Emerson's Journals, ed. Bliss Perry, Boston, 1926 • The Letters of Ralph Waldo Emerson, ed. R. L. Rusk, 7 vols., New York, 1939 • G. E. Woodberry, Ralph Waldo Emerson, New York, 1907 • Norman Foerster, "Emerson," American Criticism, Boston, 1928 • Bliss Perry, Emerson Today, Princeton, 1931

The American Scholar

An Oration Delivered Before the Phi Beta Kappa Society, at Cambridge, August 31, 1837

The American Scholar was the most famous literary address of the century. "This grand oration," wrote Oliver Wendell Holmes, "was our intellectual Declaration of Independence. Nothing like it had been heard in the halls of Harvard since Samuel Adams supported the affirmative of the question, 'Whether it be lawful to resist the chief magistrate, if the commonwealth cannot otherwise be preserved.' " James Russell Lowell called it "our Yankee version of a lecture by Abelard." Thomas Carlyle wrote to Emerson, after having read **The American Scholar**: "I could have wept to read that speech; the clear high melody of it went tingling through my heart; I said to my wife, 'There, woman!' She read; and charges me to return for answer 'that there has been nothing met with like it since Schiller. . . .' "

The circumstances of the delivery of **The American Scholar** have been vividly reconstructed by Bliss Perry in "Emerson's Most Famous Speech," **The Praise of Folly and Other Papers**, 1923, 81-113.

Mr. President and Gentlemen, I greet you on the recommencement of our literary year. Our anniversary is one of hope, and, perhaps, not enough of labor. We do not meet for games of strength or skill, for the recitation of histories, tragedies, and odes, like the ancient Greeks; for parliaments of love and poesy, like the Troubadours; nor for the advancement of science, like our contemporaries in the British and European capitals. Thus far, our holiday has been simply a friendly sign of the survival of the love of letters amongst a people too busy to give to letters any more. As such it is precious as the sign of an indestructible instinct. Perhaps the time is already come when it ought to be, and will be, something else; when the sluggard intellect of this continent will look from under its iron lids and fill the postponed expectation of the world with something better than the exertions of mechanical skill. Our day of dependence, our long apprenticeship to the learning of other lands, draws to a close. The millions that around us are rushing into life, cannot always be fed on the sere remains of foreign harvests. Events, actions arise, that must be sung, that will sing themselves. Who can doubt that poetry will revive and lead in a new age, as the star in the constellation Harp, which now flames in our zenith, astronomers announce, shall one day be the pole-star for a thousand years?

In this hope I accept the topic which not only usage but the nature of our association seem to prescribe to this day,—the AMERICAN SCHOLAR. Year by year we come up hither to read one more chapter of his biography. Let us inquire what light new days and events have thrown on his character and his hopes.

It is one of those fables which out of an unknown antiquity convey an unlooked-for wisdom, that the gods, in the beginning, divided Man into men, that he might be more helpful to himself; just as the hand was divided into fingers, the better to answer its end.

The old fable covers a doctrine ever new and sublime; that there is One Man,—present to all particular men only partially, or through one faculty; and that you must take the whole society to find the whole man. Man is not a farmer, or a professor, or an engineer, but he is all. Man is priest, and scholar, and statesman, and producer, and soldier. In the *divided* or social state these functions are parcelled out to individuals, each of whom aims to do his stint of the joint work, whilst each other performs his. The fable implies that the individual, to possess himself, must sometimes return from his own labor to embrace all the other laborers. But, unfortunately, this original unit, this fountain of power, has been so distributed to multitudes, has been so minutely sub-

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17 **Our . . . close.** Emerson's view that American literature should no longer follow European models but should be indigenous to America was by no means original with him. Other writers had been saying the same thing for a good many years. (See, for example, John C. McCloskey, "The Campaign of Periodicals after the War of 1812 for National American Literature," **Publications of the Modern Language Association**, March 1935.) Emerson has been remembered in this connection, while earlier writers have been forgotten, because Emerson expressed the view more effectively

divided and peddled out, that it is spilled into drops, and cannot be gathered. The state of society is one in which the members have suffered amputation from the trunk, and strut about so many walking monsters,—a good finger, a neck, a stomach, an elbow, but never a man.

Man is thus metamorphosed into a thing, into many things. The planter, who is Man sent out into the field to gather food, is seldom cheered by any idea of the true dignity of his ministry. He sees his bushel and his cart, and nothing beyond, and sinks into the farmer, instead of Man on the farm. The tradesman scarcely ever gives an ideal worth to his work, but is ridden by the routine of his craft, and the soul is subject to dollars. The priest becomes a form; the attorney a statute-book; the mechanic a machine; the sailor a rope of the ship.

In this distribution of functions the scholar is the delegated intellect. In the right state he is *Man Thinking.* In the degenerate state, when the victim of society, he tends to become a mere thinker, or still worse, the parrot of other men's thinking.

In this view of him, as Man Thinking, the theory of his office is contained. Him Nature solicits with all her placid, all her monitory pictures; him the past instructs; him the future invites. Is not indeed every man a student, and do not all things exist for the student's behoof? And, finally, is not the true scholar the only true master? But the old oracle said, "All things have two handles: beware of the wrong one." In life, too often, the scholar errs with mankind and forfeits his privilege. Let us see him in his school, and consider him in reference to the main influences he receives.

I. The first in time and the first in importance of the influences upon the mind is that of nature. Every day, the sun; and, after the sunset, Night and her stars. Ever the winds blow; ever the grass grows. Every day, men and women, conversing, beholding and beholden. The scholar is he of all men whom this spectacle most engages. He must settle its value in his mind. What is nature to him? There is never a beginning, there is never an end, to the inexplicable continuity of this web of God, but always circular power returning into itself. Therein it resembles his own spirit, whose beginning, whose ending, he never can find,—so entire, so boundless. Far too as her splendors shine, system on system shooting like rays, upward, downward without centre, without circumference,—in the mass and in the particle, Nature hastens to render account of herself to the mind. Classification begins. To the young mind every thing is individual, stands by itself. By and by, it finds how to join two things and see in them one nature; then three, then three thousand; and so, tyrannized over by its own unifying instinct, it goes on tying things together, diminishing anomalies, discovering roots running under ground whereby contrary and remote things cohere and flower out from one stem. It presently learns that since the dawn of history there has been a constant accumulation and classifying of facts. But what is classification but the perceiving that these objects are not chaotic, and are not foreign, but have a law which is also a law of the human mind? The astronomer discovers that geometry, a pure abstraction of the human mind, is the measure of planetary motion. The chemist finds proportions and intelligible method throughout matter; and science is nothing but the finding of analogy, identity, in the most remote parts. The ambitious soul sits down before each refractory fact; one after another reduces all strange constitutions, all new powers, to their class and their law, and goes on forever to animate the last fibre of organization, the outskirts of nature, by insight.

Thus to him, to this schoolboy under the bending dome of day, is suggested that he and it proceed from one root; one is leaf and one is flower; relation, sympathy, stirring in every vein. And what is that root? Is not that the soul of his soul? A thought too bold; a dream too wild. Yet when this spiritual light shall have revealed the law of more earthly natures,—when he has learned to worship the soul, and to see that the natural philosophy that now is, is only the first gropings of its gigantic hand, he shall look forward to an ever expanding knowledge as to a becoming creator. He shall see that nature is the opposite of the soul, answering to it part for part. One is seal and one is print. Its beauty is the beauty of his own mind. Its laws are the laws of his own mind. Nature then becomes to him the measure of his attainments. So much of nature as he is ignorant of, so much of his own mind does he not yet possess. And, in fine, the ancient precept, "Know thyself," and the modern precept, "Study nature," become at last one maxim.

II. The next great influence into the spirit of the scholar is the mind of the Past,—in whatever form, whether of literature, of art, of institutions, that mind is

inscribed. Books are the best type of the influence of the past, and perhaps we shall get at the truth,—learn the amount of this influence more conveniently,—by considering their value alone.

The theory of books is noble. The scholar of the first age received into him the world around; brooded thereon; gave it the new arrangement of his own mind, and uttered it again. It came into him life; it went out from him truth. It came to him short-lived actions; it went out from him immortal thoughts. It came to him business; it went from him poetry. It was dead fact; now, it is quick thought. It can stand, and it can go. It now endures, it now flies, it now inspires. Precisely in proportion to the depth of mind from which it issued, so high does it soar, so long does it sing.

Or, I might say, it depends on how far the process had gone, of transmuting life into truth. In proportion to the completeness of the distillation, so will the purity and imperishableness of the product be. But none is quite perfect. As no air-pump can by any means make a perfect vacuum, so neither can any artist entirely exclude the conventional, the local, the perishable from his book, or write a book of pure thought, that shall be as efficient, in all respects, to a remote posterity, as to contemporaries, or rather to the second age. Each age, it is found, must write its own books; or rather, each generation for the next succeeding. The books of an older period will not fit this.

Yet hence arises a grave mischief. The sacredness which attaches to the act of creation, the act of thought, is transferred to the record. The poet chanting was felt to be a divine man: henceforth the chant is divine also. The writer was a just and wise spirit: henceforward it is settled the book is perfect; as love of the hero corrupts into worship of his statue. Instantly the book becomes noxious: the guide is a tyrant. The sluggish and perverted mind of the multitude, slow to open to the incursions of Reason, having once so opened, having once received this book, stands upon it, and makes an outcry if it is disparaged. Colleges are built on it. Books are written on it by thinkers, not by Man Thinking; by men of talent, that is, who start wrong, who set out from accepted dogmas, not from their own sight of principles. Meek young men grow up in libraries, believing it their duty to accept the views which Cicero, which Locke, which Bacon, have given; forgetful that Cicero, Locke, and Bacon were only young men in libraries when they wrote these books.

Hence, instead of Man Thinking, we have the bookworm. Hence the book-learned class, who value books, as such; not as related to nature and the human constitution, but as making a sort of Third Estate with the world and the soul. Hence the restorers of readings, the emendators, the bibliomaniacs of all degrees.

Books are the best of things, well used; abused, among the worst. What is the right use? What is the one end which all means go to effect? They are for nothing but to inspire. I had better never see a book than to be warped by its attraction clean out of my own orbit, and made a satellite instead of a system. The one thing in the world, of value, is the active soul. This every man is entitled to; this every man contains within him, although in almost all men obstructed, and as yet unborn. The soul active sees absolute truth and utters truth, or creates. In this action it is genius; not the privilege of here and there a favorite, but the sound estate of every man. In its essence it is progressive. The book, the college, the school of art, the institution of any kind, stop with some past utterance of genius. This is good, say they,—let us hold by this. They pin me down. They look backward and not forward. But genius looks forward: the eyes of man are set in his forehead, not in his hindhead: man hopes: genius creates. Whatever talents may be, if the man create not, the pure efflux of the Deity is not his;—cinders and smoke there may be, but not yet flame. There are creative manners, there are creative actions, and creative words; manners, actions, words, that is, indicative of no custom or authority, but springing spontaneous from the mind's own sense of good and fair.

On the other part, instead of being its own seer, let it receive from another mind its truth, though it were in torrents of light, without periods of solitude, inquest, and self-recovery, and a fatal disservice is done. Genius is always sufficiently the enemy of genius by over-influence. The literature of every nation bears me witness. The English dramatic poets have Shakespearized now for two hundred years.

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12 quick, living • 38 Reason. In Emersonian usage, "Reason" is supra-rational, intuitive; "Understanding" is logical, scientific. See pp. 716-717

Undoubtedly there is a right way of reading, so it be sternly subordinated. Man Thinking must not be subdued by his instruments. Books are for the scholar's idle times. When he can read God directly, the hour is too precious to be wasted in other men's transcripts of their readings. But when the intervals of darkness come, as come they must,—when the sun is hid and the stars withdraw their shining,—we repair to the lamps which were kindled by their ray, to guide our steps to the East again, where the dawn is. We hear, that we may speak. The Arabian proverb says, "A fig tree, looking on a fig tree, becometh fruitful."

It is remarkable, the character of the pleasure we derive from the best books. They impress us with the conviction that one nature wrote and the same reads. We read the verses of one of the great English poets, of Chaucer, of Marvell, of Dryden, with the most modern joy,—with a pleasure, I mean, which is in great part caused by the abstraction of all *time* from their verses. There is some awe mixed with the joy of our surprise, when this poet, who lived in some past world, two or three hundred years ago, says that which lies close to my own soul, that which I also had well-nigh thought and said. But for the evidence thence afforded to the philosophical doctrine of the identity of all minds, we should suppose some pre-established harmony, some foresight of souls that were to be, and some preparation of stores for their future wants, like the fact observed in insects, who lay up food before death for the young grub they shall never see.

I would not be hurried by any love of system, by any exaggeration of instincts, to underrate the Book. We all know, that as the human body can be nourished on any food, though it were boiled grass and the broth of shoes, so the human mind can be fed by any knowledge. And great and heroic men have existed who had almost no other information than by the printed page. I only would say that it needs a strong head to bear that diet. One must be an inventor to read well. As the proverb says, "He that would bring home the wealth of the Indies, must carry out the wealth of the Indies." There is then creative reading as well as creative writing. When the mind is braced by labor and invention, the page of whatever book we read becomes luminous with manifold allusion. Every sentence is doubly significant, and the sense of our author is as broad as the world. We then see, what is always true, that as the seer's hour of vision is short and rare among heavy days and months, so is its record, perchance, the least part of his volume. The discerning will read, in his Plato or Shakspeare, only that least part,—only the authentic utterances of the oracle;—all the rest he rejects, were it never so many times Plato's and Shakspeare's.

Of course there is a portion of reading quite indispensable to a wise man. History and exact science he must learn by laborious reading. Colleges, in like manner, have their indispensable office,—to teach elements. But they can only highly serve us when they aim not to drill, but to create; when they gather from far every ray of various genius to their hospitable halls, and by the concentrated fires, set the hearts of their youth on flame. Thought and knowledge are natures in which apparatus and pretension avail nothing. Gowns and pecuniary foundations, though of towns of gold, can never countervail the least sentence or syllable of wit. Forget this, and our American colleges will recede in their public importance, whilst they grow richer every year.

III. There goes in the world a notion that the scholar should be a recluse, a valetudinarian,—as unfit for any handiwork, or public labor as a penknife for an axe. The so-called "practical men" sneer at speculative men, as if, because they speculate or *see,* they could do nothing. I have heard it said that the clergy,—who are always, more universally than any other class, the scholars of their day,—are addressed as women; that the rough, spontaneous conversation of men they do not hear, but only a mincing and diluted speech. They are often virtually disfranchised; and indeed there are advocates for their celibacy. As far as this is true of the studious classes, it is not just and wise. Action is with the scholar subordinate, but it is essential. Without it he is not yet man. Without it thought can never ripen into truth. Whilst the world hangs before the eye as a cloud of beauty, we cannot even see its beauty. Inaction is cowardice, but there can be no scholar without the heroic

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17 Marvell. Emerson's naming Andrew Marvell (1621-1678) as "one of the great English poets" is significant. For an informative study of Marvell's influence on Emerson, see Norman A. Brittin, "Emerson and the Metaphysical Poets," American Literature, March 1936 • **63 Gowns,** academic costume • **65 wit,** wisdom • **72 speculate or see.** "Speculate" is from the Latin, meaning to spy out, to observe

mind. The preamble of thought, the transition through which it passes from the unconscious to the conscious, is action. Only so much do I know, as I have lived. Instantly we know whose words are loaded with life, and whose not.

The world,—this shadow of the soul, or *other me,*—lies wide around. Its attractions are the keys which unlock my thoughts and make me acquainted with myself. I run eagerly into this resounding tumult. I grasp the hands of those next me, and take my place in the ring to suffer and to work, taught by an instinct that so shall the dumb abyss be vocal with speech. I pierce its order; I dissipate its fear; I dispose of it within the circuit of my expanding life. So much only of life as I know by experience, so much of the wilderness have I vanquished and planted, or so far have I extended my being, my dominion. I do not see how any man can afford, for the sake of his nerves and his nap, to spare any action in which he can partake. It is pearls and rubies to his discourse. Drudgery, calamity, exasperation, want, are instructors in eloquence and wisdom. The true scholar grudges every opportunity of action past by, as a loss of power. It is the raw material out of which the intellect moulds her splendid products. A strange process too, this by which experience is converted into thought, as a mulberry leaf is converted into satin. The manufacture goes forward at all hours.

The actions and events of our childhood and youth are now matters of calmest observation. They lie like fair pictures in the air. Not so with our recent actions,—with the business which we now have in hand. On this we are quite unable to speculate. Our affections as yet circulate through it. We no more feel or know it than we feel the feet, or the hand, or the brain of our body. The new deed is yet a part of life,—remains for a time immersed in our unconscious life. In some contemplative hour it detaches itself from the life like a ripe fruit, to become a thought of the mind. Instantly it is raised, transfigured; the corruptible has put on incorruption. Henceforth it is an object of beauty, however base its origin and neighborhood. Observe too the impossibility of antedating this act. In its grub state, it cannot fly, it cannot shine, it is a dull grub. But suddenly, without observation, the self-same thing unfurls beautiful wings, and is an angel of wisdom. So is there no fact, no event, in our private history, which shall not, sooner or later, lose its adhesive, inert form, and astonish us by soaring from our body into the empyrean. Cradle and infancy, school and playground, the fear of boys, and dogs, and ferules, the love of little maids and berries, and many another fact that once filled the whole sky, are gone already; friend and relative, profession and party, town and country, nation and world, must also soar and sing.

Of course, he who has put forth his total strength in fit actions has the richest return of wisdom. I will not shut myself out of this globe of action, and transplant an oak into a flower-pot, there to hunger and pine; nor trust the revenue of some single faculty, and exhaust one vein of thought, much like those Savoyards, who, getting their livelihood by carving shepherds, shepherdesses, and smoking Dutchmen, for all Europe, went out one day to the mountain to find stock, and discovered that they had whittled up the last of their pine trees. Authors we have, in numbers, who have written out their vein, and who, moved by a commendable prudence, sail for Greece or Palestine, follow the trapper into the prairie, or ramble round Algiers, to replenish their merchantable stock.

If it were only for a vocabulary, the scholar would be covetous of action. Life is our dictionary. Years are well spent in country labors; in town; in the insight into trades and manufactures; in frank intercourse with many men and women; in science; in art; to the one end of mastering in all their facts a language by which to illustrate and embody our perceptions. I learn immediately from any speaker how much he has already lived, through the poverty or the splendor of his speech. Life lies behind us as the quarry from whence we get tiles and copestones for the masonry of to-day. This is the way to learn grammar. Colleges and books only copy the language which the field and the work-yard made.

But the final value of action, like that of books, and better than books, is that it is a resource. The great principle of Undulation in nature, that shows itself in the inspiring and expiring of the breath; in desire and satiety; in the ebb and flow of the sea; in day and night; in heat and cold; and, as yet more deeply ingrained in every atom and every fluid, is known to us under the name of Polarity,—these "fits of easy transmission and

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39 **the corruptible . . . incorruption,** I Corinthians 15:53: "For this corruptible must put on incorruption . . ." • 59 **Savoyards,** inhabitants of Savoy in northwestern Italy

reflection," as Newton called them, are the law of nature because they are the law of spirit.

The mind now thinks, now acts, and each fit reproduces the other. When the artist has exhausted his materials, when the fancy no longer paints, when thoughts are no longer apprehended and books are a weariness,—he has always the resource *to live.* Character is higher than intellect. Thinking is the function. Living is the functionary. The stream retreats to its source. A great soul will be strong to live, as well as strong to think. Does he lack organ or medium to impart his truth? He can still fall back on this elemental force of living them. This is a total act. Thinking is a partial act. Let the grandeur of justice shine in his affairs. Let the beauty of affection cheer his lowly roof. Those "far from fame," who dwell and act with him, will feel the force of his constitution in the doings and passages of the day better than it can be measured by any public and designed display. Time shall teach him that the scholar loses no hour which the man lives. Herein he unfolds the sacred germ of his instinct, screened from influence. What is lost in seemliness is gained in strength. Not out of those on whom systems of education have exhausted their culture, comes the helpful giant to destroy the old or to build the new, but out of unhandselled savage nature; out of terrible Druids and Berserkers come at last Alfred and Shakspeare.

I hear therefore with joy whatever is beginning to be said of the dignity and necessity of labor to every citizen. There is virtue yet in the hoe and the spade, for learned as well as for unlearned hands. And labor is everywhere welcome; always we are invited to work; only be this limitation observed, that a man shall not for the sake of wider activity sacrifice any opinion to the popular judgments and modes of action.

I have now spoken of the education of the scholar by nature, by books, and by action. It remains to say somewhat of his duties.

They are such as become Man Thinking. They may all be comprised in self-trust. The office of the scholar is to cheer, to raise, and to guide men by showing them facts amidst appearances. He plies the slow, unhonored, and unpaid task of observation. Flamsteed and Herschel, in their glazed observatories, may catalogue the stars with the praise of all men, and the results being splendid and useful, honor is sure. But he, in his private observatory, cataloguing obscure and nebulous stars of the human mind, which as yet no man has thought of as such,—watching days and months sometimes for a few facts; correcting still his old records;—must relinquish display and immediate fame. In the long period of his preparation he must betray often an ignorance and shiftlessness in popular arts, incurring the disdain of the able who shoulder him aside. Long he must stammer in his speech; often forego the living for the dead. Worse yet, he must accept—how often!—poverty and solitude. For the ease and pleasure of treading the old road, accepting the fashions, the education, the religion of society, he takes the cross of making his own, and, of course, the self-accusation, the faint heart, the frequent uncertainty and loss of time, which are the nettles and tangling vines in the way of the self-relying and self-directed; and the state of virtual hostility in which he seems to stand to society, and especially to educated society. For all this loss and scorn, what offset? He is to find consolation in exercising the highest functions of human nature. He is one who raises himself from private considerations and breathes and lives on public and illustrious thoughts. He is the world's eye. He is the world's heart. He is to resist the vulgar prosperity that retrogrades ever to barbarism, by preserving and communicating heroic sentiments, noble biographies, melodious verse, and the conclusions of history. Whatsoever oracles the human heart, in all emergencies, in all solemn hours, has uttered as its commentary on the world of actions,—these he shall receive and impart. And whatsoever new verdict Reason from her inviolable seat pronounces on the passing men and events of to-day,—this he shall hear and promulgate.

These being his functions, it becomes him to feel all confidence in himself, and to defer never to the popular cry. He and he only knows the world. The world of any moment is the merest appearance. Some great decorum, some fetish of a government, some ephemeral trade, or

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1 **Newton,** Sir Isaac Newton (1642-1727), English philosopher and mathematician who discovered the laws of universal gravitation • 25 **unhandselled,** without "handsel" or gift made as a token of good luck; without, that is, artificial advantages or initial good auspices • 43 **Flamsteed,** John Flamsteed (1646-1719), English astronomer • 43 **Herschel,** Sir William Herschel (1738-1822), German astronomer in England, or his son, also a famous astronomer

war, or man, is cried up by half mankind and cried down by the other half, as if all depended on this particular up or down. The odds are that the whole question is not worth the poorest thought which the scholar has lost in listening to the controversy. Let him not quit his belief that a popgun is a popgun, though the ancient and honorable of the earth affirm it to be the crack of doom. In silence, in steadiness, in severe abstraction, let him hold by himself; add observation to observation, patient of neglect, patient of reproach, and bide his own time,—happy enough if he can satisfy himself alone that this day he has seen something truly. Success treads on every right step. For the instinct is sure, that prompts him to tell his brother what he thinks. He then learns that in going down into the secrets of his own mind he has descended into the secrets of all minds. He learns that he who has mastered any law in his private thoughts, is master to that extent of all men whose language he speaks, and of all into whose language his own can be translated. The poet, in utter solitude remembering his spontaneous thoughts and recording them, is found to have recorded that which men in crowded cities find true for them also. The orator distrusts at first the fitness of his frank confessions, his want of knowledge of the persons he addresses, until he finds that he is the complement of his hearers;—that they drink his words because he fulfils for them their own nature; the deeper he dives into his privatest, secretest presentiment, to his wonder he finds this is the most acceptable, most public, and universally true. The people delight in it; the better part of every man feels, This is my music; this is myself.

In self-trust all the virtues are comprehended. Free should the scholar be,—free and brave. Free even to the definition of freedom, "without any hindrance that does not arise out of his own constitution." Brave; for fear is a thing which a scholar by his very function puts behind him. Fear always springs from ignorance. It is a shame to him if his tranquillity, amid dangerous times, arise from the presumption that like children and women his is a protected class; or if he seek a temporary peace by the diversion of his thoughts from politics or vexed questions, hiding his head like an ostrich in the flowering bushes, peeping into microscopes, and turning rhymes, as a boy whistles to keep his courage up. So is the danger a danger still; so is the fear worse. Manlike let him turn and face it. Let him look into its eye and search its nature, inspect its origin,—see the whelping of this lion,—which lies no great way back; he will then find in himself a perfect comprehension of its nature and extent; he will have made his hands meet on the other side, and can henceforth defy it and pass on superior. The world is his who can see through its pretension. What deafness, what stone-blind custom, what overgrown error you behold is there only by sufferance,—by your sufferance. See it to be a lie, and you have already dealt it its mortal blow.

Yes, we are the cowed,—we the trustless. It is a mischievous notion that we are come late into nature; that the world was finished a long time ago. As the world was plastic and fluid in the hands of God, so it is ever to so much of his attributes as we bring to it. To ignorance and sin, it is flint. They adapt themselves to it as they may; but in proportion as a man has any thing in him divine, the firmament flows before him and takes his signet and form. Not he is great who can alter matter, but he who can alter my state of mind. They are the kings of the world who give the color of their present thought to all nature and all art, and persuade men by the cheerful serenity of their carrying the matter, that this thing which they do is the apple which the ages have desired to pluck, now at last ripe, and inviting nations to the harvest. The great man makes the great thing. Wherever Macdonald sits, there is the head of the table. Linnæus makes botany the most alluring of studies, and wins it from the farmer and the herb-woman; Davy, chemistry; and Cuvier, fossils. The day is always his who works in it with serenity and great aims. The unstable estimates of men crowd to him whose mind is filled with a truth, as the heaped waves of the Atlantic follow the moon.

For this self-trust, the reason is deeper than can be fathomed,—darker than can be enlightened. I might not carry with me the feeling of my audience in stating my own belief. But I have already shown the ground of my hope, in adverting to the doctrine that man is one. I believe man has been wronged; he has wronged himself. He has almost lost the light that can lead him back to his prerogatives. Men are become of no account. Men

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73 Wherever . . . table, taken from a proverb • 74 Linnæus, Carolus Linnæus (1707-1778), Swedish botanist • 76 Davy, Sir Humphry Davy (1778-1829), English chemist • 76 Cuvier, Georges Léopold Cuvier. See note, p. 688

in history, men in the world of to-day, are bugs, are spawn, and are called "the mass" and "the herd." In a century, in a millennium, one or two men; that is to say, one or two approximations to the right state of every man. All the rest behold in the hero or the poet their own green and crude being,—ripened; yes, and are content to be less, so *that* may attain to its full stature. What a testimony, full of grandeur, full of pity, is borne to the demands of his own nature, by the poor clansman, the poor partisan, who rejoices in the glory of his chief. The poor and the low find some amends to their immense moral capacity, for their acquiescence in a political and social inferiority. They are content to be brushed like flies from the path of a great person, so that justice shall be done by him to that common nature which it is the dearest desire of all to see enlarged and glorified. They sun themselves in the great man's light, and feel it to be their own element. They cast the dignity of man from their downtrod selves upon the shoulders of a hero, and will perish to add one drop of blood to make that great heart beat, those giant sinews combat and conquer. He lives for us, and we live in him.

Men such as they are, very naturally seek money or power; and power because it is as good as money,—the "spoils," so called, "of office." And why not? for they aspire to the highest, and this, in their sleep-walking, they dream is highest. Wake them and they shall quit the false good and leap to the true, and leave governments to clerks and desks. This revolution is to be wrought by the gradual domestication of the idea of Culture. The main enterprise of the world for splendor, for extent, is the upbuilding of a man. Here are the materials strewn along the ground. The private life of one man shall be a more illustrious monarchy, more formidable to its enemy, more sweet and serene in its influence to its friend, than any kingdom in history. For a man, rightly viewed, comprehendeth the particular natures of all men. Each philosopher, each bard, each actor has only done for me, as by a delegate, what one day I can do for myself. The books which once we valued more than the apple of the eye, we have quite exhausted. What is that but saying that we have come up with the point of view which the universal mind took through the eyes of one scribe; we have been that man, and have passed on. First, one, then another, we drain all cisterns, and waxing greater by all these supplies, we crave a better and more abundant food. The man has never lived that can feed us ever. The human mind cannot be enshrined in a person who shall set a barrier on any one side to this unbounded, unboundable empire. It is one central fire, which, flaming now out of the lips of Etna, lightens the capes of Sicily, and now out of the throat of Vesuvius, illuminates the towers and vineyards of Naples. It is one light which beams out of a thousand stars. It is one soul which animates all men.

But I have dwelt perhaps tediously upon this abstraction of the Scholar. I ought not to delay longer to add what I have to say of nearer reference to the time and to this country.

Historically, there is thought to be a difference in the ideas which predominate over successive epochs, and there are data for marking the genius of the Classic, of the Romantic, and now of the Reflective or Philosophical age. With the views I have intimated of the oneness or the identity of the mind through all individuals, I do not much dwell on these differences. In fact, I believe each individual passes through all three. The boy is a Greek; the youth, romantic; the adult, reflective. I deny not, however, that a revolution in the leading idea may be distinctly enough traced.

Our age is bewailed as the age of Introversion. Must that needs be evil? We, it seems, are critical; we are embarrassed with second thoughts; we cannot enjoy any thing for hankering to know whereof the pleasure consists; we are lined with eyes; we see with our feet; the time is infected with Hamlet's unhappiness,—

"Sicklied o'er with the pale cast of thought."

It is so bad then? Sight is the last thing to be pitied. Would we be blind? Do we fear lest we should outsee nature and God, and drink truth dry? I look upon the discontent of the literary class as a mere announcement of the fact that they find themselves not in the state of mind of their fathers, and regret the coming state as untried; as a boy dreads the water before he has learned that he can swim. If there is any period one would desire to be born in, is it not the age of Revolution; when the old and the new stand side by side and admit of being compared; when the energies of all men are searched by fear and by hope; when the historic glories of the old can be compensated by the rich possibilities

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77 **Sicklied . . . thought.** Hamlet, Act III, Scene i, l. 85

of the new era? This time, like all times, is a very good one, if we but know what to do with it.

I read with some joy of the auspicious signs of the coming days, as they glimmer already through poetry and art, through philosophy and science, through church and state.

One of these signs is the fact that the same movement which effected the elevation of what was called the lowest class in the state, assumed in literature a very marked and as benign an aspect. Instead of the sublime and beautiful, the near, the low, the common, was explored and poetized. That which had been negligently trodden under foot by those who were harnessing and provisioning themselves for long journeys into far countries, is suddenly found to be richer than all foreign parts. The literature of the poor, the feelings of the child, the philosophy of the street, the meaning of household life, are the topics of the time. It is a great stride. It is a sign—is it not?—of new vigor when the extremities are made active, when currents of warm life run into the hands and the feet. I ask not for the great, the remote, the romantic; what is doing in Italy or Arabia; what is Greek art, or Provençal minstrelsy; I embrace the common, I explore and sit at the feet of the familiar, the low. Give me insight into to-day, and you may have the antique and future worlds. What would we really know the meaning of? The meal in the firkin; the milk in the pan; the ballad in the street; the news of the boat; the glance of the eye; the form and the gait of the body;—show me the ultimate reason of these matters; show me the sublime presence of the highest spiritual cause lurking, as always it does lurk, in these suburbs and extremities of nature; let me see every trifle bristling with the polarity that ranges it instantly on an eternal law; and the shop, the plough, and the ledger referred to the like cause by which light undulates and poets sing;—and the world lies no longer a dull miscellany and lumber room, but has form and order; there is no trifle, there is no puzzle, but one design unites and animates the farthest pinnacle and the lowest trench.

This idea has inspired the genius of Goldsmith, Burns, Cowper, and in a newer time, of Goethe, Wordsworth, and Carlyle. This idea they have differently followed and with various success. In contrast with their writing, the style of Pope, of Johnson, of Gibbon, looks cold and pedantic. This writing is blood-warm. Man is surprised to find that things near are not less beautiful and wondrous than things remote. The near explains the far. The drop is a small ocean. A man is related to all nature. This perception of the worth of the vulgar is fruitful in discoveries. Goethe, in this very thing the most modern of the moderns, has shown us, as none ever did, the genius of the ancients.

There is one man of genius who has done much for this philosophy of life, whose literary value has never yet been rightly estimated;—I mean Emanuel Swedenborg. The most imaginative of men, yet writing with the precision of a mathematician, he endeavored to engraft a purely philosophical Ethics on the popular Christianity of his time. Such an attempt of course must have difficulty which no genius could surmount. But he saw and showed the connection between nature and the affections of the soul. He pierced the emblematic or spiritual character of the visible, audible, tangible world. Especially did his shade-loving muse hover over and interpret the lower parts of nature; he showed the mysterious bond that allies moral evil to the foul material forms, and has given in epical parables a theory of insanity, of beasts, of unclean and fearful things.

Another sign of our times, also marked by an analogous political movement, is the new importance given to the single person. Every thing that tends to insulate the individual,—to surround him with barriers of natural respect, so that each man shall feel the world is his, and man shall treat with man as a sovereign state with a sovereign state,—tends to true union as well as greatness. "I learned," said the melancholy Pestalozzi, "that no man in God's wide earth is either willing or able to help any other man." Help must come from the bosom alone. The scholar is that man who must take up into himself all the ability of the time, all the contributions of the past, all the hopes of the future. He must be an university of knowledges. If there be one lesson more than another which should pierce his ear, it is, The world is nothing, the man is all; in yourself is the law of all nature, and you know not yet how a globule of sap ascends; in yourself slumbers the whole of Rea-

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56 Emanuel Swedenborg is the subject of an essay in Emerson's *Representative Men* (1850). See note, p. 662 • 77 Pestalozzi, Johann Heinrich Pestalozzi (1746-1827), Swiss educational reformer. His *Hints to Parents* influenced Bronson Alcott

son; it is for you to know all; it is for you to dare all. Mr. President and Gentlemen, this confidence in the unsearched might of man belongs, by all motives, by all prophecy, by all preparation, to the American Scholar. We have listened too long to the courtly muses of Europe. The spirit of the American freeman is already suspected to be timid, imitative, tame. Public and private avarice make the air we breathe thick and fat. The scholar is decent, indolent, complaisant. See already the tragic consequence. The mind of this country, taught to aim at low objects, eats upon itself. There is no work for any but the decorous and the complaisant. Young men of the fairest promise, who begin life upon our shores, inflated by the mountain winds, shined upon by all the stars of God, find the earth below not in unison with these, but are hindered from action by the disgust which the principles on which business is managed inspire, and turn drudges, or die of disgust, some of them suicides. What is the remedy? They did not yet see, and thousands of young men as hopeful now crowding to the barriers for the career do not yet see, that if the single man plant himself indomitably on his instincts, and there abide, the huge world will come round to him. Patience,—patience; with the shades of all the good and great for company; and for solace the perspective of your own infinite life; and for work the study and the communication of principles, the making those instincts prevalent, the conversion of the world. Is it not the chief disgrace in the world, not to be an unit;—not to be reckoned one character;—not to yield that peculiar fruit which each man was created to bear, but to be reckoned in the gross, in the hundred, or the thousand, of the party, the section, to which we belong; and our opinion predicted geographically, as the north, or the south? Not so, brothers and friends,—please God, ours shall not be so. We will walk on our own feet; we will work with our own hands; we will speak our own minds. The study of letters shall be no longer a name for pity, for doubt, and for sensual indulgence. The dread of man and the love of man shall be a wall of defence and a wreath of joy around all. A nation of men will for the first time exist, because each believes himself inspired by the Divine Soul which also inspires all men.

1837

9 **complaisant**, here in the unfavorable sense of too eager to please, too compliant with the wishes of others (not to be confused with "complacent")

The Divinity School Address

Delivered Before the Senior Class in
Divinity College, Cambridge,
Sunday Evening, July 15, 1838

Emerson wrote to Carlyle, October 17, 1838, concerning the reception of this address: "The publication of my Address to the Divinity College . . . has been the occasion of an outcry in all our leading newspapers against my 'infidelity,' 'pantheism,' and 'atheism.' The writers warn all and sundry against me, and against whatever is supposed to be related to my connection of opinion, &c; against Transcendentalism, Goethe, and Carlyle. I am heartily sorry to see this last aspect of the storm in our washbowl." The opposition which Emerson refers to, it is important to notice, came from Unitarians as well as from the orthodox or "Calvinist" party; Emerson was not invited again to lecture at Unitarian Harvard until 1867. The core of his heresy was his denial of the special authority of the Christian revelation and his assertion of the supreme authority of the spiritual intuition belonging to each individual.

For an illuminating treatment of historical background, see C. H. Faust, "The Background of the Unitarian Opposition to Transcendentalism," Modern Philology, February 1938, XXXV, 297.

In this refulgent summer, it has been a luxury to draw the breath of life. The grass grows, the buds burst, the meadow is spotted with fire and gold in the tint of

flowers. The air is full of birds, and sweet with the breath of the pine, the balm-of-Gilead, and the new hay. Night brings no gloom to the heart with its welcome shade. Through the transparent darkness the stars pour their almost spiritual rays. Man under them seems a young child, and his huge globe a toy. The cool night bathes the world as with a river, and prepares his eyes again for the crimson dawn. The mystery of nature was never displayed more happily. The corn and the wine have been freely dealt to all creatures, and the never-broken silence with which the old bounty goes forward has not yielded yet one word of explanation. One is constrained to respect the perfection of this world in which our senses converse. How wide; how rich; what invitation from every property it gives to every faculty of man! In its fruitful soils; in its navigable sea; in its mountains of metal and stone; in its forests of all woods; in its animals; in its chemical ingredients; in the powers and path of light, heat, attraction and life, it is well worth the pith and heart of great men to subdue and enjoy it. The planters, the mechanics, the inventors, the astronomers, the builders of cities, and the captains, history delights to honor.

But when the mind opens and reveals the laws which traverse the universe and make things what they are, then shrinks the great world at once into a mere illustration and fable of this mind. What am I? and What is? asks the human spirit with a curiosity new-kindled, but never to be quenched. Behold these outrunning laws, which our imperfect apprehension can see tend this way and that, but not come full circle. Behold these infinite relations, so like, so unlike; many, yet one. I would study, I would know, I would admire forever. These works of thought have been the entertainments of the human spirit in all ages.

A more secret, sweet, and overpowering beauty appears to man when his heart and mind open to the sentiment of virtue. Then he is instructed in what is above him. He learns that his being is without bound; that to the good, to the perfect, he is born, low as he now lies in evil and weakness. That which he venerates is still his own, though he has not realized it yet. *He ought.* He knows the sense of that grand word, though his analysis fails to render account of it. When in innocency or when by intellectual perception he attains to say,—"I love the Right; Truth is beautiful within and without for evermore. Virtue, I am thine; save me; use me; thee will I serve, day and night, in great, in small, that I may be not virtuous, but virtue";—then is the end of the creation answered, and God is well pleased.

The sentiment of virtue is a reverence and delight in the presence of certain divine laws. It perceives that this homely game of life we play, covers, under what seem foolish details, principles that astonish. The child amidst his baubles is learning the action of light, motion, gravity, muscular force; and in the game of human life, love, fear, justice, appetite, man, and God, interact. These laws refuse to be adequately stated. They will not be written out on paper, or spoken by the tongue. They elude our persevering thought; yet we read them hourly in each other's faces, in each other's actions, in our own remorse. The moral traits which are all globed into every virtuous act and thought,—in speech we must sever, and describe or suggest by painful enumeration of many particulars. Yet, as this sentiment is the essence of all religion, let me guide your eye to the precise objects of the sentiment, by an enumeration of some of those classes of facts in which this element is conspicuous.

The intuition of the moral sentiment is an insight of the perfection of the laws of the soul. These laws execute themselves. They are out of time, out of space, and not subject to circumstance. Thus in the soul of man there is a justice whose retributions are instant and entire. He who does a noble deed is instantly ennobled. He who does a mean deed is by the action itself contracted. He who puts off impurity, thereby puts on purity. If a man is at heart just, then in so far is he God; the safety of God, the immortality of God, the majesty of God do enter into that man with justice. If a man dissemble, deceive, he deceives himself, and goes out of acquaintance with his own being. A man in the view of absolute goodness, adores, with total humility. Every step so downward, is a step upward. The man who renounces himself, comes to himself.

See how this rapid intrinsic energy worketh everywhere, righting wrongs, correcting appearances, and bringing up facts to a harmony with thoughts. Its operation in life, though slow to the senses, is at last as sure

83 The . . . himself. Compare Matthew 10:39: ". . . he that loseth his life for my sake shall find it"

as in the soul. By it a man is made the Providence to himself, dispensing good to his goodness, and evil to his sin. Character is always known. Thefts never enrich; alms never impoverish; murder will speak out of stone walls. The least admixture of a lie,—for example, the taint of vanity, any attempt to make a good impression, a favorable appearance,—will instantly vitiate the effect. But speak the truth, and all nature and all spirits help you with unexpected furtherance. Speak the truth, and all things alive or brute are vouchers, and the very roots of the grass underground there do seem to stir and move to bear you witness. See again the perfection of the Law as it applies itself to the affections, and becomes the law of society. As we are, so we associate. The good, by affinity, seek the good; the vile, by affinity, the vile. Thus of their own volition, souls proceed into heaven, into hell.

These facts have always suggested to man the sublime creed that the world is not the product of manifold power, but of one will, of one mind; and that one mind is everywhere active, in each ray of the star, in each wavelet of the pool; and whatever opposes that will is everywhere balked and baffled, because things are made so, and not otherwise. Good is positive. Evil is merely privative, not absolute: it is like cold, which is the privation of heat. All evil is so much death or nonentity. Benevolence is absolute and real. So much benevolence as a man hath, so much life hath he. For all things proceed out of this same spirit, which is differently named love, justice, temperance, in its different applications, just as the ocean receives different names on the several shores which its washes. All things proceed out of the same spirit, and all things conspire with it. Whilst a man seeks good ends, he is strong by the whole strength of nature. In so far as he roves from these ends, he bereaves himself of power, or auxiliaries; his being shrinks out of all remote channels, he becomes less and less, a mote, a point, until absolute badness is absolute death.

The perception of this law of laws awakens in the mind a sentiment which we call the religious sentiment, and which makes our highest happiness. Wonderful is its power to charm and to command. It is a mountain air. It is the embalmer of the world. It is myrrh and storax, and chlorine and rosemary. It makes the sky and the hills sublime, and the silent song of the stars is it. By it is the universe made safe and habitable, not by science or power. Thought may work cold and intransitive in things, and find no end or unity; but the dawn of the sentiment of virtue on the heart, gives and is the assurance that Law is sovereign over all natures; and the worlds, time, space, eternity, do seem to break out into joy.

This sentiment is divine and deifying. It is the beatitude of man. It makes him illimitable. Through it, the soul first knows itself. It corrects the capital mistake of the infant man, who seeks to be great by following the great, and hopes to derive advantages *from another,*—by showing the fountain of all good to be in himself, and that he, equally with every man, is an inlet into the deeps of Reason. When he says, "I ought"; when love warms him; when he chooses, warned from on high, the good and great deed; then, deep melodies wander through his soul from Supreme Wisdom.—Then he can worship, and be enlarged by his worship; for he can never go behind this sentiment. In the sublimest flights of the soul, rectitude is never surmounted, love is never outgrown.

This sentiment lies at the foundation of society, and successively creates all forms of worship. The principle of veneration never dies out. Man fallen into superstition, into sensuality, is never quite without the visions of the moral sentiment. In like manner, all the expressions of this sentiment are sacred and permanent in proportion to their purity. The expressions of this sentiment affect us more than all other compositions. The sentences of the oldest time, which ejaculate this piety, are still fresh and fragrant. This thought dwelled always deepest in the minds of men in the devout and contemplative East; not alone in Palestine, where it reached its purest expression, but in Egypt, in Persia, in India, in China. Europe has always owed to oriental genius its divine impulses. What these holy bards said, all sane men found agreeable and true. And the unique impression of Jesus upon mankind, whose name is not so much written as ploughed into the history of this world, is proof of the subtle virtue of this infusion.

Meantime, whilst the doors of the temple stand open, day and night, before every man, and the oracles of this truth cease never, it is guarded by one stern condition; this, namely: it is an intuition. It cannot be received at second hand. Truly speaking, it is not instruction, but provocation, that I can receive from another soul. What he announces, I must find true in me,

or reject; and on his word, or as his second, be he who he may, I can accept nothing. On the contrary, the absence of this primary faith is the presence of degradation. As is the flood, so is the ebb. Let this faith depart, and the very words it spake and the things it made become false and hurtful. Then falls the church, the state, art, letters, life. The doctrine of the divine nature being forgotten, a sickness infects and dwarfs the constitution. Once man was all; now he is an appendage, a nuisance. And because the indwelling Supreme Spirit cannot wholly be got rid of, the doctrine of it suffers this perversion, that the divine nature is attributed to one or two persons, and denied to all the rest, and denied with fury. The doctrine of inspiration is lost; the base doctrine of the majority of voices usurps the place of the doctrine of the soul. Miracles, prophecy, poetry, the ideal life, the holy life, exist as ancient history merely; they are not in the belief, nor in the aspiration of society; but, when suggested, seem ridiculous. Life is comic or pitiful as soon as the high ends of being fade out of sight, and man becomes near-sighted, and can only attend to what addresses the senses.

These general views, which, whilst they are general, none will contest, find abundant illustration in the history of religion, and especially in the history of the Christian church. In that, all of us have had our birth and nurture. The truth contained in that, you, my young friends, are now setting forth to teach. As the Cultus, or established worship of the civilized world, it has great historical interest for us. Of its blessed words, which have been the consolation of humanity, you need not that I should speak. I shall endeavor to discharge my duty to you on this occasion, by pointing out two errors in its administration, which daily appear more gross from the point of view we have just now taken.

Jesus Christ belonged to the true race of prophets. He saw with open eye the mystery of the soul. Drawn by its severe harmony, ravished with its beauty, he lived in it, and had his being there. Alone in all history he estimated the greatness of man. One man was true to what is in you and me. He saw that God incarnates himself in man, and evermore goes forth anew to take possession of his World. He said, in this jubilee of sublime emotion, "I am divine. Through me, God acts; through me, speaks. Would you see God, see me; or see thee, when thou also thinkest as I now think." But what a distortion did his doctrine and memory suffer in the same, in the next, and the following ages! There is no doctrine of the Reason which will bear to be taught by the Understanding. The understanding caught this high chant from the poet's lips, and said, in the next age, "This was Jehovah come down out of heaven. I will kill you, if you say he was a man." The idioms of his language and the figures of his rhetoric have usurped the place of his truth; and churches are not built on his principles, but on his tropes. Christianity became a Mythus, as the poetic teaching of Greece and of Egypt, before. He spoke of miracles; for he felt that man's life was a miracle, and all that man doth, and he knew that this daily miracle shines as the character ascends. But the word Miracle, as pronounced by Christian churches, gives a false impression; it is Monster. It is not one with the blowing clover and the falling rain.

He felt respect for Moses and the prophets, but no unfit tenderness at postponing their initial revelations to the hour and the man that now is; to the eternal revelation in the heart. Thus was he a true man. Having seen that the law in us is commanding, he would not suffer it to be commanded. Boldly, with hand, and heart, and life, he declared it was God. Thus is he, as I think, the only soul in history who has appreciated the worth of man.

1. In this point of view we become sensible of the first defect of historical Christianity. Historical Christianity has fallen into the error that corrupts all attempts to communicate religion. As it appears to us, and as it has appeared for ages, it is not the doctrine of the soul, but an exaggeration of the personal, the positive, the ritual. It has dwelt, it dwells, with noxious exaggeration about the *person* of Jesus. The soul knows no persons. It invites every man to expand to the full circle of the universe, and will have no preferences but those of spontaneous love. But by this eastern monarchy of a Christianity, which indolence and fear have built, the friend of man is made the injurer of man. The manner in which his name is surrounded with expressions which were once sallies of admiration and love, but are now petrified into official titles, kills all generous sympathy

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44 **I . . . think.** The words are not Jesus' exact words, but Emerson's interpretation of Jesus' meaning • 49 **Reason . . . Understanding.** See note, p. 878 • 84 **friend of man.** When Elizabeth Peabody urged Emerson to write "friend" with a capital F, he replied, "If I did so, they would all go to sleep"

and liking. All who hear me, feel that the language that describes Christ to Europe and America is not the style of friendship and enthusiasm to a good and noble heart, but is appropriated and formal,—paints a demigod, as the Orientals or the Greeks would describe Osiris or Apollo. Accept the injurious impositions of our early catechetical instruction, and even honesty and self-denial were but splendid sins, if they did not wear the Christian name. One would rather be

> "A pagan, suckled in a creed outworn,"

than to be defrauded of his manly right in coming into nature and finding not names and places, not land and professions, but even virtue and truth foreclosed and monopolized. You shall not be a man even. You shall not own the world; you shall not dare and live after the infinite Law that is in you, and in company with the infinite Beauty which heaven and earth reflect to you in all lovely forms; but you must subordinate your nature to Christ's nature; you must accept our interpretations, and take his portrait as the vulgar draw it.

That is always best which gives me to myself. The sublime is excited in me by the great stoical doctrine, Obey thyself. That which shows God in me, fortifies me. That which shows God out of me, makes me a wart and a wen. There is no longer a necessary reason for my being. Already the long shadows of untimely oblivion creep over me, and I shall decease forever.

The divine bards are the friends of my virtue, of my intellect, of my strength. They admonish me that the gleams which flash across my mind are not mine, but God's; that they had the like, and were not disobedient to the heavenly vision. So I love them. Noble provocations go out from them, inviting me to resist evil; to subdue the world; and to Be. And thus, by his holy thoughts, Jesus serves us, and thus only. To aim to convert a man by miracles is a profanation of the soul. A true conversion, a true Christ, is now, as always, to be made by the reception of beautiful sentiments. It is true that a great and rich soul, like his, falling among the simple, does so preponderate, that, as his did, it names the world. The world seems to exist for him, and they have not yet drunk so deeply of his sense as to see that only by coming again to themselves, or to God in themselves, can they grow forevermore. It is a low benefit to give me something; it is a high benefit to enable me to do somewhat of myself. The time is coming when all men will see that the gift of God to the soul is not a vaunting, overpowering, excluding sanctity, but a sweet, natural goodness, a goodness like thine and mine, and that so invites thine and mine to be and to grow.

The injustice of the vulgar tone of preaching is not less flagrant to Jesus than to the souls which it profanes. The preachers do not see that they make his gospel not glad, and shear him of the locks of beauty and the attributes of heaven. When I see a majestic Epaminondas, or Washington; when I see among my contemporaries a true orator, an upright judge, a dear friend; when I vibrate to the melody and fancy of a poem; I see beauty that is to be desired. And so lovely, and yet with more entire consent of my human being, sounds in my ear the severe music of the bards that have sung of the true God in all ages. Now do not degrade the life and dialogues of Christ out of the circle of this charm, by insulation and peculiarity. Let them lie as they befell, alive and warm, part of human life and of the landscape and of the cheerful day.

2. The second defect of the traditionary and limited way of using the mind of Christ is a consequence of the first; this namely: that the Moral Nature, that Law of laws whose revelations introduce greatness—yea, God himself—into the open soul, is not explored as the fountain of the established teaching in society. Men have come to speak of the revelation as somewhat long ago given and done, as if God were dead. The injury to faith throttles the preacher; and the goodliest of institutions becomes an uncertain and inarticulate voice.

It is very certain that it is the effect of conversation with the beauty of the soul, to beget a desire and need to impart to others the same knowledge and love. If utterance is denied, the thought lies like a burden on the man. Always the seer is a sayer. Somehow his dream is told; somehow he publishes it with solemn joy: sometimes with pencil on canvas; sometimes with chisel on stone; sometimes in towers and aisles of granite, his soul's worship is builded; sometimes in anthems of in-

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7 **catechetical instruction,** the questions and answers of the catechism, much in vogue in early New England • 10 **A pagan . . . outworn,** Wordsworth's "The World Is Too Much with Us," l. 10 • 31 **not . . . vision.** Acts 26:19: "I was not disobedient unto the heavenly vision" • 56 **Epaminondas,** Theban statesman and general (d. 362 B.C.)

definite music; but clearest and most permanent, in words.

The man enamored of this excellency becomes its priest or poet. The office is coeval with the world. But observe the condition, the spiritual limitation of the office. The spirit only can teach. Not any profane man, not any sensual, not any liar, not any slave can teach, but only he can give, who has; he only can create, who is. The man on whom the soul descends, through whom the soul speaks, alone can teach. Courage, piety, love, wisdom, can teach; and every man can open his door to these angels, and they shall bring him the gift of tongues. But the man who aims to speak as books enable, as synods use, as the fashion guides, and as interest commands, babbles. Let him hush.

To this holy office you propose to devote yourselves. I wish you may feel your call in throbs of desire and hope. The office is the first in the world. It is of that reality that it cannot suffer the deduction of any falsehood. And it is my duty to say to you that the need was never greater of new revelation than now. From the views I have already expressed, you will infer the sad conviction, which I share, I believe, with numbers, of the universal decay and now almost death of faith in society. The soul is not preached. The Church seems to totter to its fall, almost all life extinct. On this occasion, any complaisance would be criminal which told you, whose hope and commission it is to preach the faith of Christ, that the faith of Christ is preached.

It is time that this ill-suppressed murmur of all thoughtful men against the famine of our churches;—this moaning of the heart because it is bereaved of the consolation, the hope, the grandeur that come alone out of the culture of the moral nature,—should be heard through the sleep of indolence, and over the din of routine. This great and perpetual office of the preacher is not discharged. Preaching is the expression of the moral sentiment in application to the duties of life. In how many churches, by how many prophets, tell me, is man made sensible that he is an infinite Soul; that the earth and heavens are passing into his mind; that he is drinking forever the soul of God? Where now sounds the persuasion, that by its very melody imparadises my heart, and so affirms its own origin in heaven? Where shall I hear words such as in elder ages drew men to leave all and follow,—father and mother, house and land, wife and child? Where shall I hear these august laws of moral being so pronounced as to fill my ear, and I feel ennobled by the offer of my uttermost action and passion? The test of the true faith, certainly, should be its power to charm and command the soul, as the laws of nature control the activity of the hands,—so commanding that we find pleasure and honor in obeying. The faith should blend with the light of rising and of setting suns, with the flying cloud, the singing bird, and the breath of flowers. But now the priest's Sabbath has lost the splendor of nature; it is unlovely; we are glad when it is done; we can make, we do make, even sitting in our pews, a far better, holier, sweeter, for ourselves.

Whenever the pulpit is usurped by a formalist, then is the worshipper defrauded and disconsolate. We shrink as soon as the prayers begin, which do not uplift, but smite and offend us. We are fain to wrap our cloaks about us, and secure, as best we can, a solitude that hears not. I once heard a preacher who sorely tempted me to say I would go to church no more. Men go, thought I, where they are wont to go, else had no soul entered the temple in the afternoon. A snow-storm was falling around us. The snow-storm was real, the preacher merely spectral, and the eye felt the sad contrast in looking at him, and then out of the window behind him into the beautiful meteor of the snow. He had lived in vain. He had no one word intimating that he had laughed or wept, was married or in love, had been commended, or cheated, or chagrined. If he had ever lived and acted, we were none the wiser for it. The capital secret of his profession, namely, to convert life into truth, he had not learned. Not one fact in all his experience had he yet imported into his doctrine. This man had ploughed and planted and talked and bought and sold; he had read books; he had eaten and drunken; his head aches, his heart throbs; he smiles and suffers; yet was there not a surmise, a hint, in all the discourse, that he had ever lived at all. Not a line did he draw out of real history. The true preacher can be known by this, that he deals out to his people his life,—life passed through the fire of thought. But of the bad preacher, it could not be told from his sermon what age of the world he fell in; whether he had a father or a child; whether he was a

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24 **The Church . . . extinct.** Emerson wrote in his *Journals* of "the corpse-cold Unitarianism of Brattle Street"

freeholder or a pauper; whether he was a citizen or a countryman; or any other fact of his biography. It seemed strange that the people should come to church. It seemed as if their houses were very unentertaining, that they should prefer this thoughtless clamor. It shows that there is a commanding attraction in the moral sentiment, that can lend a faint tint of light to dulness and ignorance coming in its name and place. The good hearer is sure he has been touched sometimes; is sure there is somewhat to be reached, and some word that can reach it. When he listens to these vain words, he comforts himself by their relation to his remembrance of better hours, and so they clatter and echo unchallenged.

I am not ignorant that when we preach unworthily, it is not always quite in vain. There is a good ear, in some men, that draws supplies to virtue out of very indifferent nutriment. There is poetic truth concealed in all the commonplaces of prayer and of sermons, and though foolishly spoken, they may be wisely heard; for each is some select expression that broke out in a moment of piety from some stricken or jubilant soul, and its excellency made it remembered. The prayers and even the dogmas of our church are like the zodiac of Denderah and the astronomical monuments of the Hindoos, wholly insulated from anything now extant in the life and business of the people. They mark the height to which the waters once rose. But this docility is a check upon the mischief from the good and devout. In a large portion of the community, the religious service gives rise to quite other thoughts and emotions. We need not chide the negligent servant. We are struck with pity, rather, at the swift retribution of his sloth. Alas for the unhappy man that is called to stand in the pulpit, and *not* give bread of life. Everything that befalls, accuses him. Would he ask contributions for the missions, foreign or domestic? Instantly his face is suffused with shame, to propose to his parish that they should send money a hundred or a thousand miles, to furnish such poor fare as they have at home and would do well to go the hundred or the thousand miles to escape. Would he urge people to a godly way of living;—and can he ask a fellow-creature to come to Sabbath meetings, when he and they all know what is the poor uttermost they can hope for therein? Will he invite them privately to the Lord's Supper? He dares not. If no heart warm this rite, the hollow, dry, creaking formality is too plain, than that he can face a man of wit and energy and put the invitation without terror. In the street, what has he to say to the bold village blasphemer? The village blasphemer sees fear in the face, form, and gait of the minister.

Let me not taint the sincerity of this plea by any oversight of the claims of good men. I know and honor the purity and strict conscience of numbers of the clergy. What life the public worship retains, it owes to the scattered company of pious men, who minister here and there in the churches, and who, sometimes accepting with too great tenderness the tenet of the elders, have not accepted from others, but from their own heart, the genuine impulses of virtue, and so still command our love and awe, to the sanctity of character. Moreover, the exceptions are not so much to be found in a few eminent preachers, as in the better hours, the truer inspirations of all,—nay, in the sincere moments of every man. But, with whatever exception, it is still true that tradition characterizes the preaching of this country; that it comes out of the memory, and not out of the soul; that it aims at what is usual, and not at what is necessary and eternal; that thus historical Christianity destroys the power of preaching, by withdrawing it from the exploration of the moral nature of man; where the sublime is, where are the resources of astonishment and power. What a cruel injustice it is to that Law, the joy of the whole earth, which alone can make the thought dear and rich; that Law whose fatal sureness the astronomical orbits poorly emulate;—that it is travestied and depreciated, that it is behooted and behowled, and not a trait, not a word of it articulated. The pulpit in losing sight of this Law, loses its reason, and gropes after it knows not what. And for want of this culture the soul of the community is sick and faithless. It wants nothing so much as a stern, high, stoical, Christian discipline, to make it know itself and the divinity that speaks through it. Now man is ashamed of himself; he skulks and sneaks through the world, to be tolerated, to be

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46 **Lord's Supper.** Emerson had resigned the pastorate of the Second Church in Boston in 1832 because of a disagreement with his parishioners on the nature and importance of the Lord's Supper. In a sermon, "The Lord's Supper" (printed in Miscellanies, Centenary Edition of his works), delivered to the Church September 9, 1832, he gave the reasons for his "want of sympathy" with the sacrament

pitied, and scarcely in a thousand years does any man dare to be wise and good, and so draw after him the tears and blessings of his kind.

Certainly there have been periods when, from the inactivity of the intellect on certain truths, a greater faith was possible in names and persons. The Puritans in England and America found in the Christ of the Catholic Church and in the dogmas inherited from Rome, scope for their austere piety and their longings for civil freedom. But their creed is passing away, and none arises in its room. I think no man can go with his thoughts about him into one of our churches, without feeling that what hold the public worship had on men is gone, or going. It has lost its grasp on the affection of the good and the fear of the bad. In the country, neighborhoods, half parishes are *signing off,* to use the local term. It is already beginning to indicate character and religion to withdraw from the religious meetings. I have heard a devout person, who prized the Sabbath, say in bitterness of heart, "On Sundays, it seems wicked to go to church." And the motive that holds the best there is now only a hope and a waiting. What was once a mere circumstance, that the best and the worst men in the parish, the poor and the rich, the learned and the ignorant, young and old, should meet one day as fellows in one house, in sign of an equal right in the soul, has come to be a paramount motive for going thither.

My friends, in these two errors, I think, I find the causes of a decaying church and a wasting unbelief. And what greater calamity can fall upon a nation than the loss of worship? Then all things go to decay. Genius leaves the temple to haunt the senate or the market. Literature becomes frivolous. Science is cold. The eye of youth is not lighted by the hope of other worlds, and age is without honor. Society lives to trifles, and when men die we do not mention them.

And now, my brothers, you will ask, What in these desponding days can be done by us? The remedy is already declared in the ground of our complaint of the Church. We have contrasted the Church with the Soul. In the soul then let the redemption be sought. Wherever a man comes, there comes revolution. The old is for slaves. When a man comes, all books are legible, all things transparent, all religions are forms. He is religious. Man is the wonderworker. He is seen amid miracles. All men bless and curse. He saith yea and nay, only. The stationariness of religion; the assumption that the age of inspiration is past, that the Bible is closed; the fear of degrading the character of Jesus by representing him as a man;—indicate with sufficient clearness the falsehood of our theology. It is the office of a true teacher to show us that God is, not was; that He speaketh, not spake. The true Christianity,—a faith like Christ's in the infinitude of man,—is lost. None believeth in the soul of man, but only in some man or person old and departed. Ah me! no man goeth alone. All men go in flocks to this saint or that poet, avoiding the God who seeth in secret. They cannot see in secret; they love to be blind in public. They think society wiser than their soul, and know not that one soul, and their soul, is wiser than the whole word. See how nations and races flit by on the sea of time and leave no ripple to tell where they floated or sunk, and one good soul shall make the name of Moses, or of Zeno, or of Zoroaster, reverend forever. None assayeth the stern ambition to be the Self of the nation and of nature, but each would be an easy secondary to some Christian scheme, or sectarian connection, or some eminent man. Once leave your own knowledge of God, your own sentiment, and take secondary knowledge, as St. Paul's or George Fox's, or Swedenborg's, and you get wide from God with every year this secondary form lasts, and if, as now, for centuries,—the chasm yawns to that breadth, that men can scarcely be convinced there is in them anything divine.

Let me admonish you, first of all, to go alone; to refuse the good models, even those which are sacred to the imagination of men, and dare to love God without mediator or veil. Friends enough you shall find who will hold up to your emulation Wesleys and Oberlins, Saints and Prophets. Thank God for these good men, but say, "I also am a man." Imitation cannot go above its model. The imitator dooms himself to hopeless mediocrity. The inventor did it because it was natural to him, and so in him it has a charm. In the imitator something else

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19 **a devout person,** Mrs. Emerson, who is quoted in the **Journals** (December 3, 1837), as follows: "Lidian says, it is wicked to go to Church Sundays" • 64 **Zeno,** Greek philosopher, founder of the Stoic School. See note, p. 295 • 64 **Zoroaster,** founder of the ancient Persian religion about 1000 B.C. • 70 **George Fox.** See note, p. 837 • 79 **Wesley,** John Wesley. See note, p. 828 • 79 **Oberlin,** Jean Frédéric Oberlin (1740-1826), Franco-German clergyman and philanthropist

is natural, and he bereaves himself of his own beauty, to come short of another man's.

Yourself a newborn bard of the Holy Ghost, cast behind you all conformity, and acquaint men at first hand with Deity. Look to it first and only, that fashion, custom, authority, pleasure, and money, are nothing to you,—are not bandages over your eyes, that you cannot see,—but live with the privilege of the immeasurable mind. Not too anxious to visit periodically all families and each family in your parish connection,—when you meet one of these men or women, be to them a divine man; be to them thought and virtue; let their timid aspirations find in you a friend; let their trampled instincts be genially tempted out in your atmosphere; let their doubts know that you have doubted, and their wonder feel that you have wondered. By trusting your own heart, you shall gain more confidence in other men. For all our penny-wisdom, for all our soul-destroying slavery to habit, it is not to be doubted that all men have sublime thoughts; that all men value the few real hours of life; they love to be heard; they love to be caught up into the vision of principles. We mark with light in the memory the few interviews we have had, in the dreary years of routine and of sin, with souls that made our souls wiser; that spoke what we thought; that told us what we knew; that gave us leave to be what we inly were. Discharge to men the priestly office, and, present or absent, you shall be followed with their love as by an angel.

And, to this end, let us not aim at common degrees of merit. Can we not leave, to such as love it, the virtue that glitters for the commendation of society, and ourselves pierce the deep solitudes of absolute ability and worth? We easily come up to the standard of goodness in society. Society's praise can be cheaply secured, and almost all men are content with those easy merits; but the instant effect of conversing with God will be to put them away. There are persons who are not actors, not speakers, but influences; persons too great for fame, for display; who disdain eloquence; to whom all we call art and artist, seems too nearly allied to show and by-ends, to the exaggeration of the finite and selfish, and loss of the universal. The orators, the poets, the commanders encroach on us only as fair women do, by our allowance and homage. Slight them by preöccupation of mind, slight them, as you can well afford to do, by high and universal aims, and they instantly feel that you have right, and that it is in lower places that they must shine. They also feel your right; for they with you are open to the influx of the all-knowing Spirit, which annihilates before its broad noon the little shades and gradations of intelligence in the compositions we call wiser and wisest.

In such high communion let us study the grand strokes of rectitude: a bold benevolence, an independence of friends, so that not the unjust wishes of those who love us shall impair our freedom, but we shall resist for truth's sake the freest flow of kindness, and appeal to sympathies far in advance; and—what is the highest form in which we know this beautiful element,—a certain solidity of merit, that has nothing to do with opinion, and which is so essentially and manifestly virtue, that it is taken for granted that the right, the brave, the generous step will be taken by it, and nobody thinks of commending it. You would compliment a coxcomb doing a good act, but you would not praise an angel. The silence that accepts merit as the most natural thing in the world, is the highest applause. Such souls, when they appear, are the Imperial Guard of Virtue, the perpetual reserve, the dictators of fortune. One needs not praise their courage,—they are the heart and soul of nature. O my friends, there are resources in us on which we have not drawn. There are men who rise refreshed on hearing a threat; men to whom a crisis which intimidates and paralyzes the majority,—demanding not the faculties of prudence and thrift, but comprehension, immovableness, the readiness of sacrifice,—comes graceful and beloved as a bride. Napoleon said of Massena, that he was not himself until the battle began to go against him; then, when the dead began to fall in ranks around him, awoke his powers of combination, and he put on terror and victory as a robe. So it is in rugged crises, in unweariable endurance, and in aims which put sympathy out of the question, that the angel is shown. But these are heights that we can scarce remember and look up to without contrition and shame. Let us thank God that such things exist.

And now let us do what we can to rekindle the smouldering, nigh quenched fire on the altar. The evils of the church that now is are manifest. The question returns, What shall we do? I confess, all attempts to

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76 **Massena,** André Masséna (1758-1817), Marshal of Napoleon I

project and establish a Cultus with new rites and forms, seem to me vain. Faith makes us, and not we it, and faith makes its own forms. All attempts to contrive a system are as cold as the new worship introduced by the French to the goddess of Reason,—today, pasteboard and filigree, and ending tomorrow in madness and murder. Rather let the breath of new life be breathed by you through the forms already existing. For if once you are alive, you shall find they shall become plastic and new. The remedy to their deformity is first, soul, and second, soul, and evermore, soul. A whole popedom of forms one pulsation of virtue can uplift and vivify. Two inestimable advantages Christianity has given us; first the Sabbath, the jubilee of the whole world, whose light dawns welcome alike into the closet of the philosopher, into the garret of toil, and into prison-cells, and everywhere suggests, even to the vile, the dignity of spiritual being. Let it stand forevermore, a temple, which new love, new faith, new sight shall restore to more than its first splendor to mankind. And secondly, the institution of preaching,—the speech of man to men,—essentially the most flexible of all organs, of all forms. What hinders that now, everywhere, in pulpits, in lecture-rooms, in houses, in fields, wherever the invitation of men or your own occasions lead you, you speak the very truth, as your life and conscience teach it, and cheer the waiting, fainting hearts of men with new hope and new revelation?

I look for the hour when that supreme Beauty which ravished the souls of those Eastern men, and chiefly of those Hebrews, and through their lips spoke oracles to all time, shall speak in the West also. The Hebrew and Greek Scriptures contain immortal sentences, that have been bread of life to millions. But they have no epical integrity; are fragmentary; are not shown in their order to the intellect. I look for the new Teacher that shall follow so far those shining laws that he shall see them come full circle; shall see their rounding complete grace; shall see the world to be the mirror of the soul; shall see the identity of the law of gravitation with purity of heart; and shall show that the Ought, that Duty, is one thing with Science, with Beauty, and with Joy.

1838

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4 **new . . . Reason.** The "worship of Reason" was instituted in France in 1793 in the midst of the Reign of Terror. The use of "Reason" in this connection is Deistic and is not to be confused with Emerson's use of the word • 32 **Hebrew . . . Scriptures,** the Old and New Testaments

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Self-Reliance

Self-Reliance has been in the past, and perhaps is still, the best-known and most often quoted essay in American literature. "Trust thyself; every heart vibrates to that iron string," and "Nothing can bring you peace but the triumph of principles" are only two among many examples of Emerson's gift for expressing spiritual truth in quotable form. "These lofty sentences of Emerson," Matthew Arnold wrote in 1884, "and a hundred others of like strain, I never have lost out of my memory; I never can lose them."

Emerson's belief in self-reliance follows as the logical result of his doctrine of the "over-soul." According to this doctrine, every man has something of the divine in his nature and is capable of establishing a direct relationship with the universal spirit. By means of what Emerson liked to call "the intuition of the moral sentiment," every man is capable of perceiving the highest truth. To quote from the essay: "We lie in the lap of immense intelligence, which makes us receivers of its truth and organs of its activity." Every man, therefore, ought to rely upon his own spiritual perceptions, ought to be self-reliant.

Emerson was an individualist, and his **Self-Reliance** is an extreme statement of the individualistic point of view. To the modern reader, the author may appear unmindful of social obligations when he says: "What I must do is all that concerns me, not what the people think"; and again,

"Are they my poor?" But Emerson was not indifferent to society. He thought of society as composed of individuals. A good society would be a society composed of good individuals. The primary obligation of the individual, therefore, is to perfect his own life. Like his Puritan forbears, Emerson believed that social salvation could be achieved only through the salvation of the individuals who compose society.

A superficial reading may leave one with the impression that Emerson's doctrine is fatally easy. He appears to say, simply, "Do as you like." It should be remembered, however, that Emerson, again like his Puritan forbears, is holding himself to an almost intolerably high standard of thinking and living. The individual must obey his own highest instinct, must "absolve" himself to himself. Self-imposed requirements, in the case of a conscientious person, may be rigorous to the last degree. "If anyone imagines that this law is lax," says Emerson, a little defiantly, "let him keep its commandment one day."

I read the other day some verses written by an eminent painter which were original and not conventional. The soul always hears an admonition in such lines, let the subject be what it may. The sentiment they instil is of more value than any thought they may contain. To believe your own thought, to believe that what is true for you in your private heart is true for all men,—that is genius. Speak your latent conviction, and it shall be the universal sense; for the inmost in due time becomes the outmost, and our first thought is rendered back to us by the trumpets of the Last Judgment. Familiar as the voice of the mind is to each, the highest merit we ascribe to Moses, Plato and Milton is that they set at naught books and traditions, and spoke not what men, but what *they* thought. A man should learn to detect and watch that gleam of light which flashes across his mind from within, more than the lustre of the firmament of bards and sages. Yet he dismisses without notice his thought, because it is his. In every work of genius we recognize our own rejected thoughts; they come back to us with a certain alienated majesty. Great works of art have no more affecting lesson for us than this. They teach us to abide by our spontaneous impression with good-humored inflexibility then most when the whole cry of voices is on the other side. Else to-morrow a stranger will say with masterly good sense precisely what we have thought and felt all the time, and we shall be forced to take with shame our own opinion from another.

There is a time in every man's education when he arrives at the conviction that envy is ignorance; that imitation is suicide; that he must take himself for better for worse as his portion; that though the wide universe is full of good, no kernel of nourishing corn can come to him but through his toil bestowed on that plot of ground which is given to him to till. The power which resides in him is new in nature, and none but he knows what that is which he can do, nor does he know until he has tried. Not for nothing one face, one character, one fact, makes much impression on him, and another none. This sculpture in the memory is not without preëstablished harmony. The eye was placed where one ray should fall, that it might testify of that particular ray. We but half express ourselves, and are ashamed of that divine idea which each of us represents. It may be safely trusted as proportionate and of good issues, so it be faithfully imparted, but God will not have his work made manifest by cowards. A man is relieved and gay when he has put his heart into his work and done his best; but what he has said or done otherwise shall give him no peace. It is a deliverance which does not deliver. In the attempt his genius deserts him; no muse befriends; no invention, no hope.

Trust thyself: every heart vibrates to that iron string. Accept the place the divine providence has found for you, the society of your contemporaries, the connection of events. Great men have always done so, and confided themselves childlike to the genius of their age, betraying their perception that the absolutely trustworthy was seated at their heart, working through their hands, predominating in all their being. And we are now men, and must accept in the highest mind the same transcendent destiny; and not minors and invalids in a protected corner nor cowards fleeing before a revolution, but guides, redeemers and benefactors, obeying the Almighty effort and advancing on Chaos and the Dark.

What pretty oracles nature yields us on this text in the

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1 eminent painter, probably Washington Allston (1779-1843) • 65 Chaos . . . Dark, reminiscent of Milton's "Chaos and Old Night" in *Paradise Lost*, Bk. I, l. 543

face and behavior of children, babes, and even brutes! That divided and rebel mind, that distrust of a sentiment because our arithmetic has computed the strength and means opposed to our purpose, these have not. Their mind being whole, their eye is as yet unconquered, and when we look in their faces we are disconcerted. Infancy conforms to nobody; all conform to it; so that one babe commonly makes four or five out of the adults who prattle and play to it. So God has armed youth and puberty and manhood no less with its own piquancy and charm, and made it enviable and gracious and its claims not to be put by, if it will stand by itself. Do not think the youth has no force, because he cannot speak to you and me. Hark! in the next room his voice is sufficiently clear and emphatic. It seems he knows how to speak to his contemporaries. Bashful or bold then, he will know how to make us seniors very unnecessary.

The nonchalance of boys who are sure of a dinner, and would disdain as much as a lord to do or say aught to conciliate one, is the healthy attitude of human nature. A boy is in the parlor what the pit is in the playhouse; independent, irresponsible, looking out from his corner on such people and facts as pass by, he tries and sentences them on their merits, in the swift, summary way of boys, as good, bad, interesting, silly, eloquent, troublesome. He cumbers himself never about consequences, about interests; he gives an independent, genuine verdict. You must court him; he does not court you. But the man is as it were clapped into jail by his consciousness. As soon as he has once acted or spoken with *éclat* he is a committed person, watched by the sympathy or the hatreds of hundreds, whose affections must now enter into his account. There is no Lethe for this. Ah, that he could pass again into his neutrality! Who can thus avoid all pledges and, having observed, observe again from the same unaffected, unbiased, unbribable, unaffrighted innocence,—must always be formidable. He would utter opinions on all passing affairs, which being seen to be not private but necessary, would sink like darts into the ear of men and put them in fear.

These are the voices which we hear in solitude, but they grow faint and inaudible as we enter into the world. Society everywhere is in conspiracy against the manhood of every one of its members. Society is a joint-stock company, in which the members agree, for the better securing of his bread to each shareholder, to surrender the liberty and culture of the eater. The virtue in most request is conformity. Self-reliance is its aversion. It loves not realities and creators, but names and customs.

Whoso would be a man, must be a nonconformist. He who would gather immortal palms must not be hindered by the name of goodness, but must explore if it be goodness. Nothing is at last sacred but the integrity of your own mind. Absolve you to yourself, and you shall have the suffrage of the world. I remember an answer which when quite young I was prompted to make to a valued adviser who was wont to importune me with the dear old doctrines of the church. On my saying, "What have I to do with the sacredness of traditions, if I live wholly from within?" my friend suggested,—"But these impulses may be from below, not from above." I replied, "They do not seem to me to be such; but if I am the Devil's child, I will live then from the Devil." No law can be sacred to me but that of my nature. Good and bad are but names very readily transferable to that or this; the only right is what is after my constitution; the only wrong what is against it. A man is to carry himself in the presence of all opposition as if every thing were titular and ephemeral but he. I am ashamed to think how easily we capitulate to badges and names, to large societies and dead institutions. Every decent and well-spoken individual affects and sways me more than is right. I ought to go upright and vital, and speak the rude truth in all ways. If malice and vanity wear the coat of philanthropy, shall that pass? If an angry bigot assumes this bountiful cause of Abolition, and comes to me with his last news from Barbadoes, why should I not say to him, "Go love thy infant; love thy wood-chopper; be good-natured and modest; have that grace; and never varnish your hard, uncharitable ambition with this incredible tenderness for black folk a thousand miles off. Thy love afar is spite at home." Rough and graceless would be such greeting, but truth is handsomer than the affectation of love. Your goodness must have some edge to it,—else it is none. The doctrine of

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21 pit, that part of the theater now usually known in the United States as the "orchestra." In Elizabethan times, the pit was the cheapest location in the house and was occupied by the "groundlings" (see Hamlet, Act III, Scene ii, l. 11), who were very outspoken in their judgments on the performance • 33 Lethe. See note, p. 803 • 51 palms, symbol of success • 77 Barbadoes, an island in the British West Indies in which Negro slavery was abolished in 1834

hatred must be preached, as the counteraction of the doctrine of love, when that pules and whines. I shun father and mother and wife and brother when my genius calls me. I would write on the lintels of the door-post, *Whim.* I hope it is somewhat better than whim at last, but we cannot spend the day in explanation. Expect me not to show cause why I seek or why I exclude company. Then again, do not tell me, as a good man did to-day, of my obligation to put all poor men in good situations. Are they *my* poor? I tell thee, thou foolish philanthropist, that I grudge the dollar, the dime, the cent I give to such men as do not belong to me and to whom I do not belong. There is a class of persons to whom by all spiritual affinity I am bought and sold; for them I will go to prison if need be; but your miscellaneous popular charities; the education at college of fools; the building of meeting-houses to the vain end to which many now stand; alms to sots, and the thousand-fold Relief Societies;—though I confess with shame I sometimes succumb and give the dollar, it is a wicked dollar, which by and by I shall have the manhood to withhold.

Virtues are, in the popular estimate, rather the exception than the rule. There is the man *and* his virtues. Men do what is called a good action, as some piece of courage or charity, much as they would pay a fine in expiation of daily non-appearance on parade. Their works are done as an apology or extenuation of their living in the world,—as invalids and the insane pay a high board. Their virtues are penances. I do not wish to expiate, but to live. My life is for itself and not for a spectacle. I much prefer that it should be of a lower strain, so it be genuine and equal, than that it should be glittering and unsteady. I wish it to be sound and sweet, and not to need diet and bleeding. I ask primary evidence that you are a man, and refuse this appeal from the man to his actions. I know that for myself it makes no difference whether I do or forbear those actions which are reckoned excellent. I cannot consent to pay for a privilege where I have intrinsic right. Few and mean as my gifts may be, I actually am, and do not need for my own assurance or the assurance of my fellows any secondary testimony.

What I must do is all that concerns me, not what the people think. This rule, equally arduous in actual and in intellectual life, may serve for the whole distinction between greatness and meanness. It is the harder because you will always find those who think they know what is your duty better than you know it. It is easy in the world to live after the world's opinion; it is easy in solitude to live after our own; but the great man is he who in the midst of the crowd keeps with perfect sweetness the independence of solitude.

The objection to conforming to usages that have become dead to you is that it scatters your force. It loses your time and blurs the impression of your character. If you maintain a dead church, contribute to a dead Bible-society, vote with a great party either for the government or against it, spread your table like base housekeepers,—under all these screens I have difficulty to detect the precise man you are: and of course so much force is withdrawn from your proper life. But do your work, and I shall know you. Do your work, and you shall reinforce yourself. A man must consider what a blind-man's-buff is this game of conformity. If I know your sect I anticipate your argument. I hear a preacher announce for his text and topic the expediency of one of the institutions of his church. Do I not know beforehand that not possibly can he say a new and spontaneous word? Do I not know that with all this ostentation of examining the grounds of the institution he will do no such thing? Do I not know that he is pledged to himself not to look but at one side, the permitted side, not as a man, but as a parish minister? He is a retained attorney, and these airs of the bench are the emptiest affectation. Well, most men have bound their eyes with one or another handkerchief, and attached themselves to some one of these communities of opinion. This conformity makes them not false in a few particulars, authors of a few lies, but false in all particulars. Their every truth is not quite true. Their two is not the real two, their four is not the real four; so that every word they say chagrins us and we know not where to begin to set them right. Meantime nature is not slow to equip us in the prison-uniform of the party to which we adhere. We come to wear one cut of face and figure, and acquire by degrees the gentlest asinine expression. There is a mortifying experience in particular, which does not fail to wreak itself also in the general history; I mean "the foolish face of praise," the forced smile which we put on in company where we

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4 **lintels.** A lintel is the crosspiece above a door • 73 **bench,** the judge, who sits on the "bench" • 87 **the foolish . . . praise,** from Pope's famous satire on Addison in his "Epistle to Dr. Arbuthnot"

do not feel at ease, in answer to conversation which does not interest us. The muscles, not spontaneously moved but moved by a low usurping wilfulness, grow tight about the outline of the face, with the most disagreeable sensation.

For nonconformity the world whips you with its displeasure. And therefore a man must know how to estimate a sour face. The by-standers look askance on him in the public street or in the friend's parlor. If this aversion had its origin in contempt and resistance like his own he might well go home with a sad countenance; but the sour faces of the multitude, like their sweet faces, have no deep cause, but are put on and off as the wind blows and a newspaper directs. Yet is the discontent of the multitude more formidable than that of the senate and the college. It is easy enough for a firm man who knows the world to brook the rage of the cultivated classes. Their rage is decorous and prudent, for they are timid, as being very vulnerable themselves. But when to their feminine rage the indignation of the people is added, when the ignorant and the poor are aroused, when the unintelligent brute force that lies at the bottom of society is made to growl and mow, it needs the habit of magnanimity and religion to treat it godlike as a trifle of no concernment.

The other terror that scares us from self-trust is our consistency; a reverence for our past act or word because the eyes of others have no other data for computing our orbit than our past acts, and we are loth to disappoint them.

But why should you keep your head over your shoulder? Why drag about this corpse of your memory, lest you contradict somewhat you have stated in this or that public place? Suppose you should contradict yourself, what then? It seems to be a rule of wisdom never to rely on your memory alone, scarcely even in acts of pure memory, but to bring the past for judgment into the thousand-eyed present, and live ever in a new day. In your metaphysics you have denied personality to the Deity, yet when the devout motions of the soul come, yield to them heart and life, though they should clothe God with shape and color. Leave your theory, as Joseph his coat in the hand of the harlot, and flee.

A foolish consistency is the hobgoblin of little minds, adored by little statesmen and philosophers and divines. With consistency a great soul has simply nothing to do. He may as well concern himself with his shadow on the wall. Speak what you think now in hard words and to-morrow speak what to-morrow thinks in hard words again, though it contradict every thing you said to-day.—"Ah, so you shall be sure to be misunderstood."—Is it so bad then to be misunderstood? Pythagoras was misunderstood, and Socrates, and Jesus, and Luther, and Copernicus, and Galileo, and Newton, and every pure and wise spirit that ever took flesh. To be great is to be misunderstood.

I suppose no man can violate his nature. All the sallies of his will are rounded in by the law of his being, as the inequalities of Andes and Himmaleh are insignificant in the curve of the sphere. Nor does it matter how you gauge and try him. A character is like an acrostic or Alexandrian stanza;—read it forward, backward, or across, it still spells the same thing. In this pleasing contrite wood-life which God allows me, let me record day by day my honest thought without prospect or retrospect, and, I cannot doubt, it will be found symmetrical, though I mean it not and see it not. My book should smell of pines and resound with the hum of insects. The swallow over my window should interweave that thread or straw he carries in his bill into my web also. We pass for what we are. Character teaches above our wills. Men imagine that they communicate their virtue or vice only by overt actions, and do not see that virtue or vice emit a breath every moment.

There will be an agreement in whatever variety of actions, so they be each honest and natural in their hour. For of one will, the actions will be harmonious, however unlike they seem. These varieties are lost sight of at a little distance, at a little height of thought. One tendency unites them all. The voyage of the best ship is a zigzag line of a hundred tacks. See the line from a sufficient distance, and it straightens itself to the average tendency.

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23 mow, make grimaces • 42 **Joseph . . . flee.** The allusion is to Genesis 39:12 • 52 **Pythagoras.** See note, p. 259 • 53 **Socrates,** Greek philosopher of the fifth century B.C. • 53 **Luther,** Martin Luther. See note, p. 129 • 53 **Copernicus,** Nikolaus Copernicus (1473-1543), Polish astronomer whose system superseded the Ptolemaic • 54 **Galileo** (1564-1642), Italian astronomer • 54 **Newton,** Sir Isaac Newton. See note, p. 879 • 59 **Andes,** a mountain range in South America, extending from the Isthmus of Panama to Cape Horn • 59 **Himmaleh,** or Himalaya, a mountain range between India and China in which are found the world's highest mountains

Your genuine action will explain itself and will explain your other genuine actions. Your conformity explains nothing. Act singly, and what you have already done singly will justify you now. Greatness appeals to the future. If I can be firm enough to-day to do right and scorn eyes, I must have done so much right before as to defend me now. Be it how it will, do right now. Always scorn appearances and you always may. The force of character is cumulative. All the foregone days of virtue work their health into this. What makes the majesty of the heroes of the senate and the field, which so fills the imagination? The consciousness of a train of great days and victories behind. They shed a united light on the advancing actor. He is attended as by a visible escort of angels. That is it which throws thunder into Chatham's voice, and dignity into Washington's port, and America into Adams's eye. Honor is venerable to us because it is no ephemera. It is always ancient virtue. We worship it today because it is not of to-day. We love it and pay it homage because it is not a trap for our love and homage, but is self-dependent, self-derived, and therefore of an old immaculate pedigree, even if shown in a young person.

I hope in these days we have heard the last of conformity and consistency. Let the words be gazetted and ridiculous henceforward. Instead of the gong for dinner, let us hear a whistle from the Spartan fife. Let us never bow and apologize more. A great man is coming to eat at my house. I do not wish to please him; I wish that he should wish to please me. I will stand here for humanity, and though I would make it kind, I would make it true. Let us affront and reprimand the smooth mediocrity and squalid contentment of the times, and hurl in the face of custom and trade and office, the fact which is the upshot of all history, that there is a great responsible Thinker and Actor working wherever a man works; that a true man belongs to no other time or place, but is the centre of things. Where he is, there is nature. He measures you and all men and all events. Ordinarily, every body in society reminds us of somewhat else, or of some other person. Character, reality, reminds you of nothing else; it takes place of the whole creation. The man must be so much that he must make all circumstances indifferent. Every true man is a cause, a country, and an age; requires infinite spaces and numbers and time fully to accomplish his design;—and posterity seem to follow his steps as a train of clients. A man Cæsar is born, and for ages after we have a Roman Empire. Christ is born, and millions of minds so grow and cleave to his genius that he is confounded with virtue and the possible of man. An institution is the lengthened shadow of one man; as, Monachism, of the Hermit Antony; the Reformation, of Luther; Quakerism, of Fox; Methodism, of Wesley; Abolition, of Clarkson. Scipio, Milton called "the height of Rome;" and all history resolves itself very easily into the biography of a few stout and earnest persons.

Let a man then know his worth, and keep things under his feet. Let him not peep or steal, or skulk up and down with the air of a charity-boy, a bastard, or an interloper in the world which exists for him. But the man in the street, finding no worth in himself which corresponds to the force which built a tower or sculptured a marble god, feels poor when he looks on these. To him a palace, a statue, or a costly book have an alien and forbidding air, much like a gay equipage, and seem to say like that, "Who are you, Sir?" Yet they all are his, suitors for his notice, petitioners to his faculties that they will come out and take possession. The picture waits for my verdict; it is not to command me, but I am to settle its claims to praise. That popular fable of the sot who was picked up dead-drunk in the street, carried to the duke's house, washed and dressed and laid in the duke's bed, and, on his waking, treated with all obsequious ceremony like the duke, and assured that he had been insane, owes its popularity to the fact that it symbolizes so well the state of man, who is in the world a sort of sot, but now and then wakes up, exercises his reason and finds himself a true prince.

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15 **Chatham,** William Pitt, first Earl of Chatham (1708-1778), English statesman • 17 **Adams,** Samuel Adams (1722-1803), Revolutionary patriot • 25 **gazetted,** announced in a gazette, as, for example, a case of bankruptcy • 52 **Monachism,** monasticism • 52 **Antony,** St. Anthony (251-356?), Egyptian founder of monachism • 53 **Fox,** George Fox. See note, p. 837 • 54 **Wesley,** John Wesley. See note, p. 828 • 54 **Clarkson,** Thomas Clarkson (1760-1846), English abolitionist • 54 **Scipio** (185?-129? B.C.), Roman general who captured and destroyed Carthage • 55 **the height of Rome,** Paradise Lost, Bk. IX, l. 510 • 55 **all . . . persons.** Compare Carlyle's famous dictum at the beginning of **Heroes and Hero-Worship** (1841): "For, as I take it, Universal History, the history of what man has accomplished in this world, is at bottom the History of the Great Men who have worked here" • 71 **fable.** Such a story is told in the "Induction" to Shakespeare's **Taming of the Shrew**

Our reading is mendicant and sycophantic. In history our imagination plays us false. Kingdom and lordship, power and estate, are a gaudier vocabulary than private John and Edward in a small house and common day's work; but the things of life are the same to both; the sum total of both is the same. Why all this deference to Alfred and Scanderbeg and Gustavus? Suppose they were virtuous; did they wear out virtue? As great a stake depends on your private act to-day as followed their public and renowned steps. When private men shall act with original views, the lustre will be transferred from the actions of kings to those of gentlemen.

The world has been instructed by its kings, who have so magnetized the eyes of nations. It has been taught by this colossal symbol the mutual reverence that is due from man to man. The joyful loyalty with which men have everywhere suffered the king, the noble, or the great proprietor to walk among them by a law of his own, make his own scale of men and things and reverse theirs, pay for benefits not with money but with honor, and represent the law in his person, was the hieroglyphic by which they obscurely signified their consciousness of their own right and comeliness, the right of every man.

The magnetism which all original action exerts is explained when we inquire the reason of self-trust. Who is the Trustee? What is the aboriginal Self, on which a universal reliance may be grounded? What is the nature and power of that science-baffling star, without parallax, without calculable elements, which shoots a ray of beauty even into trivial and impure actions, if the least mark of independence appear? The inquiry leads us to that source, at once the essence of genius, of virtue, and of life, which we call Spontaneity or Instinct. We denote this primary wisdom as Intuition, whilst all later teachings are tuitions. In that deep force, the last fact behind which analysis cannot go, all things find their common origin. For the sense of being which in calm hours rises, we know not how, in the soul, is not diverse from things, from space, from light, from time, from man, but one with them and proceeds obviously from the same source whence their life and being also proceed. We first share the life by which things exist and afterwards see them as appearances in nature and forget that we have shared their cause. Here is the fountain of action and of thought. Here are the lungs of that inspiration which giveth man wisdom and which cannot be denied without impiety and atheism. We lie in the lap of immense intelligence, which makes us receivers of its truth and organs of its activity. When we discern justice, when we discern truth, we do nothing of ourselves, but allow a passage to its beams. If we ask whence this comes, if we seek to pry into the soul that causes, all philosophy is at fault. Its presence or its absence is all we can affirm. Every man discriminates between the voluntary acts of his mind and his involuntary perceptions, and knows that to his involuntary perceptions a perfect faith is due. He may err in the expression of them, but he knows that these things are so, like day and night, not to be disputed. My wilful actions and acquisitions are but roving;—the idlest reverie, the faintest native emotion, command my curiosity and respect. Thoughtless people contradict as readily the statement of perceptions as of opinions, or rather much more readily; for they do not distinguish between perception and notion. They fancy that I choose to see this or that thing. But perception is not whimsical, but fatal. If I see a trait, my children will see it after me, and in course of time all mankind,—although it may chance that no one has seen it before me. For my perception of it is as much a fact as the sun.

The relations of the soul to the divine spirit are so pure that it is profane to seek to interpose helps. It must be that when God speaketh he should communicate, not one thing, but all things; should fill the world with his voice; should scatter forth light, nature, time, souls, from the centre of the present thought; and new date and new create the whole. Whenever a mind is simple and receives a divine wisdom, old things pass away,—means, teachers, texts, temples fall; it lives now, and absorbs past and future into the present hour. All things are made sacred by relation to it,—one as much as another. All things are dissolved to their centre by their cause, and in the universal miracle petty and particular miracles disappear. If therefore a man claims to know and speak of God and carries you backward to the phraseology of some old mouldered nation in another country, in an-

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7 **Alfred**, Alfred the Great (849-901), king of the West Saxons • 7 **Scanderbeg** (1403-1468), Albanian patriot who opposed the Turks • 7 **Gustavus**, Gustavus Adolphus (1594-1632), king of Sweden • 28 **parallax**, the apparent displacement (or the difference in apparent direction) of an object, as seen from two different points

other world, believe him not. Is the acorn better than the oak which is its fulness and completion? Is the parent better than the child into whom he has cast his ripened being? Whence then this worship of the past? The centuries are conspirators against the sanity and authority of the soul. Time and space are but physiological colors which the eye makes, but the soul is light: where it is, is day; where it was, is night; and history is an impertinence and an injury if it be any thing more than a cheerful apologue or parable of my being and becoming.

Man is timid and apologetic; he is no longer upright; he dares not say 'I think,' 'I am,' but quotes some saint or sage. He is ashamed before the blade of grass or the blowing rose. These roses under my window make no reference to former roses or to better ones; they are for what they are; they exist with God to-day. There is no time to them. There is simply the rose; it is perfect in every moment of its existence. Before a leaf-bud has burst, its whole life acts; in the full-blown flower there is no more; in the leafless root there is no less. Its nature is satisfied and it satisfies nature in all moments alike. But man postpones or remembers; he does not live in the present, but with reverted eye laments the past, or, heedless of the riches that surround him, stands on tiptoe to foresee the future. He cannot be happy and strong until he too lives with nature in the present, above time.

This should be plain enough. Yet see what strong intellects dare not yet hear God himself unless he speak the phraseology of I know not what David, or Jeremiah, or Paul. We shall not always set so great a price on a few texts, on a few lives. We are like children who repeat by rote the sentences of grandames and tutors, and, as they grow older, of the men of talents and character they chance to see,—painfully recollecting the exact words they spoke; afterwards, when they come into the point of view which those had who uttered these sayings, they understand them and are willing to let the words go; for at any time they can use words as good when occasion comes. If we live truly, we shall see truly. It is as easy for the strong man to be strong, as it is for the weak to be weak. When we have new perception, we shall gladly disburden the memory of its hoarded treasures as old rubbish. When a man lives with God, his voice shall be as sweet as the murmur of the brook and the rustle of the corn.

And now at last the highest truth on this subject remains unsaid; probably cannot be said; for all that we say is the far-off remembering of the intuition. That thought by what I can now nearest approach to say it, is this. When good is near you, when you have life in yourself, it is not by any known or accustomed way; you shall not discern the footprints of any other; you shall not see the face of man; you shall not hear any name;—the way, the thought, the good, shall be wholly strange and new. It shall exclude example and experience. You take the way from man, not to man. All persons that ever existed are its forgotten ministers. Fear and hope are alike beneath it. There is somewhat low even in hope. In the hour of vision there is nothing that can be called gratitude, nor properly joy. The soul raised over the passion beholds identity and eternal causation, perceives the self-existence of Truth and Right, and calms itself with knowing that all things go well. Vast spaces of nature, the Atlantic Ocean, the South Sea; long intervals of time, years, centuries, are of no account. This which I think and feel underlay every former state of life and circumstances, as it does underlie my present, and what is called life and what is called death.

Life only avails, not the having lived. Power ceases in the instant of repose; it resides in the moment of transition from a past to a new state, in the shooting of the gulf, in the darting to an aim. This one fact the world hates; that the soul *becomes;* for that forever degrades the past, turns all riches to poverty, all reputation to a shame, confounds the saint with the rogue, shoves Jesus and Judas equally aside. Why then do we prate of self-reliance? Inasmuch as the soul is present there will be power not confident but agent. To talk of reliance is a poor external way of speaking. Speak rather of that which relies because it works and is. Who has more obedience than I masters me, though he should not raise his finger. Round him I must revolve by the gravitation of spirits. We fancy it rhetoric when we speak of eminent virtue. We do not yet see that virtue is Height, and that a man or a company of men, plastic and permeable to principles, by the law of nature must overpower and ride all cities, nations, kings, rich men, poets, who are not.

This is the ultimate fact which we so quickly reach on this, as on every topic, the resolution of all into the ever-blessed ONE. Self-existence is the attribute of the Supreme Cause, and it constitutes the measure of good by

the degree in which it enters into all lower forms. All things real are so by so much virtue as they contain. Commerce, husbandry, hunting, whaling, war, eloquence, personal weight, are somewhat, and engage my respect as examples of its presence and impure action. I see the same law working in nature for conservation and growth. Power is, in nature, the essential measure of right. Nature suffers nothing to remain in her kingdoms which cannot help itself. The genesis and maturation of a planet, its poise and orbit, the bended tree recovering itself from the strong wind, the vital resources of every animal and vegetable, are demonstrations of the self-sufficing and therefore self-relying soul.

Thus all concentrates: let us not rove; let us sit at home with the cause. Let us stun and astonish the intruding rabble of men and books and institutions by a simple declaration of the divine fact. Bid the invaders take the shoes from off their feet, for God is here within. Let our simplicity judge them, and our docility to our own law demonstrate the poverty of nature and fortune beside our native riches.

But now we are a mob. Man does not stand in awe of man, nor is his genius admonished to stay at home, to put itself in communication with the internal ocean, but it goes abroad to beg a cup of water of the urns of other men. We must go alone. I like the silent church before the service begins, better than any preaching. How far off, how cool, how chaste the persons look, begirt each one with a precinct or sanctuary! So let us always sit. Why should we assume the faults of our friend, or wife, or father, or child, because they sit around our hearth, or are said to have the same blood? All men have my blood and I all men's. Not for that will I adopt their petulance or folly, even to the extent of being ashamed of it. But your isolation must not be mechanical, but spiritual, that is, must be elevation. At times the whole world seems to be in conspiracy to importune you with emphatic trifles. Friend, client, child, sickness, fear, want, charity, all knock at once at thy closet door and say,—'Come out unto us.' But keep thy state; come not into their confusion. The power men possess to annoy me I give them by a weak curiosity. No man can come near me but through my act. "What we love that we have, but by desire we bereave ourselves of the love."

If we cannot at once rise to the sanctities of obedience and faith, let us at least resist our temptations; let us enter into the state of war and wake Thor and Woden, courage and constancy, in our Saxon breasts. This is to be done in our smooth times by speaking the truth. Check this lying hospitality and lying affection. Live no longer to the expectation of these deceived and deceiving people with whom we converse. Say to them, 'O father, O mother, O wife, O brother, O friend, I have lived with you after appearances hitherto. Henceforward I am the truth's. Be it known unto you that henceforward I obey no law less than the eternal law. I will have no covenants but proximities. I shall endeavor to nourish my parents, to support my family, to be the chaste husband of one wife,—but these relations I must fill after a new and unprecedented way. I appeal from your customs. I must be myself. I cannot break myself any longer for you, or you. If you can love me for what I am, we shall be the happier. If you cannot, I will still seek to deserve that you should. I will not hide my tastes or aversions. I will so trust that what is deep is holy, that I will do strongly before the sun and moon whatever inly rejoices me and the heart appoints. If you are noble, I will love you; if you are not, I will not hurt you and myself by hypocritical attentions. If you are true, but not in the same truth with me, cleave to your companions; I will seek my own. I do this not selfishly but humbly and truly. It is alike your interest, and mine, and all men's, however long we have dwelt in lies, to live in truth. Does this sound harsh to-day? You will soon love what is dictated by your nature as well as mine, and if we follow the truth it will bring us out safe at last.'—But so may you give these friends pain. Yes, but I cannot sell my liberty and my power, to save their sensibility. Besides, all persons have their moments of reason, when they look out into the region of absolute truth; then will they justify me and do the same thing.

The populace think that your rejection of popular standards is a rejection of all standard, and mere antinomianism; and the bold sensualist will use the name of philosophy to gild his crimes. But the law of conscious-

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18 **shoes . . . feet,** an allusion to the words of God to Moses in Exodus 3:5: ". . . put off thy shoes from off thy feet, for the place whereon thou standest is holy ground" • 47 **Thor.** See note, p. 837 • 47 **Woden,** or Odin, is treated at length in Carlyle's *Heroes and Hero-Worship* as "the central figure of Scandinavian Paganism" • 83 **antinomianism,** the doctrine that the moral law may be set aside on the ground that faith alone is necessary to salvation

ness abides. There are two confessionals, in one or the other of which we must be shriven. You may fulfil your round of duties by clearing yourself in the *direct*, or in the *reflex* way. Consider whether you have satisfied your relations to father, mother, cousin, neighbor, town, cat, and dog—whether any of these can upbraid you. But I may also neglect this reflex standard and absolve me to myself. I have my own stern claims and perfect circle. It denies the name of duty to many offices that are called duties. But if I can discharge its debts it enables me to dispense with the popular code. If any one imagines that this law is lax, let him keep its commandment one day.

And truly it demands something godlike in him who has cast off the common motives of humanity and has ventured to trust himself for a taskmaster. High be his heart, faithful his will, clear his sight, that he may in good earnest be doctrine, society, law, to himself, that a simple purpose may be to him as strong as iron necessity is to others!

If any man consider the present aspects of what is called by distinction *society*, he will see the need of these ethics. The sinew and heart of man seem to be drawn out, and we are become timorous, desponding whimperers. We are afraid of truth, afraid of fortune, afraid of death, and afraid of each other. Our age yields no great and perfect persons. We want men and women who shall renovate life and our social state, but we see that most natures are insolvent, cannot satisfy their own wants, have an ambition out of all proportion to their practical force and do lean and beg day and night continually. Our housekeeping is mendicant, our arts, our occupations, our marriages, our religion we have not chosen, but society has chosen for us. We are parlor soldiers. We shun the rugged battle of fate, where strength is born.

If our young men miscarry in their first enterprises they lose all heart. If the young merchant fails, men say he is *ruined*. If the finest genius studies at one of our colleges and is not installed in an office within one year afterwards in the cities or suburbs of Boston or New York, it seems to his friends and to himself that he is right in being disheartened and in complaining the rest of his life. A sturdy lad from New Hampshire or Vermont, who in turn tries all the professions, who *teams it, farms it, peddles*, keeps a school, preaches, edits a newspaper, goes to Congress, buys a township, and so forth, in successive years, and always like a cat falls on his feet, is worth a hundred of these city dolls. He walks abreast with his days and feels no shame in not 'studying a profession,' for he does not postpone his life, but lives already. He has not one chance, but a hundred chances. Let a Stoic open the resources of man and tell men they are not leaning willows, but can and must detach themselves; that with the exercise of self-trust, new powers shall appear; that a man is the word made flesh, born to shed healing to the nations; that he should be ashamed of our compassion, and that the moment he acts from himself, tossing the laws, the books, idolatries and customs out of the window, we pity him no more but thank and revere him;—and that teacher shall restore the life of man to splendor and make his name dear to all history.

It is easy to see that a greater self-reliance must work a revolution in all the offices and relations of men; in their religion; in their education; in their pursuits; their modes of living; their association; in their property; in their speculative views.

1. In what prayers do men allow themselves! That which they call a holy office is not so much as brave and manly. Prayer looks abroad and asks for some foreign addition to come through some foreign virtue, and loses itself in endless mazes of natural and supernatural, and mediatorial and miraculous. Prayer that craves a particular commodity, anything less than all good, is vicious. Prayer is the contemplation of the facts of life from the highest point of view. It is the soliloquy of a beholding and jubilant soul. It is the spirit of God pronouncing his works good. But prayer as a means to effect a private end is meanness and theft. It supposes dualism and not unity in nature and consciousness. As soon as the man is at one with God, he will not beg. He will then see prayer in all action. The prayer of the farmer kneeling in his field to weed it, the prayer of the rower kneeling with the stroke of his oar, are true prayers heard throughout nature, though for cheap ends. Caratach, in Fletcher's

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56 **word made flesh.** Compare John 1:14: "And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us . . ." • 57 **healing . . . nations.** Compare Revelation 22:2: ". . . and the leaves of the tree [of life] were for the healing of the nations" • 78 **God . . . good.** Compare Genesis 1:31: "And God saw everything that he had made, and behold, it was very good"

"Bonduca," when admonished to inquire the mind of the god Audate, replies,—

> His hidden meaning lïes in our endeavors;
> Our valors are our best gods.

Another sort of false prayers are our regrets. Discontent is the want of self-reliance: it is infirmity of will. Regret calamities if you can thereby help the sufferer; if not, attend your own work and already the evil begins to be repaired. Our sympathy is just as base. We come to them who weep foolishly and sit down and cry for company, instead of imparting to them truth and health in rough electric shocks, putting them once more in communication with their own reason. The secret of fortune is joy in our hands. Welcome evermore to gods and men is the self-helping man. For him all doors are flung wide; him all tongues greet, all honors crown, all eyes follow with desire. Our love goes out to him and embraces him because he did not need it. We solicitously and apologetically caress and celebrate him because he held on his way and scorned our disapprobation. The gods love him because men hated him. "To the persevering mortal," said Zoroaster, "the blessed Immortals are swift."

As men's prayers are a disease of the will, so are their creeds a disease of the intellect. They say with those foolish Israelites, 'Let not God speak to us, lest we die. Speak thou, speak any man with us, and we will obey.' Everywhere I am hindered of meeting God in my brother, because he has shut his own temple doors and recites fables merely of his brother's, or his brother's brother's God. Every new mind is a new classification. If it prove a mind of uncommon activity and power, a Locke, a Lavoisier, a Hutton, a Bentham, a Fourier, it imposes its classification on other men, and lo! a new system. In proportion to the depth of the thought, and so to the number of the objects it touches and brings within reach of the pupil, is his complacency. But chiefly is this apparent in creeds and churches, which are also classifications of some powerful mind acting on the elemental thought of duty and man's relation to the Highest. Such is Calvinism, Quakerism, Swedenborgism. The pupil takes the same delight in subordinating every thing to the new terminology as a girl who has just learned botany in seeing a new earth and new seasons thereby. It will happen for a time that the pupil will find his intellectual power has grown by the study of his master's mind. But in all unbalanced minds the classification is idolized, passes for the end and not for a speedily exhaustible means, so that the walls of the system blend to their eye in the remote horizon with the walls of the universe; the luminaries of heaven seem to them hung on the arch their master built. They cannot imagine how you aliens have any right to see,—how you can see; 'It must be somehow that you stole the light from us.' They do not yet perceive that light, unsystematic, indomitable, will break into any cabin, even into theirs. Let them chirp awhile and call it their own. If they are honest and do well, presently their neat new pinfold will be too strait and low, will crack, will lean, will rot and vanish, and the immortal light, all young and joyful, million-orbed, million-colored, will beam over the universe as on the first morning.

2. It is for want of self-culture that the superstition of Travelling, whose idols are Italy, England, Egypt, retains its fascination for all educated Americans. They who made England, Italy, or Greece venerable in the imagination, did so by sticking fast where they were, like an axis of the earth. In manly hours we feel that duty is our place. The soul is no traveller; the wise man stays at home, and when his necessities, his duties, on any occasion call him from his house, or into foreign lands, he is at home still and shall make men sensible by the expression of his countenance that he goes, the missionary of wisdom and virtue, and visits cities and men like a sovereign and not like an interloper or a valet.

I have no churlish objection to the circumnavigation of the globe for the purposes of art, of study, and benevolence, so that the man is first domesticated, or does not go abroad with the hope of finding somewhat greater than he knows. He who travels to be amused, or to get somewhat which he does not carry, travels away from himself, and grows old even in youth among old things. In Thebes, in Palmyra, his will and mind have become old and dilapidated as they. He carries ruins to ruins.

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3 **His . . . gods,** from John Fletcher's **Bonduca** (1647), Act III, Scene i, ll. 88-89 • 22 **Zoroaster.** See note, p. 890 • 26 **Let . . . obey,** inaccurately quoted from Exodus 20:19 • 33 **Locke,** John Locke. See note, p. 252 • 33 **Lavoisier,** Antoine Lavoisier (1743-1794), French chemist • 33 **Hutton,** James Hutton (1726-1797), English geologist • 33 **Bentham,** Jeremy Bentham (1748-1832), English philosopher and jurist • 33 **Fourier,** François Fourier (1772-1837), French socialist • 83 **Thebes,** ancient ruined city in Egypt • 83 **Palmyra,** ancient ruined city in Syria

Travelling is a fool's paradise. Our first journeys discover to us the indifference of places. At home I dream that at Naples, at Rome, I can be intoxicated with beauty and lose my sadness. I pack my trunk, embrace my friends, embark on the sea and at last wake up in Naples, and there beside me is the stern fact, the sad self, unrelenting, identical, that I fled from. I seek the Vatican and the palaces. I affect to be intoxicated with sights and suggestions, but I am not intoxicated. My giant goes with me wherever I go.

3. But the rage of travelling is a symptom of a deeper unsoundness affecting the whole intellectual action. The intellect is vagabond, and our system of education fosters restlessness. Our minds travel when our bodies are forced to stay at home. We imitate; and what is imitation but the travelling of the mind? Our houses are built with foreign taste; our shelves are garnished with foreign ornaments; our opinions, our tastes, our faculties, lean, and follow the Past and the Distant. The soul created the arts wherever they have flourished. It was in his own mind that the artist sought his model. It was an application of his own thought to the thing to be done and the conditions to be observed. And why need we copy the Doric or the Gothic model? Beauty, convenience, grandeur of thought and quaint expression are as near to us as to any, and if the American artist will study with hope and love the precise thing to be done by him, considering the climate, the soil, the length of the day, the wants of the people, the habit and form of the government, he will create a house in which all these will find themselves fitted, and taste and sentiment will be satisfied also.

Insist on yourself; never imitate. Your own gift you can present every moment with the cumulative force of a whole life's cultivation; but of the adopted talent of another you have only an extemporaneous half possession. That which each can do best, none but his Maker can teach him. No man yet knows what it is, nor can, till that person has exhibited it. Where is the master who could have taught Shakspeare? Where is the master who could have instructed Franklin, or Washington, or Bacon, or Newton? Every great man is a unique. The Scipionism of Scipio is precisely that part he could not borrow. Shakspeare will never be made by the study of Shakspeare. Do that which is assigned you, and you cannot hope too much or dare too much. There is at this moment for you an utterance brave and grand as that of the colossal chisel of Phidias, or trowel of the Egyptians, or the pen of Moses or Dante, but different from all these. Not possibly will the soul, all rich, all eloquent, with thousand-cloven tongue, deign to repeat itself; but if you can hear what these patriarchs say, surely you can reply to them in the same pitch of voice; for the ear and the tongue are two organs of one nature. Abide in the simple and noble regions of thy life, obey thy heart, and thou shalt reproduce the Foreworld again.

4. As our Religion, our Education, our Art look abroad, so does our spirit of society. All men plume themselves on the improvement of society, and no man improves.

Society never advances. It recedes as fast on one side as it gains on the other. It undergoes continual changes; it is barbarous, it is civilized, it is christianized, it is rich, it is scientific; but this change is not amelioration. For every thing that is given something is taken. Society acquires new arts and loses old instincts. What a contrast between the well-clad, reading, writing, thinking American, with a watch, a pencil and a bill of exchange in his pocket, and the naked New Zealander, whose property is a club, a spear, a mat and an undivided twentieth of a shed to sleep under! But compare the health of the two men and you shall see that the white man has lost his aboriginal strength. If the traveller tell us truly, strike the savage with a broad-axe and in a day or two the flesh shall unite and heal as if you struck the blow into soft pitch, and the same blow shall send the white to his grave.

The civilized man has built a coach, but has lost the use of his feet. He is supported on crutches, but lacks so much support of muscle. He has a fine Geneva watch, but he fails of the skill to tell the hour by the sun. A Greenwich nautical almanac he has, and so being sure of the information when he wants it, the man in the street does not know a star in the sky. The solstice he does not observe; the equinox he knows as little; and the whole bright calendar of the year is without a dial in his mind. His note-books impair his memory; his libraries overload his wit; the insurance-office increases the number of

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24 **Doric,** Greek or classic • 24 **Gothic,** medieval • 48 **Phidias,** Greek sculptor of the fifth century B.C. • 48 **trowel . . . Egyptians,** meaning the pyramids

accidents; and it may be a question whether machinery does not encumber; whether we have not lost by refinement some energy, by a Christianity, entrenched in establishments and forms, some vigor of wild virtue. For every Stoic was a Stoic; but in Christendom where is the Christian?

There is no more deviation in the moral standard than in the standard of height or bulk. No greater men are now than ever were. A singular equality may be observed between the great men of the first and of the last ages; nor can all the science, art, religion, and philosophy of the nineteenth century avail to educate greater men than Plutarch's heroes, three or four and twenty centuries ago. Not in time is the race progressive. Phocion, Socrates, Anaxagoras, Diogenes, are great men, but they leave no class. He who is really of their class will not be called by their name, but will be his own man, and in his turn the founder of a sect. The arts and inventions of each period are only its costume and do not invigorate men. The harm of the improved machinery may compensate its good. Hudson and Behring accomplished so much in their fishing-boats as to astonish Parry and Franklin, whose equipment exhausted the resources of science and art. Galileo, with an opera-glass, discovered a more splendid series of celestial phenomena than any one since. Columbus found the New World in an undecked boat. It is curious to see the periodical disuse and perishing of means and machinery which were introduced with loud laudation a few years or centuries before. The great genius returns to essential man. We reckoned the improvements of the art of war among the triumphs of science, and yet Napoleon conquered Europe by the bivouac, which consisted of falling back on naked valor and disencumbering it of all aids. The Emperor held it impossible to make a perfect army, says Las Cases, "without abolishing our arms, magazines, commissaries and carriages, until, in imitation of the Roman custom, the soldier should receive his supply of corn, grind it in his hand-mill and bake his bread himself."

Society is a wave. The wave moves onward, but the water of which it is composed does not. The same particle does not rise from the valley to the ridge. Its unity is only phenomenal. The persons who make up a nation to-day, next year die, and their experience dies with them.

And so the reliance on Property, including the reliance on governments which protect it, is the want of self-reliance. Men have looked away from themselves and at things so long that they have come to esteem the religious, learned and civil institutions as guards of property, and they deprecate assaults on these, because they feel them to be assaults on property. They measure their esteem of each other by what each has, and not by what each is. But a cultivated man becomes ashamed of his property, out of new respect for his nature. Especially he hates what he has if he see that it is accidental,—came to him by inheritance, or gift, or crime; then he feels that it is not having; it does not belong to him, has no root in him and merely lies there because no revolution or no robber takes it away. But that which a man is, does always by necessity acquire; and what the man acquires, is living property, which does not wait the beck of rulers, or mobs, or revolutions, or fire, or storm, or bankruptcies, but perpetually renews itself wherever the man breathes. "Thy lot or portion of life," said the Caliph Ali, "is seeking after thee; therefore be at rest from seeking after it." Our dependence on these foreign goods leads us to our slavish respect for numbers. The political parties meet in numerous conventions; the greater the concourse and with each new uproar of announcement, The delegation from Essex! The Democrats from New Hampshire! The Whigs of Maine! the young patriot feels himself stronger than before by a new thousand of eyes and arms. In like manner the reformers summon conventions and vote and resolve in multitude. Not so, O friends! will the God deign to enter and inhabit you, but by a method precisely the reverse. It is only as a man puts off all foreign support and stands alone that I see him to be strong and to prevail. He is weaker by every recruit to his banner. Is not a man better than a town? Ask nothing of men, and, in the endless mutation, thou only firm column must presently appear the upholder of all that

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13 **Plutarch's heroes,** the noble Greeks and Romans of Plutarch's *Lives* • 14 **Phocion** (402-317 B.C.), Greek philosopher • 15 **Anaxagoras** (500-428 B.C.), Greek philosopher • 15 **Diogenes** (412?-323 B.C.), Greek Cynic philosopher • 21 **Hudson,** Henry Hudson (d. 1611), English navigator. See note, p. 569 • 21 **Behring,** Vitus Jonassen Bering (1680-1741), Danish nagivator who explored the Bering Sea • 22 **Parry,** Sir William Edward Parry (1790-1855), English explorer of the Arctic • 22 **Franklin,** Sir John Franklin (1786-1847), English explorer, was lost in the Arctic • 35 **Las Cases.** Marquis de Las Cases (1766-1842) recorded in **Mémorial de Ste. Hélène** his conversations with Napoleon at St. Helena • 64 **Caliph Ali,** Ali ben Abu Talib (602?-661), fourth caliph of Mecca • 70 **Essex,** a county in eastern Massachusetts

surrounds thee. He who knows that power is inborn, that he is weak because he has looked for good out of him and elsewhere, and, so perceiving, throws himself unhesitatingly on his thought, instantly rights himself, stands in the erect position, commands his limbs, works miracles; just as a man who stands on his feet is stronger than a man who stands on his head.

So use all that is called Fortune. Most men gamble with her, and gain all, and lose all, as her wheel rolls. But do thou leave as unlawful these winnings, and deal with Cause and Effect, the chancellors of God. In the Will work and acquire, and thou hast chained the wheel of Chance, and shall sit hereafter out of fear from her rotations. A political victory, a rise of rents, the recovery of your sick or the return of your absent friend, or some other favorable event raises your spirits, and you think good days are preparing for you. Do not believe it. Nothing can bring you peace but yourself. Nothing can bring you peace but the triumph of principles.

1841

The Poet

Those who are esteemed umpires of taste are often persons who have acquired some knowledge of admired pictures or sculptures, and have an inclination for whatever is elegant; but if you inquire whether they are beautiful souls, and whether their own acts are like fair pictures, you learn that they are selfish and sensual. Their cultivation is local, as if you should rub a log of dry wood in one spot to produce fire, all the rest remaining cold. Their knowledge of the fine arts is some study of rules and particulars, or some limited judgment of color or form, which is exercised for amusement or for show. It is a proof of the shallowness of the doctrine of beauty, as it lies in the minds of our amateurs, that men seem to have lost the perception of the instant dependence of form upon soul. There is no doctrine of forms in our philosophy. We were put into our bodies, as fire is put into a pan, to be carried about; but there is no accurate adjustment between the spirit and the organ, much less is the latter the germination of the former. So in regard to other forms, the intellectual men do not believe in any essential dependence of the material world on thought and volition. Theologians think it a pretty air-castle to talk of the spiritual meaning of a ship or a cloud, of a city or a contract, but they prefer to come again to the solid ground of historical evidence; and even the poets are contented with a civil and conformed manner of living, and to write poems from the fancy, at a safe distance from their own experience. But the highest minds of the world have never ceased to explore the double meaning, or, shall I say, the quadruple, or the centuple, or much more manifold meaning, of every sensuous fact: Orpheus, Empedocles, Heraclitus, Plato, Plutarch, Dante, Swedenborg, and the masters of sculpture, picture, and poetry. For we are not pans and barrows, nor even porters of the fire and torch-bearers, but children of the fire, made of it, and only the same divinity transmuted, and at two or three removes, when we know least about it. And this hidden truth, that the fountains whence all this river of Time, and its creatures, floweth, are intrinsically ideal and beautiful, draws us to the consideration of the nature and functions of the Poet, or the man of Beauty, to the means and materials he uses, and to the general aspect of the art in the present time.

The breadth of the problem is great, for the poet is representative. He stands among partial men for the

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32 **Orpheus,** a Thracian poet and musician of Greek mythology, whose lyre could charm beasts and cause trees and rocks to move • 32 **Empedocles, Heraclitus,** Greek philosophers of the fifth century B.C. 33 **Plutarch.** See note, p. 250. Emerson was fond of lists of impressive names, some of which he seems to have used not very significantly. In the present list, only Swedenborg and Plato have a special importance for Emerson; each is the subject of an essay in **Representative Men.** In the essay on Plato, he said, "Plato is philosophy, and philosophy, Plato"

complete man, and apprises us not of his wealth, but of the commonwealth. The young man reveres men of genius, because, to speak truly, they are more himself than he is. They receive of the soul as he also receives, but they more. Nature enhances her beauty, to the eye of loving men, from their belief that the poet is beholding her shows at the same time. He is isolated among his contemporaries, by truth and by his art, but with this consolation in his pursuits, that they will draw all men sooner or later. For all men live by truth, and stand in need of expression. In love, in art, in avarice, in politics, in labor, in games, we study to utter our painful secret. The man is only half himself, the other half is his expression.

Notwithstanding this necessity to be published, adequate expression is rare. I know not how it is that we need an interpreter; but the great majority of men seem to be minors, who have not yet come into possession of their own, or mutes, who cannot report the conversation they have had with nature. There is no man who does not anticipate a super-sensual utility in the sun, and stars, earth, and water. These stand and wait to render him a peculiar service. But there is some obstruction, or some excess of phlegm in our constitution, which does not suffer them to yield the due effect. Too feeble fall the impressions of nature on us to make us artists. Every touch should thrill. Every man should be so much an artist, that he could report in conversation what had befallen him. Yet, in our experience, the rays or appulses have sufficient force to arrive at the senses, but not enough to reach the quick, and compel the reproduction of themselves in speech. The poet is the person in whom these powers are in balance, the man without impediment, who sees and handles that which others dream of, traverses the whole scale of experience, and is representative of man, in virtue of being the largest power to receive and to impart.

For the Universe has three children, born at one time, which reappear, under different names, in every system of thought, whether they be called cause, operation, and effect; or, more poetically, Jove, Pluto, Neptune; or theologically, the Father, the Spirit, and the Son; but which we will call here the Knower, the Doer, and the Sayer. These stand respectively for the love of truth, for the love of good, and for the love of beauty. These three are equal. Each is that which he is essentially, so that he cannot be surmounted or analyzed, and each of these three has the power of the others latent in him, and his own patent.

The poet is the sayer, the namer, and represents beauty. He is a sovereign, and stands on the centre. For the world is not painted or adorned, but is from the beginning beautiful; and God has not made some beautiful things, but Beauty is the creator of the universe. Therefore the poet is not any permissive potentate, but is emperor in his own right. Criticism is infested with a cant of materialism, which assumes that manual skill and activity is the first merit of all men, and disparages such as say and do not, overlooking the fact, that some men, namely, poets, are natural sayers, sent into the world to the end of expression, and confounds them with those whose province is action, but who quit it to imitate the sayers. But Homer's words are as costly and admirable to Homer, as Agamemnon's victories are to Agamemnon. The poet does not wait for the hero or the sage, but, as they act and think primarily, so he writes primarily what will and must be spoken, reckoning the others, though primaries also, yet, in respect to him, secondaries and servants; as sitters or models in the studio of a painter, or as assistants who bring building materials to an architect.

For poetry was all written before time was, and whenever we are so finely organized that we can penetrate into that region where the air is music, we hear those primal warblings, and attempt to write them down, but we lose ever and anon a word, or a verse, and substitute something of our own, and thus miswrite the poem. The men of more delicate ear write down these cadences more faithfully, and these transcripts, though imperfect, become the songs of the nations. For nature is as truly beautiful as it is good, or as it is reasonable, and must as much appear, as it must be done, or be known. Words and deeds are quite indifferent modes of the divine energy. Words are also actions, and actions are a kind of words.

The sign and credentials of the poet are, that he announces that which no man foretold. He is the true and only doctor; he knows and tells; he is the only teller of news, for he was present and privy to the appearance which he describes. He is a beholder of ideas, and an utterer of the necessary and causal. For we do not speak now of men of poetical talents, or of industry

and skill in metre, but of the true poet. I took part in a conversation, the other day, concerning a recent writer of lyrics, a man of subtle mind, whose head appeared to be a music-box of delicate tunes and rhythms, and whose skill, and command of language, we could not sufficiently praise. But when the question arose, whether he was not only a lyrist, but a poet, we were obliged to confess that he is plainly a contemporary, not an eternal man. He does not stand out of our low limitations, like a Chimborazo under the line, running up from a torrid base through all the climates of the globe, with belts of the herbage of every latitude on its high and mottled sides; but this genius is the landscape-garden of a modern house, adorned with fountains and statues, with well-bred men and women standing and sitting in the walks and terraces. We hear, through all the varied music, the ground-tone of conventional life. Our poets are men of talents who sing, and not the children of music. The argument is secondary, the finish of the verses is primary.

For it is not metres, but a metre-making argument, that makes a poem,—a thought so passionate and alive, that, like the spirit of a plant or an animal, it has an architecture of its own, and adorns nature with a new thing. The thought and the form are equal in the order of time, but in the order of genesis the thought is prior to the form. The poet has a new thought: he has a whole new experience to unfold; he will tell us how it was with him, and all men will be the richer in his fortune. For the experience of each new age requires a new confession, and the world seems always waiting for its poet. I remember, when I was young, how much I was moved one morning by tidings that genius had appeared in a youth who sat near me at table. He had left his work, and gone rambling none knew whither, and had written hundreds of lines, but could not tell whether that which was in him was therein told: he could tell nothing but that all was changed,—man, beast, heaven, earth, and sea. How gladly we listened! how credulous! Society seemed to be compromised. We sat in the aurora of a sunrise which was to put out all the stars. Boston seemed to be at twice the distance it had the night before, or was much farther than that. Rome,—what was Rome? Plutarch and Shakspeare were in the yellow leaf, and Homer no more should be heard of. It is much to know that poetry has been written this very day, under this very roof, by your side. What! that wonderful spirit has not expired! these stony moments are still sparkling and animated! I had fancied that the oracles were all silent, and nature had spent her fires; and behold! all night, from every pore, these fine auroras have been streaming. Every one has some interest in the advent of the poet, and no one knows how much it may concern him. We know that the secret of the world is profound, but who or what shall be our interpreter, we know not. A mountain ramble, a new style of the face, a new person, may put the key into our hands. Of course, the value of genius to us is in the veracity of its report. Talent may frolic and juggle; genius realizes and adds. Mankind, in good earnest, have availed so far in understanding themselves and their work, that the foremost watchman on the peak announces his news. It is the truest word ever spoken, and the phrase will be the fittest, most musical, and the unerring voice of the world for that time.

All that we call sacred history attests that the birth of a poet is the principal event in chronology. Man, never so often deceived, still watches for the arrival of a brother who can hold him steady to a truth, until he has made it his own. With what joy I begin to read a poem, which I confide in as an inspiration! And now my chains are to be broken; I shall mount above these clouds and opaque airs in which I live,—opaque, though they seem transparent,—and from the heaven of truth I shall see and comprehend my relations. That will reconcile me to life, and renovate nature, to see trifles animated by a tendency, and to know what I am doing. Life will no more be a noise; now I shall see men and women, and know the signs by which they may be discerned from fools and satans. This day shall be better than my birthday: then I became an animal: now I am invited into the science of the real. Such is the hope, but the fruition is postponed. Oftener it falls, that this winged man, who will carry me into the heaven, whirls me into mists, then leaps and frisks about with me as it were from

2 **writer of lyrics,** probably Tennyson, of whose 1842 volume Emerson wrote in his *Journals* (June 1842): "It has many merits, but the question might remain whether it has *the* merit. One would say it was the poetry of an exquisite; that it was prettiness carried out to the infinite, but with no one great heroic stroke; a too vigorous exclusion of all mere natural influences" • 10 **Chimborazo . . . line,** a mountain in Ecuador near the equator • 43 **yellow leaf.** Compare *Macbeth,* Act V, Scene iii, ll. 22-23: "My way of life is fall'n into the sere, the yellow leaf"

cloud to cloud, still affirming that he is bound heavenward; and I, being myself a novice, am slow in perceiving that he does not know the way into the heavens, and is merely bent that I should admire his skill to rise, like a fowl or a flying fish, a little way from the ground or the water; but the all-piercing, all-feeding, and ocular air of heaven, that man shall never inhabit. I tumble down again soon into my old nooks, and lead the life of exaggerations as before, and have lost my faith in the possibility of any guide who can lead me thither where I would be.

But, leaving these victims of vanity, let us, with new hope, observe how nature, by worthier impulses, has insured the poet's fidelity to his office of announcement and affirming, namely, by the beauty of things, which becomes a new and higher beauty, when expressed. Nature offers all her creatures to him as a picture-language. Being used as a type, a second wonderful value appears in the object, far better than its old value, as the carpenter's stretched cord, if you hold your ear close enough, is musical in the breeze. "Things more excellent than every image," says Jamblichus, "are expressed through images." Things admit of being used as symbols, because nature is a symbol, in the whole, and in every part. Every line we can draw in the sand, has expression; and there is no body without its spirit or genius. All form is an effect of character; all condition, of the quality of the life; all harmony, of health; (and, for this reason, a perception of beauty should be sympathetic, or proper only to the good.) The beautiful rests on the foundations of the necessary. The soul makes the body, as the wise Spenser teaches:

"So every spirit, as it is most pure,
And hath in it the more of heavenly light,
So it the fairer body doth procure
To habit in, and it more fairly dight,
With cheerful grace and amiable sight.
For, of the soul, the body form doth take,
For soul is form, and doth the body make."

Here we find ourselves, suddenly, not in a critical speculation, but in a holy place, and should go very warily and reverently. We stand before the secret of the world, there where Being passes into Appearance, and Unity into Variety.

The Universe is the externization of the soul. Wherever the life is, that bursts into appearance around it. Our science is sensual, and therefore superficial. The earth and the heavenly bodies, physics, and chemistry, we sensually treat, as if they were self-existent; but these are the retinue of that Being we have. "The mighty heaven," said Proclus, "exhibits, in its transfigurations, clear images of the splendor of intellectual perceptions; being moved in conjunction with the unapparent periods of intellectual natures." Therefore, science always goes abreast with the just elevation of the man, keeping step with religion and metaphysics; or, the state of science is an index of our self-knowledge. Since everything in nature answers to a moral power, if any phenomenon remains brute and dark, it is because the corresponding faculty in the observer is not yet active.

No wonder, then, if these waters be so deep, that we hover over them with a religious regard. The beauty of the fable proves the importance of the sense; to the poet, and to all others; or, if you please, every man is so far a poet as to be susceptible of these enchantments of nature; for all men have the thoughts whereof the universe is the celebration. I find that the fascination resides in the symbol. Who loves nature? Who does not? Is it only poets, and men of leisure and cultivation, who live with her? No; but also hunters, farmers, grooms, and butchers, though they express their affection in their choice of life, and not in their choice of words. The writer wonders what the coachman or the hunter values in riding, in horses, and dogs. It is not superficial qualities. When you talk with him, he holds these at as slight a rate as you. His worship is sympathetic; he has no definitions, but he is commanded in nature, by the living power which he feels to be there present. No imitation, or playing of these things, would content him; he loves the earnest of the north wind, of rain, of stone, and wood, and iron. A beauty not explicable is dearer than a beauty which we can see to the end of. It is nature the symbol, nature certifying the supernatural, body overflowed by life, which he worships, with coarse, but sincere rites.

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22 Jamblichus, one of the Neo-Platonists. He flourished in Alexandria in the fourth century • 33 So . . . make. Edmund Spenser's "An Hymne in Honour of Beautie," ll. 127-133 • 51 Proclus (411-485), another Neo-Platonist. The Neo-Platonists (Plotinus, Proclus, Jamblichus, and Porphyry), whose works Emerson read in the translations of Thomas Taylor, were one of the major influences on his thought

The inwardness and mystery of this attachment drives men of every class to the use of emblems. The schools of poets, and philosophers, are not more intoxicated with their symbols, than the populace with theirs. In our political parties, compute the power of badges and emblems. See the great ball which they roll from Baltimore to Bunker Hill! In the political processions, Lowell goes in a loom, and Lynn in a shoe, and Salem in a ship. Witness the cider-barrel, the log-chain, the hickory-stick, the palmetto, and all the cognizances of party. See the power of national emblems. Some stars, lilies, leopards, a crescent, a lion, an eagle, or other figure, which came into credit God knows how, on an old rag of bunting, blowing in the wind, on a fort, at the ends of the earth, shall make the blood tingle under the rudest, or the most conventional exterior. The people fancy they hate poetry, and they are all poets and mystics!

Beyond this universality of the symbolic language, we are apprised of the divineness of this superior use of things, whereby the world is a temple whose walls are covered with emblems, pictures, and commandments of the Deity, in this, that there is no fact in nature which does not carry the whole sense of nature; and the distinctions which we make in events, and in affairs, of low and high, honest and base, disappear when nature is used as a symbol. Thought makes everything fit for use. The vocabulary of an omniscient man would embrace words and images excluded from polite conversation. What would be base, or even obscene, to the obscene, becomes illustrious, spoken in a new connection of thought. The piety of the Hebrew prophets purges their grossness. The circumcision is an example of the power of poetry to raise the low and offensive. Small and mean things serve as well as great symbols. The meaner the type by which a law is expressed, the more pungent it is, and the more lasting in the memories of men: just as we choose the smallest box, or case, in which any needful utensil can be carried. Bare lists of words are found suggestive, to an imaginative and excited mind; as it is related of Lord Chatham, that he was accustomed to read in Bailey's Dictionary, when he was preparing to speak in Parliament. The poorest experience is rich enough for all the purposes of expressing thought. Why covet a knowledge of new facts? Day and night, house and garden, a few books, a few actions, serve us as well as would all trades and all spectacles. We are far from having exhausted the significance of the few symbols we use. We can come to use them yet with a terrible simplicity. It does not need that a poem should be long. Every word was once a poem. Every new relation is a new word. Also, we use defects and deformities to a sacred purpose, so expressing our sense that the evils of the world are such only to the evil eye. In the old mythology, mythologists observe, defects are ascribed to divine natures, as lameness to Vulcan, blindness to Cupid, and the like, to signify exuberances.

For, as it is dislocation and detachment from the life of God, that makes things ugly, the poet, who re-attaches things to nature and the Whole,—re-attaching even artificial things, and violations of nature, to nature, by a deeper insight,—disposes very easily of the most disagreeable facts. Readers of poetry see the factory-village and the railway, and fancy that the poetry of the landscape is broken up by these; for these works of art are not yet consecrated in their reading; but the poet sees them fall within the great Order not less than the beehive or the spider's geometrical web. Nature adopts them very fast into her vital circles, and the gliding train of cars she loves like her own. Besides, in a centred mind, it signifies nothing how many mechanical inventions you exhibit. Though you add millions, and never so surprising, the fact of mechanics has not gained a grain's weight. The spiritual fact remains unalterable, by many or by few particulars; as no mountain is of any appreciable height to break the curve of the sphere. A shrewd country-boy goes to the city for the first time, and the complacent citizen is not satisfied with his little wonder.

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6 **great . . . Hill,** the reference is to the presidential election of 1840, in which the Whig candidate, Harrison, defeated the Democratic candidate, Van Buren. Emerson wrote in his **Journals:** "The most imposing part of this Harrison celebration of the Fourth of July in Concord, as in Baltimore, was this ball, twelve or thirteen feet in diameter, which, as it mounts the little heights and slopes of the road, draws all eyes with a certain sublime movement, especially as the imagination is incessantly addressed with its political significance" • 7 **Lowell . . . ship,** signifying the textile industry of Lowell, the shoe factories of Lynn, and the maritime interests of Salem—all cities in Massachusetts • 10 **the cognizances of party.** The cider barrel and the log cabin were used by the Whigs as emblems of Harrison; the hickory stick and the palmetto were Democratic symbols, associated, respectively, with Andrew Jackson and South Carolina • 11 **national emblems,** lilies, of France; leopards, of Scotland; crescent, of Turkey; lion, of England • 40 **Lord Chatham,** William Pitt. See note, p. 897

It is not that he does not see all the fine houses, and know that he never saw such before, but he disposes of them as easily as the poet finds place for the railway. The chief value of the new fact, is to enhance the great and constant fact of Life, which can dwarf any and every circumstance, and to which the belt of wampum, and the commerce of America, are alike.

The world being thus put under the mind for verb and noun, the poet is he who can articulate it. For, though life is great, and fascinates, and absorbs,—and though all men are intelligent of the symbols through which it is named,—yet they cannot originally use them. We are symbols, and inhabit symbols; workmen, work, and tools, words and things, birth and death, all are emblems; but we sympathize with the symbols, and, being infatuated with the economical uses of things, we do not know that they are thoughts. The poet, by an ulterior intellectual perception, gives them a power which makes their old use forgotten, and puts eyes, and a tongue, into every dumb and inanimate object. He perceives the independence of the thought on the symbol, the stability of the thought, the accidency and fugacity of the symbol. As the eyes of Lyncaeus were said to see through the earth, so the poet turns the world to glass, and shows us all things in their right series and procession. For, through that better perception, he stands one step nearer to things, and sees the flowing or metamorphosis; perceives that thought is multiform; that within the form of every creature is a force impelling it to ascend into a higher form: and, following with his eyes the life, uses the forms which express that life, and so his speech flows with the flowing of nature. All the facts of the animal economy, sex, nutriment, gestation, birth, growth, are symbols of the passage of the world into the soul of man, to suffer there a change, and reappear a new and higher fact. He uses forms according to the life, and not according to the form. This is true science. The poet alone knows astronomy, chemistry, vegetation, and animation, for he does not stop at these facts, but employs them as signs. He knows why the plain or meadow of space was strown with these flowers we call suns, and moons, and stars; why the great deep is adorned with animals, with men, and gods; for, in every word he speaks he rides on them as the horses of thought.

By virtue of this science the poet is the Namer or Language-maker, naming things sometimes after their appearance, sometimes after their essence, and giving to every one its own name and not another's, thereby rejoicing the intellect, which delights in detachment or boundary. The poets made all the words, and therefore language is the archives of history, and, if we must say it, a sort of tomb of the muses. For, though the origin of most of our words is forgotten, each word was at first a stroke of genius, and obtained currency, because for the moment it symbolized the world to the first speaker and to the hearer. The etymologist finds the deadest word to have been once a brilliant picture. Language is fossil poetry. As the limestone of the continent consists of infinite masses of the shells of animalcules, so language is made up of images, or tropes, which now, in their secondary use, have long ceased to remind us of their poetic origin. But the poet names the thing because he sees it, or comes one step nearer to it than any other. This expression, or naming, is not art, but a second nature, grown out of the first, as a leaf out of a tree. What we call nature, is a certain self-regulated motion, or change; and nature does all things by her own hands, and does not leave another to baptize her, but baptizes herself; and this through the metamorphosis again. I remember that a certain poet described it to me thus:

Genius is the activity which repairs the decays of things, whether wholly or partly of a material and finite kind. Nature, through all her kingdoms, insures herself. Nobody cares for planting the poor fungus: so she shakes down from the gills of one agaric countless spores, any one of which, being preserved, transmits new billions of spores to-morrow or next day. The new agaric of this hour has a chance which the old one had not. This atom of seed is thrown into a new place, not subject to the accidents which destroyed its parent two rods off. She makes a man; and having brought him to ripe age, she will no longer run the risk of losing this wonder at a blow, but she detaches from him a new self, that the kind may be safe from accidents to which the individual is exposed. So when the soul of the poet has come to ripeness of thought, she detaches and sends away from it its poems or songs,—a fearless, sleepless, deathless

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23 **Lyncaeus** was one of the mythological band who sailed in search of the Golden Fleece • 71 **a certain poet,** Emerson himself

progeny, which is not exposed to the accidents of the weary kingdom of time: a fearless, vivacious offspring, clad with wings (such was the virtue of the soul out of which they came), which carry them fast and far, and infix them irrecoverably into the hearts of men. These wings are the beauty of the poet's soul. The songs, thus flying immortal from their mortal parent, are pursued by clamorous flights of censures, which swarm in far greater numbers, and threaten to devour them; but these last are not winged. At the end of a very short leap they fall plump down, and rot, having received from the souls out of which they came no beautiful wings. But the melodies of the poet ascend, and leap, and pierce into the deeps of infinite time.

So far the bard taught me, using his freer speech. But nature has a higher end, in the production of new individuals, than security, namely, *ascension,* or, the passage of the soul into higher forms. I knew, in my younger days, the sculptor who made the statue of the youth which stands in the public garden. He was, as I remember, unable to tell directly, what made him happy, or unhappy, but by wonderful indirections he could tell. He rose one day, according to his habit, before the dawn, and saw the morning break, grand as the eternity out of which it came, and, for many days after, he strove to express this tranquillity, and, lo! his chisel had fashioned out of marble the form of a beautiful youth, Phosphorus, whose aspect is such, that, it is said, all persons who look on it become silent. The poet also resigns himself to his mood, and that thought which agitated him is expressed, but *alter idem,* in a manner totally new. The expression is organic, or, the new type which things themselves take when liberated. As, in the sun, objects paint their images on the retina of the eye, so they, sharing the aspiration of the whole universe, tend to paint a far more delicate copy of their essence in his mind. Like the metamorphosis of things into higher organic forms, is their change into melodies. Over everything stands its daemon, or soul, and, as the form of the thing is reflected by the eye, so the soul of the thing is reflected by a melody. The sea, the mountain-ridge, Niagara, and every flower-bed, pre-exist, or super-exist, in precantations, which sail like odors in the air, and when any man goes by with an ear sufficiently fine, he overhears them, and endeavors to write down the notes, without diluting or depraving them. And herein is the legitimation of criticism, in the mind's faith, that the poems are a corrupt version of some text in nature, with which they ought to be made to tally. A rhyme in one of our sonnets should not be less pleasing than the iterated nodes of a seashell, or the resembling difference of a group of flowers. The pairing of the birds is an idyl, not tedious as our idyls are; a tempest is a rough ode, without falsehood or rant: a summer, with its harvest sown, reaped, and stored, is an epic song, subordinating how many admirably executed parts. Why should not the symmetry and truth that modulate these, glide into our spirits, and we participate the invention of nature?

This insight, which expresses itself by what is called Imagination, is a very high sort of seeing, which does not come by study, but by the intellect being where and what it sees, by sharing the path or circuit of things through forms, and so making them translucid to others. The path of things is silent. Will they suffer a speaker to go with them? A spy they will not suffer; a lover, a poet, is the transcendency of their own nature,—him they will suffer. The condition of true naming, on the poet's part, is his resigning himself to the divine *aura* which breathes through forms, and accompanying that.

It is a secret which every intellectual man quickly learns, that, beyond the energy of his possessed and conscious intellect, he is capable of a new energy (as of an intellect doubled on itself), by abandonment to the nature of things; that, beside his privacy of power as an individual man, there is a great public power, on which he can draw, by unlocking, at all risks, his human doors, and suffering the ethereal tides to roll and circulate through him: then he is caught up into the life of the Universe, his speech is thunder, his thought is law, and his words are universally intelligible as the plants and animals. The poet knows that he speaks adequately, then, only when he speaks somewhat wildly, or, "with the flower of the mind;" not with the intellect, used as an organ, but with the intellect released from all service, and suffered to take its direction from its celestial life; or, as the ancients were wont to express themselves, not with intellect alone, but with the intellect inebriated by nectar. As the traveller who has lost his way throws his reins on his horse's neck, and trusts to the instinct of the animal to find his road, so must we do with the

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31 alter idem, a second self

divine animal who carries us through this world. For if in any manner we can stimulate this instinct, new passages are opened for us into nature, the mind flows into and through things hardest and highest, and the metamorphosis is possible.

This is the reason why bards love wine, mead, narcotics, coffee, tea, opium, the fumes of sandal-wood and tobacco, or whatever other procurers of animal exhilaration. All men avail themselves of such means as they can, to add this extraordinary power to their normal powers; and to this end they prize conversation, music, pictures, sculpture, dancing, theatres, travelling, war, mobs, fires, gaming, politics, or love, or science, or animal intoxication, which are several coarser or finer *quasi*-mechanical substitutes for the true nectar, which is the ravishment of the intellect by coming nearer to the fact. These are auxiliaries to the centrifugal tendency of a man, to his passage out into free space, and they help him to escape the custody of that body in which he is pent up, and of that jail-yard of individual relations in which he is enclosed. Hence a great number of such as were professionally expressers of Beauty, as painters, poets, musicians, and actors, have been more than others wont to lead a life of pleasure and indulgence; all but the few who received the true nectar; and, as it was a spurious mode of attaining freedom, as it was an emancipation not into the heavens, but into the freedom of baser places, they were punished for that advantage they won, by a dissipation and deterioration. But never can any advantage be taken of nature by a trick. The spirit of the world, the great calm presence of the Creator, comes not forth to the sorceries of opium or of wine. The sublime vision comes to the pure and simple soul in a clean and chaste body. That is not an inspiration which we owe to narcotics, but some counterfeit excitement and fury. Milton says, that the lyric poet may drink wine and live generously, but the epic poet, he who shall sing of the gods, and their descent unto men, must drink water out of a wooden bowl. For poetry is not 'Devil's wine,' but God's wine. It is with this as it is with toys. We fill the hands and nurseries of our children with all manner of dolls, drums, and horses, withdrawing their eyes from the plain face and sufficing objects of nature, the sun, and the moon, the animals, the water, and stones, which should be their toys. So the poet's habit of living should be set on a key so low, that the common influences should delight him. His cheerfulness should be the gift of the sunlight; the air should suffice for his inspiration, and he should be tipsy with water. That spirit which suffices quiet hearts, which seems to come forth to such from every dry knoll of sere grass, from every pine-stump, and half-imbedded stone, on which the dull March sun shines, comes forth to the poor and hungry, and such as are of simple taste. If thou fill thy brain with Boston and New York, with fashion and covetousness, and wilt stimulate thy jaded senses with wine and French coffee, thou shalt find no radiance of wisdom in the lonely waste of the pinewoods.

If the imagination intoxicates the poet, it is not inactive in other men. The metamorphosis excites in the beholder an emotion of joy. The use of symbols has a certain power of emancipation and exhilaration for all men. We seem to be touched by a wand, which makes us dance and run about happily, like children. We are like persons who come out of a cave or cellar into the open air. This is the effect on us of tropes, fables, oracles, and all poetic forms. Poets are thus liberating gods. Men have really got a new sense, and found within their world, another world, or nest of worlds; for, the metamorphosis once seen, we divine that it does not stop. I will not now consider how much this makes the charm of algebra and the mathematics, which also have their tropes, but it is felt in every definition; as, when Aristotle defines *space* to be an immovable vessel, in which things are contained;—or, when Plato defines a *line* to be a flowing point; or *figure* to be a bound of solid; and many the like. What a joyful sense of freedom we have, when Vitruvius announces the old opinion of artists that no architect can build any house well, who does not know something of anatomy. When Socrates, in Charmides, tells us that the soul is cured of its maladies by certain incantations, and that these incantations are beautiful reasons, from which temperance is generated in souls; when Plato calls the world an animal; and Timaeus affirms that plants also are animals; or affirms a man to be a heavenly tree, growing with his root, which is his head, upward; and, as George Chapman, following him, writes,—

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36 Milton says, in the "Sixth Latin Elegy," ll. 55-78 • 78 Vitruvius. See note, p. 320 • 80 Charmides, one of the dialogues of Plato • 85 Timaeus, one of the dialogues of Plato

"So in our tree of man, whose nervie root
Springs in his top;"

when Orpheus speaks of hoariness as "that white flower which marks extreme old age;" when Proclus calls the universe the statue of the intellect; when Chaucer, in his praise of 'Gentilesse,' compares good blood in mean condition to fire, which, though carried to the darkest house betwixt this and the mount of Caucasus, will yet hold its natural office, and burn as bright as if twenty thousand men did it behold; when John saw, in the Apocalypse, the ruin of the world through evil, and the stars fall from heaven, as the figtree casteth her untimely fruit; when Aesop reports the whole catalogue of common daily relations through the masquerade of birds and beasts;—we take the cheerful hint of the immortality of our essence, and its versatile habits and escapes, as when the gypsies say of themselves, "it is in vain to hang them, they cannot die."

The poets are thus liberating gods. The ancient British bards had for the title of their order, "Those who are free throughout the world." They are free, and they make free. An imaginative book renders us much more service at first, by stimulating us through its tropes, than afterward, when we arrive at the precise sense of the author. I think nothing is of any value in books, excepting the transcendental and extraordinary. If a man is inflamed and carried away by his thought, to that degree that he forgets the authors and the public, and heeds only this one dream, which holds him like an insanity, let me read his paper, and you may have all the arguments and histories and criticism. All the value which attaches to Pythagoras, Paracelsus, Cornelius Agrippa, Cardan, Kepler, Swedenborg, Schelling, Oken, or any other who introduces questionable facts into his cosmogony, as angels, devils, magic, astrology, palmistry, mesmerism, and so on, is the certificate we have of departure from routine, and that here is a new witness. That also is the best success in conversation, the magic of liberty, which puts the world, like a ball, in our hands. How cheap even the liberty then seems; how mean to study, when an emotion communicates to the intellect the power to sap and upheave nature: how great the perspective! nations, times, systems, enter and disappear, like threads in tapestry of large figure and many colors; dream delivers us to dream, and while the drunkenness lasts, we will sell our bed, our philosophy, our religion, in our opulence.

There is good reason why we should prize this liberation. The fate of the poor shepherd, who, blinded and lost in the snowstorm, perishes in a drift within a few feet of his cottage door, is an emblem of the state of man. On the brink of the waters of life and truth, we are miserably dying. The inaccessibleness of every thought but that we are in, is wonderful. What if you come near to it,—you are as remote when you are nearest as when you are farthest. Every thought is also a prison; every heaven is also a prison. Therefore we love the poet, the inventor, who in any form, whether in an ode, or in an action, or in looks and behavior, has yielded us a new thought. He unlocks our chains, and admits us to a new scene.

This emancipation is dear to all men, and the power to impart it, as it must come from greater depth and scope of thought, is a measure of intellect. Therefore all books of the imagination endure, all which ascend to that truth that the writer sees nature beneath him, and uses it as his exponent. Every verse or sentence, possessing this virtue, will take care of its own immortality. The religions of the world are the ejaculations of a few imaginative men.

But the quality of the imagination is to flow, and not to freeze. The poet did not stop at the color, or the form, but read their meaning; neither may he rest in this meaning, but he makes the same objects exponents of his new thought. Here is the difference betwixt the poet and the mystic, that the last nails a symbol to one sense, which was a true sense for a moment, but soon becomes old and false. For all symbols are fluxional; all language is vehicular and transitive, and is good, as ferries and horses are, for conveyance, not as farms and houses are, for homestead. Mysticism consists in the mistake of an accidental and individual symbol for a universal one.

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1 **So . . . top,** from the dedication of Chapman's Homer • 5 **Chaucer.** The reference is to the "Wife of Bath's Tale," ll. 283-289 • 10 **John . . . Apocalypse.** See Revelation 6:13 • 32 **Pythagoras.** See note, p. 259 • 32 **Paracelsus,** Philippus Paracelsus (1493-1541), Swiss alchemist • 32 **Cornelius Agrippa** (1486-1535), German physician • 33 **Cardan,** Jerome Cardan (1501-1576), Italian mathematician • 33 **Kepler,** Johannes Kepler (1571-1630), German astronomer • 33 **Schelling,** Friedrich von Schelling (1775-1854), German philosopher • 33 **Oken,** Lorenz Oken (1779-1851), German naturalist. The author, with characteristic whimsicality, lumps together philosophers, scientists, and charlatans

The morning-redness happens to be the favorite meteor to the eyes of Jacob Behmen, and comes to stand to him for truth and faith; and he believes should stand for the same realities to every reader. But the first reader prefers as naturally the symbol of a mother and child, or a gardener and his bulb, or a jeweller polishing a gem. Either of these, or of a myriad more, are equally good to the person to whom they are significant. Only they must be held lightly, and be very willingly translated into the equivalent terms which others use. And the mystic must be steadily told,—All that you say is just as true without the tedious use of that symbol as with it. Let us have a little algebra, instead of this trite rhetoric,—universal signs, instead of these village symbols,—and we shall both be gainers. The history of hierarchies seems to show, that all religious error consisted in making the symbol too stark and solid, and, at last, nothing but an excess of the organ of language.

Swedenborg, of all men in the recent ages, stands eminently for the translator of nature into thought. I do not know the man in history to whom things stood so uniformly for words. Before him the metamorphosis continually plays. Every thing on which his eye rests, obeys the impulses of moral nature. The figs become grapes whilst he eats them. When some of his angels affirmed a truth, the laurel twig which they held blossomed in their hands. The noise which, at a distance, appeared like gnashing and thumping, on coming nearer was found to be the voice of disputants. The men, in one of his visions, seen in heavenly light, appeared like dragons, and seemed in darkness: but to each other they appeared as men, and, when the light from heaven shone into their cabin, they complained of the darkness, and were compelled to shut the window that they might see.

There was this perception in him, which makes the poet or seer, an object of awe and terror, namely, that the same man, or society of men, may wear one aspect to themselves and their companions, and a different aspect to higher intelligences. Certain priests, whom he describes as conversing very learnedly together, appeared to the children, who were at some distance, like dead horses; and many the like misappearances. And instantly the mind inquires, whether these fishes under the bridge, yonder oxen in the pasture, those dogs in the yard, are immutably fishes, oxen, and dogs, or only so appear to me, and perchance to themselves appear upright men; and whether I appear as a man to all eyes. The Brahmins and Pythagoras propounded the same question, and if any poet has witnessed the transformation, he doubtless found it in harmony with various experiences. We have all seen changes as considerable in wheat and caterpillars. He is the poet, and shall draw us with love and terror, who sees, through the flowing vest, the firm nature, and can declare it.

I look in vain for the poet whom I describe. We do not, with sufficient plainness, or sufficient profoundness, address ourselves to life, nor dare we chaunt our own times and social circumstance. If we filled the day with bravery, we should not shrink from celebrating it. Time and nature yield us many gifts, but not yet the timely man, the new religion, the reconciler, whom all things await. Dante's praise is, that he dared to write his autobiography in colossal cipher, or into universality. We have yet had no genius in America, with tyrannous eye, which knew the value of our incomparable materials, and saw, in the barbarism and materialism of the times, another carnival of the same gods whose picture he so much admires in Homer; then in the middle age; then in Calvinism. Banks and tariffs, the newspaper and caucus, Methodism and Unitarianism, are flat and dull to dull people, but rest on the same foundations of wonder as the town of Troy, and the temple of Delphi, and are as swiftly passing away. Our logrolling, our stumps and their politics, our fisheries, our Negroes, and Indians, our boats, and our repudiations, the wrath of rogues, and the pusillanimity of honest men, the northern trade, the southern planting, the western clearing, Oregon, and Texas, are yet unsung. Yet America is a poem in our eyes; its ample geography dazzles the imagination, and it will not wait long for metres. If I have not found that excellent combination of gifts in my countrymen which I seek, neither could I aid myself to fix the idea of the poet by reading now and then in Chalmers's collection of five centuries of English poets. These are

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2 **Jacob Behmen** (1575-1624), German mystic • 64 **no . . . America.** The remainder of the paragraph seems remarkably prophetic of Whitman, whose *Leaves of Grass* appeared eleven years later • 72 **temple of Delphi,** the seat of the oracles of Apollo • 77 **Oregon, and Texas.** In 1844, the date of this essay, Oregon and Texas were subjects of special interest. The Oregon boundary dispute with England was settled in 1846; Texas was admitted into the Union in 1845 • 83 **Chalmers's collection,** Alexander Chalmers' collection of English poets in twenty-one volumes, published in 1810

wits, more than poets, though there have been poets among them. But when we adhere to the ideal of the poet, we have our difficulties even with Milton and Homer. Milton is too literary, and Homer too literal and historical.

But I am not wise enough for a national criticism, and must use the old largeness a little longer, to discharge my errand from the muse to the poet concerning his art.

Art is the path of the creator to his work. The paths, or methods, are ideal and eternal, though few men ever see them, not the artist himself, for years, or for a lifetime, unless he come into the conditions. The painter, the sculptor, the composer, the epic rhapsodist, the orator, all partake one desire, namely, to express themselves symmetrically and abundantly, not dwarfishly and fragmentarily. They found or put themselves in certain conditions, as, the painter and sculptor before some impressive human figures; the orator, into the assembly of the people; and the others, in such scenes as each has found exciting to his intellect; and each presently feels the new desire. He hears a voice, he sees a beckoning. Then he is apprised, with wonder, what herds of daemons hem him in. He can no more rest; he says, with the old painter, "By God, it is in me, and must go forth of me." He pursues a beauty, half seen, which flies before him. The poet pours out verses in every solitude. Most of the things he says are conventional, no doubt; but by and by he says something which is original and beautiful. That charms him. He would say nothing else but such things. In our way of talking, we say, 'That is yours, this is mine;' but the poet knows well that it is not his; that it is as strange and beautiful to him as to you; he would fain hear the like eloquence at length. Once having tasted this immortal ichor, he cannot have enough of it, and as an admirable creative power exists in these intellections, it is of the last importance that these things get spoken. What a little of all we know is said! What drops of all the sea of our science are baled up! and by what accident it is that these are exposed, when so many secrets sleep in nature! Hence the necessity of speech and song; hence these throbs and heart-beatings in the orator, at the door of the assembly, to the end, namely, that thought may be ejaculated as Logos, or Word.

Doubt not, O poet, but persist. Say 'It is in me, and shall out.' Stand there, balked and dumb, stuttering and stammering, hissed and hooted, stand and strive, until, at last, rage draw out of thee that *dream*-power which every night shows thee is thine own; a power transcending all limit and privacy, and by virtue of which a man is the conductor of the whole river of electricity. Nothing walks, or creeps, or grows, or exists, which must not in turn arise and walk before him as exponent of his meaning. Comes he to that power, his genius is no longer exhaustible. All the creatures, by pairs and by tribes, pour into his mind as into a Noah's ark, to come forth again to people a new world. This is like the stock of air for our respiration, or for the combustion of our fireplace, not a measure of gallons, but the entire atmosphere if wanted. And therefore the rich poets, as Homer, Chaucer, Shakspeare, and Raphael, have obviously no limits to their works, except the limits of their lifetime, and resemble a mirror carried through the street, ready to render an image of every created thing.

O poet! a new nobility is conferred in groves and pastures, and not in castles, or by the sword-blade, any longer. The conditions are hard, but equal. Thou shalt leave the world, and know the muse only. Thou shalt not know any longer the times, customs, graces, politics, or opinions of men, but shalt take all from the muse. For the time of towns is tolled from the world by funereal chimes, but in nature the universal hours are counted by succeeding tribes of animals and plants, and by growth of joy on joy. God wills also that thou abdicate a manifold and duplex life, and that thou be content that others speak for thee. Others shall be thy gentlemen, and shall represent all courtesy and worldly life for thee; others shall do the great and resounding actions also. Thou shalt lie close hid with nature, and canst not be afforded to the Capitol or the Exchange. The world is full of renunciations and apprenticeships, and this is thine; thou must pass for a fool and a churl for a long season. This is the screen and sheath in which Pan has protected his well-beloved flower, and thou shalt be known only to thine own, and they shall console thee with tenderest love. And thou shalt not be able to rehearse the names of thy friends in thy verse, for an old shame before the holy ideal. And this is the reward: that the ideal shall be real to thee, and the impressions

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43 **Logos**, Greek for "word." Emerson alludes to John 1:1: "In the beginning was the Word . . ." • 60 **Raphael**. See note, p. 840. The inclusion of Raphael in the present list seems whimsical

of the actual world shall fall like summer rain, copious, but not troublesome, to thy invulnerable essence. Thou shalt have the whole land for thy park and manor, the sea for thy bath and navigation, without tax and without envy; the woods and the rivers thou shalt own; and thou shalt possess that wherein others are only tenants and boarders. Thou true land-lord! sea-lord! air-lord! Wherever snow falls, or water flows, or birds fly, wherever day and night meet in twilight, wherever the blue heaven is hung by clouds, or sown with stars, wherever are forms with transparent boundaries, wherever are outlets into celestial space, wherever is danger, and awe, and love, there is Beauty, plenteous as rain, shed for thee, and though thou shouldst walk the world over, thou shalt not be able to find a condition inopportune or ignoble.

1844

Plato; or, The Philosopher

Emerson's **Representative Men,** published in 1850, consists of chapters on "Plato; or, the Philosopher," "Swedenborg; or, the Mystic," "Montaigne; or, the Sceptic," "Shakspeare; or, the Poet," "Napoleon; or, the Man of the World," and "Goethe; or, the Writer." Although modeled after the **Heroes and Hero-Worship** of his friend Thomas Carlyle, Emerson's book, as the word "representative" suggests, is more democratic: Carlyle's great men are demigods who, the author believed, ought to be worshiped and obeyed; Emerson's are embodiments of virtues which are attainable by all men.

Of the six "representative men," Plato exerted by far the largest influence upon Emerson. Primarily a philosopher, Emerson derived his philosophy chiefly from Plato and his successors—the Neo-Platonists and the Cambridge Platonists. The essay was written in an expansive mood. No praise was too high for the great primary source of philosophical wisdom: "Plato is philosophy, and philosophy, Plato."

So close was the relation between the subject and the author that Emerson seems in many passages to have been writing about himself; many passages, at any rate, are as applicable to him as to Plato and throw valuable light upon Emerson's philosophical ideas and methods.

Among books, Plato only is entitled to Omar's fanatical compliment to the Koran, when he said, "Burn the libraries, for their value is in this book." These sentences contain the culture of nations; these are the corner-stone of schools; these are the fountain-head of literatures. A discipline it is in logic, arithmetic, taste, symmetry, poetry, language, rhetoric, ontology, morals, or practical wisdom. There was never such range of speculation. Out of Plato come all things that are still written and debated among men of thought. Great havoc makes he among our originalities. We have reached the mountain from which all these drift boulders were detached. The Bible of the learned for twenty-two hundred years, every brisk young man who says in succession fine things to each reluctant generation,—Boethius, Rabelais, Erasmus, Bruno, Locke, Rousseau, Alfieri, Coleridge,—is some reader of Plato, translating into the vernacular, wittily, his good things. Even the men of grander proportion suffer some deduction from the misfortune (shall I say?) of coming after this exhausting generalizer. St. Augustine, Copernicus, Newton, Behmen, Swedenborg, Goethe, are likewise his debtors, and must say after him. For it is fair

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1 **Omar,** caliph of the Mohammedans in the seventh century • 2 **Koran,** the holy scriptures of the Mohammedans • 15 **Boethius,** Roman philosopher of the fifth century • 15 **Rabelais,** François Rabelais (1490?-1553), French humorist and satirist • 15 **Erasmus,** Desiderius Erasmus. See note, p. 158 • 15 **Bruno,** Giordano Bruno (1548-1600), Italian philosopher • 16 **Locke,** John Locke. See note, p. 252. Emerson had a low opinion of Locke because of his denial of innate ideas • 16 **Rousseau,** Jean Jacques Rousseau (1712-1778), French philosopher and father of modern romanticism • 16 **Alfieri,** Count Vittorio Alfieri (1749-1803), Italian dramatist • 20 **St. Augustine** (354-430), bishop of Hippo and author of **The City of God** • 20 **Copernicus,** Nikolaus Copernicus. See note, p. 896 • 21 **Newton,** Sir Isaac Newton. See note, p. 896 • 21 **Behmen,** Jacob Behmen. See note, p. 914 • 21 **Swedenborg,** Emanuel Swedenborg. See note, p. 662 • 21 **Goethe,** Johann Wolfgang von Goethe. See note, p. 855

to credit the broadest generalizer with all the particulars deducible from his thesis.

Plato is philosophy, and philosophy, Plato,—at once the glory and the shame of mankind, since neither Saxon nor Roman have availed to add any idea to his categories. No wife, no children had he, and the thinkers of all civilized nations are his posterity, and are tinged with his mind. How many great men Nature is incessantly sending up out of night to be *his men,*—Platonists! the Alexandrians, a constellation of genius; the Elizabethans, not less; Sir Thomas More, Henry More, John Hales, John Smith, Lord Bacon, Jeremy Taylor, Ralph Cudworth, Sydenham, Thomas Taylor; Marcilius Ficinus, and Picus Mirandola. Calvinism is in his "Phædo:" Christianity is in it. Mohametanism draws all its philosophy in its handbook of morals, the Akhlak-y-Jalaly, from him. Mysticism finds in Plato all its texts. This citizen of a town in Greece is no villager nor patriot. An Englishman reads and says, "How English!" a German, "How Teutonic!" an Italian, "How Roman and how Greek!" As they say that Helen of Argos had that universal beauty that everybody felt related to her, so Plato seems, to a reader in New England, an American genius. His broad humanity transcends all sectional lines.

This range of Plato instructs us what to think of the vexed question concerning his reputed works,—what are genuine, what spurious. It is singular that wherever we find a man higher, by a whole head, than any of his contemporaries, it is sure to come into doubt what are his real works. Thus Homer, Plato, Raffaelle, Shakspeare. For these men magnetize their contemporaries, so that their companions can do for them what they can never do for themselves; and the great man does thus live in several bodies, and write, or paint, or act by many hands: and after some time it is not easy to say what is the authentic work of the master, and what is only of his school.

Plato, too, like every great man, consumed his own times. What is a great man but one of great affinities, who takes up into himself all arts, sciences, all knowables, as his food? He can spare nothing; he can dispose of everything. What is not good for virtue is good for knowledge. Hence his contemporaries tax him with plagiarism. But the inventor only knows how to borrow; and society is glad to forget the innumerable laborers who ministered to this architect, and reserves all its gratitude for him. When we are praising Plato it seems we are praising quotations from Solon, and Sophron, and Philolaus. Be it so. Every book is a quotation; and every house is a quotation out of all forests, and mines, and stone-quarries; and every man is a quotation from all his ancestors. And this grasping inventor puts all nations under contribution.

Plato absorbed the learning of his times—Philolaus, Timæus, Heraclitus, Parmenides, and what else; then his master, Socrates; and, finding himself still capable of a larger synthesis,—beyond all example then or since,—he travelled into Italy, to gain what Pythagoras had for him; then into Egypt, and perhaps still farther east, to import the other element, which Europe wanted, into the European mind. This breadth entitles him to stand as the representative of philosophy. He says in the "Republic," "Such a genius as philosophers must of necessity have is wont but seldom, in all its parts, to meet in one man; but its different parts generally spring up in different persons." Every man who would do anything well must come to it from a higher ground. A philosopher must be more than a philosopher. Plato is clothed with the powers of a poet, stands upon the highest place of the poet, and (though I doubt he wanted the decisive gift of lyric expression) mainly is not a poet, because he chose to use the poetic gift to an ulterior purpose.

Great geniuses have the shortest biographies. Their cousins can tell you nothing about them. They lived in their writings, and so their house and street life was trivial and commonplace. If you would know their tastes and complexions, the most admiring of their readers most resembles them. Plato, especially, has no external bi-

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10 **Alexandrians,** the Neo-Platonists who flourished in Alexandria in the early centuries of the Christian era • 11 **Sir Thomas More** (1478-1535), English statesman and philosopher, author of the **Utopia** • 11 **Henry More** (1614-1687), English philosopher and one of the Cambridge Platonists • 11 **John Hales** (1584-1656), English divine • 12 **John Smith,** Captain John Smith. See p. 65 • 12 **Jeremy Taylor** (1613-1667), English bishop. In his poem "The Problem" Emerson called him "the Shakspeare of divines" • 12 **Ralph Cudworth** (1617-1688), another Cambridge Platonist • 13 **Sydenham,** Thomas Sydenham (1624-1689), English physician • 13 **Thomas Taylor** (1758-1835), English translator of Plato and the Neo-Platonists whose translations Emerson used and admired • 13 **Marcilius Ficinus,** Marsilio Ficino (1433-1499), Italian Platonist • 14 **Picus Mirandola,** Giovanni Pico della Mirandola (1463-1494), Italian humanist • 48 **Solon, Sophron, Philolaus,** Greek writers before Plato • 55 **Timæus, Heraclitus, Parmenides,** Greek philosophers who flourished around 500 B.C.

ography. If he had lover, wife, or children, we hear nothing of them. He ground them all into paint. As a good chimney burns its smoke, so a philosopher converts the value of all his fortunes into his intellectual performances.

He was born 427, B.C., about the time of the death of Pericles; was of patrician connection in his times and city; and is said to have had an early inclination for war; but, in his twentieth year, meeting with Socrates, was easily dissuaded from this pursuit, and remained for ten years his scholar, until the death of Socrates. He then went to Megara, accepted the invitations of Dion and of Dionysius to the court of Sicily, and went thither three times, though very capriciously treated. He travelled into Italy, then into Egypt, where he stayed a long time; some say three, some say thirteen years. It is said he went farther, into Babylonia: this is uncertain. Returning to Athens, he gave lessons in the Academy to those whom his fame drew thither and died, as we have received it, in the act of writing, at eighty-one years.

But the biography of Plato is interior. We are to account for the supreme elevation of this man in the intellectual history of our race,—how it happens that, in proportion to the culture of men, they become his scholars; that, as our Jewish Bible has implanted itself in the table-talk and household life of every man and woman in the European and American nations, so the writings of Plato have pre-occupied every school of learning, every lover of thought, every church, every poet,—making it impossible to think, on certain levels, except through him. He stands between the truth and every man's mind, and has almost impressed language, and the primary forms of thought, with his name and seal. I am struck, in reading him, with the extreme modernness of his style and spirit. Here is the germ of that Europe we know so well, in its long history of arts and arms; here are all its traits, already discernible in the mind of Plato,—and in none before him. It has spread itself since into a hundred histories, but has added no new element. This perpetual modernness is the measure of merit in every work of art, since the author of it was not misled by anything short-lived or local, but abode by real and abiding traits. How Plato came thus to be Europe, and philosophy, and almost literature, is the problem for us to solve.

This could not have happened without a sound, sincere and catholic man, able to honour at the same time the ideal, or laws of the mind, and fate, or the order of nature. The first period of a nation, as of an individual, is the period of unconscious strength. Children cry, scream, and stamp with fury, unable to express their desires. As soon as they can speak and tell their want, and the reason of it, they become gentle. In adult life, whilst the perceptions are obtuse, men and women talk vehemently and superlatively, blunder and quarrel; their manners are full of desperation, their speech is full of oaths. As soon as, with culture, things have cleared up a little, and they see them no longer in lumps and masses, but accurately distributed, they desist from that weak vehemence, and explain their meaning in detail. If the tongue had not been framed for articulation man would still be a beast in the forest. The same weakness and want, on a higher plane, occurs daily in the education of ardent young men and women. "Ah! you don't understand me; I have never met with any one who comprehends me;" and they sigh and weep, write verses, and walk alone,—fault of power to express their precise meaning. In a month or two, through the favor of their good genius, they meet some one so related as to assist their volcanic estate, and good communication being once established, they are thenceforward good citizens. It is ever thus. The progress is to accuracy, to skill, to truth, from blind force.

There is a moment, in the history of every nation, when proceeding out of this brute youth, the perceptive powers reach their ripeness, and have not yet become microscopic: so that man, at that instant, extends across the entire scale, and with his feet still planted on the immense forces of night, converses, by his eyes and brain, with solar and stellar creation. That is the moment of adult health, the culmination of power.

Such is the history of Europe in all points, and such in philosophy. Its early records, almost perished, are of the immigrations from Asia, bringing with them the dreams of barbarians; a confusion of crude notions of morals, and of natural philosophy, gradually subsiding through the partial insight of single teachers.

Before Pericles came the Seven Wise Masters, and we have the beginnings of geometry, metaphysics, and ethics: then the partialists, deducing the origin of things from

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11 **Megara,** a town in Greece • 11 **Dion . . . Dionysius,** tyrants of Syracuse • 86 **Seven Wise Masters,** characters in a collection of Eastern tales

flux or water, or from air, or from fire, or from mind. All mix with these causes mythologic pictures. At last comes Plato, the distributor, who needs no barbaric paint, or tattoo, or whooping; for he can define. He leaves with Asia the vast and superlative; he is the arrival of accuracy and intelligence. "He shall be as a god to me, who can rightly divide and define."

This defining is philosophy. Philosophy is the account which the human mind gives to itself of the constitution of the world. Two cardinal facts lie for ever at the base; the one, and the two.—1. Unity, or Identity; and 2. Variety. We unite all things by perceiving the law which pervades them; by perceiving the superficial differences and the profound resemblances. But every mental act,—this very perception of identity or oneness, recognizes the difference of things. Oneness and otherness. It is impossible to speak or to think without embracing both.

The mind is urged to ask for one cause of many effects; then for the cause of that; and again the cause, diving still into the profound, self-assured that it shall arrive at an absolute and sufficient one,—a one that shall be all. "In the midst of the sun is the light, in the midst of the light is truth, and in the midst of truth is the imperishable being," say the Vedas. All philosophy, of east and west, has the same centripetence. Urged by an opposite necessity, the mind returns from the one to that which is not one, but other or many; from cause to effect; and affirms the necessary existence of variety, the self-existence of both, as each is involved in the other. These strictly-blended elements it is the problem of thought to separate and to reconcile. Their existence is mutually contradictory and exclusive; and each so fast slides into the other that we can never say what is one and what it is not. The Proteus is as nimble in the highest as in the lowest grounds, when we contemplate the one, the true, the good,—as in the surfaces and extremities of matter.

In all nations there are minds which incline to dwell in the conception of fundamental Unity. The raptures of prayer and ecstasy of devotion lose all being in one Being. This tendency finds its highest expression in the religious writings of the East, and chiefly in the Indian Scriptures, in the Vedas, the Bhagavat Geeta, and the Vishnu Purana. Those writings contain little else than this idea, and they rise to pure and sublime strains in celebrating it.

The Same, the Same: friend and foe are of one stuff; the ploughman, the plough, and the furrow are of one stuff; and the stuff is such, and so much, that the variations of form are unimportant. "You are fit" (says the supreme Krishna to a sage), "to apprehend that you are not distinct from me. That which I am thou art, and that also is this world, with its gods, and heroes, and mankind. Men contemplate distinctions, because they are stupefied with ignorance." "The words *I* and *mine* constitute ignorance. What is the great end of all you shall now learn from me. It is soul,—one in all bodies, pervading, uniform, perfect, pre-eminent over nature, exempt from birth, growth, and decay, omnipresent, made up of true knowledge, independent, unconnected with unrealities, with name, species, and the rest, in time past, present, and to come. The knowledge that this spirit, which is essentially one, is in one's own, and in all other bodies, is the wisdom of one who knows the unity of things. As one diffusive air, passing through the perforations of a flute, is distinguished as the notes of a scale, so the nature of the Great Spirit is single, though its forms be manifold, arising from the consequences of acts. When the difference of the investing form, as that of god, or the rest, is destroyed, there is no distinction." "The whole world is but a manifestation of Vishnu, who is identical with all things, and is to be regarded by the wise as not differing from, but as the same as themselves. I neither am going nor coming; nor is my dwelling in any one place; nor art thou, thou: nor are others, others; nor am I, I." As if he had said, "All is for the soul, and the soul is Vishnu; and animals and stars are transient paintings; and light is whitewash; and durations are deceptive; and form is imprisonment; and heaven itself a decoy." That which the soul seeks is resolution into being, above form, out of Tartarus, and out of heaven,—liberation from nature.

If speculation tends thus to a terrific unity, in which all things are absorbed, action tends directly backwards to diversity. The first is the course of gravitation of

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26 **centripetence,** force directed toward the center • 35 **Proteus,** a sea god in Greek mythology who assumed different shapes • 47 **The Same . . . unimportant.** The same thought appears in Emerson's poem "Brahma" and is a close rendering of a passage from the **Bhagavad-Gita,** one of the Hindu scriptures • 51 **Krishna,** a Hindu deity, the oracular source of the Bhagavad-Gita • 71 **Vishnu,** a Hindu deity, of whom Krishna is an incarnation • 81 **Tartarus,** the infernal regions

mind; the second is the power of nature. Nature is the manifold. The unity absorbs and melts or reduces. Nature opens and creates. These two principles reappear, and interpenetrate all things, all thought; the one, the many. One is being; the other, intellect: one is necessity; the other, freedom: one, rest; the other, motion: one, power; the other, distribution: one, strength; the other, pleasure: one, consciousness; the other, definition: one, genius: the other, talent: one, earnestness; the other, knowledge: one, possession; the other, trade: one, caste; the other, culture: one, king; the other, democracy: and if we dare carry these generalizations a step higher, and name the last tendency of both, we might say that the end of the one is escape from organization,—pure science; and the end of the other is the highest instrumentality, or use of means, or executive deity.

Each student adheres, by temperament and by habit, to the first or second of these gods of the mind. By religion, he tends to unity; by intellect, or by the senses, to the many. A too rapid unification, and an excessive appliance to parts and particulars, are the twin dangers of speculation.

To this partiality the history of nations corresponded. The country of unity, of immovable institutions, the seat of a philosophy delighting in abstractions, of men faithful in doctrine and in practice to the idea of a deaf, unimplorable, immense fate, is Asia; and it realizes this faith in the social institution of caste. On the other side, the genius of Europe is active and creative: it resists caste by culture; its philosophy was a discipline; it is a land of arts, inventions, trade, freedom. If the East loved infinity, the West delighted in boundaries.

European civility is the triumph of talent, the extension of system, the sharpened understanding, adaptive skill, delight in forms, delight in manifestation, in comprehensible results. Pericles, Athens, Greece, had been working in this element with the joy of genius not yet chilled by any foresight of the detriment of an excess. They saw before them no sinister political economy; no ominous Malthus; no Paris or London; no pitiless subdivision of classes—the doom of the pinmakers, the doom of the weavers, of dressers, of stockingers, of carders, of spinners, of colliers; no Ireland; no Indian caste, superinduced by the efforts of Europe to throw it off. The understanding was in its health and prime. Art was in its splendid novelty. They cut the Pentelican marble as if it were snow, and their perfect works in architecture and sculpture seemed things of course, not more difficult than the completion of a new ship at the Medford yards, or new mills at Lowell. These things are in course, and may be taken for granted. The Roman legion, Byzantine legislation, English trade, the saloons of Versailles, the cafés of Paris, the steam-mill, steam-boat, steam-coach, may all be seen in perspective; the town-meeting, the ballot-box, the newspaper and cheap press.

Meantime, Plato, in Egypt and in eastern pilgrimages, imbibed the idea of one Deity, in which all things are absorbed. The unity of Asia, and the detail of Europe; the infinitude of the Asiatic soul, and the defining, result-loving, machine-making, surface-seeking, opera-going Europe—Plato came to join, and by contact, to enhance the energy of each. The excellence of Europe and Asia are in his brain. Metaphysics and natural philosophy expressed the genius of Europe; he substructs the religion of Asia, as the base.

In short, a balanced soul was born, perceptive of the two elements. It is as easy to be great as to be small. The reason why we do not at once believe in admirable souls, is because they are not in our experience. In actual life, they are so rare as to be incredible; but, primarily, there is not only no presumption against them, but the strongest presumption in favour of their appearance. But whether voices were heard in the sky, or not; whether his mother or his father dreamed that the infant man-child was the son of Apollo; whether a swarm of bees settled on his lips, or not; a man who could see two sides of a thing was born. The wonderful synthesis so familiar in nature; the upper and the under side of the medal of Jove; the union of impossibilities, which reappears in every object; its real and its ideal power—was now, also, transferred entire to the consciousness of a man.

The balanced soul came. If he loved abstract truth, he saved himself by propounding the most popular of all principles, the absolute good, which rules rulers, and judges the judge. If he made transcendental distinctions, he fortified himself by drawing all his illustrations from sources disdained by orators and polite conversers; from mares and puppies; from pitchers and soup-ladles; from

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40 **Malthus,** Thomas Robert Malthus (1766-1834), English political economist • 46 **Pentelican marble,** obtained from Mount Pentelicus, near Athens, and used in building the Parthenon • 50 **Medford . . . Lowell,** manufacturing cities in Massachusetts

cooks and criers; the shops of potters, horse-doctors, butchers, and fishmongers. He cannot forgive in himself a partiality, but is resolved that the two poles of thought shall appear in his statement. His argument and his sentence are self-poised and spherical. The two poles appear; yes, and become two hands, to grasp and appropriate their own.

Every great artist has been such by synthesis. Our strength is transitional, alternating; or, shall I say, a thread of two strands. The sea-shore, sea seen from shore, shore seen from sea; the taste of two metals in contact; and our enlarged powers at the approach and at the departure of a friend; the experience of poetic creativeness, which is not found in staying at home, nor yet in travelling, but in transitions from one to the other, which must therefore be adroitly managed to present as much transitional surface as possible; this command of two elements must explain the power and the charm of Plato. Art expresses the one, or the same by the different. Thought seeks to know unity in unity; poetry to show it by variety; that is, always by an object or symbol. Plato keeps the two vases, one of æther and one of pigment, at his side, and invariably uses both. Things added to things, as statistics, civil history, are inventories. Things used as language are inexhaustibly attractive. Plato turns incessantly the obverse and the reverse of the medal of Jove.

To take an example:—The physical philosophers had sketched each his theory of the world; the theory of atoms, of fire, of flux, of spirit; theories mechanical and chemical in their genius. Plato, a master of mathematics, studious of all natural laws and causes, feels these, as second causes, to be no theories of the world, but bare inventories and lists. To the study of nature he therefore prefixes the dogma—"Let us declare the cause which led the Supreme Ordainer to produce and compose the universe. He was good; and he who is good has no kind of envy. Exempt from envy, he wished that all things should be as much as possible like himself. Whosoever, taught by wise men, shall admit this as the prime cause of the origin and foundation of the world, will be in the truth." "All things are for the sake of the good, and it is the cause of everything beautiful." This dogma animates and impersonates his philosophy.

The synthesis which makes the character of his mind appears in all his talents. Where there is great compass of wit, we usually find excellencies that combine easily in the living man, but in description appear incompatible. The mind of Plato is not to be exhibited by a Chinese catalogue, but is to be apprehended by an original mind in the exercise of its original power. In him the freest abandonment is united with the precision of a geometer. His daring imagination gives him the more solid grasp of facts; as the birds of highest flight have the strongest alar bones. His patrician polish, his intrinsic elegance, edged by an irony so subtle that it stings and paralyzes, adorn the soundest health and strength of frame. According to the old sentence, "If Jove should descend to the earth, he would speak in the style of Plato."

With this palatial air there is, for the direct aim of several of his works, and running through the tenor of them all, a certain earnestness, which mounts, in the "Republic," and in the "Phædo," to piety. He has been charged with feigning sickness at the time of the death of Socrates. But the anecdotes that have come down from the times attest his manly interference before the people in his master's behalf, since even the savage cry of the assembly to Plato is preserved; and the indignation towards popular government, in many of his pieces, expresses a personal exasperation. He has a probity, a native reverence for justice and honor, and a humanity which makes him tender for the superstitions of the people. Add to this, he believes that poetry, prophecy, and the high insight, are from a wisdom of which man is not master; that the gods never philosophize; but, by a celestial mania, these miracles are accomplished. Horsed on these winged steeds, he sweeps the dim regions, visits worlds which flesh cannot enter; he saw the souls in pain; he hears the doom of the judge; he beholds the penal metempsychosis; the Fates, with the rock and shears; and hears the intoxicating hum of their spindle.

But his circumspection never forsook him. One would say, he had read the inscription on the gates of Busyrane—"Be bold;" and on the second gate—"Be bold, be bold, and evermore be bold:" and then again had paused well at the third gate—"Be not too bold."

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35 **Let us . . . truth,** from Plato's *Timæus* • 85 **inscription . . . too bold.** The inscriptions are in Spenser's *Faerie Queene,* Bk. III, Canto XI

His strength is like the momentum of a falling planet; and his discretion, the return of its due and perfect curve—so excellent is his Greek love of boundary, and his skill in definition. In reading logarithms, one is not more secure, than in following Plato in his flights. Nothing can be colder than his head, when the lightnings of his imagination are playing in the sky. He has finished his thinking, before he brings it to the reader; and he abounds in the surprises of a literary master. He has that opulence which furnishes, at every turn, the precise weapon he needs. As the rich man wears no more garments, drives no more horses, sits in no more chambers, than the poor—but has that one dress, or equipage, or instrument, which is fit for the hour and the need; so Plato, in his plenty, is never restricted, but has the fit word. There is, indeed, no weapon in all the armory of wit which he did not possess and use—epic, analysis, mania, intuition, music, satire, and irony, down to the customary and polite. His illustrations are poetry, and his jests illustrations. Socrates' profession of obstetric art is good philosophy; and his finding that word "cookery," and "adulatory art," for rhetoric, in the "Gorgias," does us a substantial service still. No orator can measure in effect with him who can give good nicknames.

What moderation, and understatement, and checking his thunder in mid volley! He has good-naturedly furnished the courtier and citizen with all that can be said against the schools. "For philosophy is an elegant thing if any one modestly meddles with it; but, if he is conversant with it more than is becoming, it corrupts the man." He could well afford to be generous—he who, from the sunlike centrality and reach of vision, had a faith without cloud. Such as his perception, was his speech: he plays with the doubt, and makes the most of it: he paints and quibbles; and by-and-by comes a sentence that moves the sea and land. The admirable earnest comes not only at intervals, in the perfect yes and no of the dialogue, but in bursts of light. "I, therefore, Callicles, am persuaded by these accounts, and consider how I may exhibit my soul before the judge in a healthy condition. Wherefore, disregarding the honors that most men value, and looking to the truth, I shall endeavor in reality to live as virtuously as I can; and, when I die, to die so. And I invite all other men to the utmost of my power; and you, too, I in turn invite to this contest, which, I affirm, surpasses all contests here."

He is a great average man; one who, to the best thinking, adds a proportion and equality in his faculties, so that men see in him their own dreams and glimpses made available, and made to pass for what they are. A great common sense is his warrant and qualification to be the world's interpreter. He has reason, as all the philosophic and poetic class have: but he has, also, what they have not,—this strong solving sense to reconcile his poetry with the appearances of the world, and build a bridge from the streets of cities to the Atlantis. He omits never this graduation, but slopes his thought, however picturesque the precipice on one side, to an access from the plain. He never writes in ecstasy, or catches us up into poetic raptures.

Plato apprehended the cardinal facts. He could prostrate himself on the earth, and cover his eyes whilst he adored that which cannot be numbered, or gauged, or known, or named: that of which everything can be affirmed and denied: that "which is entity and nonentity." He called it super-essential. He even stood ready, as in the "Parmenides," to demonstrate that it was so—that this Being exceeded the limits of intellect. No man ever more fully acknowledged the Ineffable. Having paid his homage, as for the human race, to the Illimitable, he then stood erect, and for the human race affirmed, "And yet things are knowable!"—that is, the Asia in his mind was first heartily honored—the ocean of love and power, before form, before will, before knowledge, the Same, the Good, the One; and now, refreshed and empowered by this worship, the instinct of Europe, namely, culture, returns; and he cries, Yet things are knowable! They are knowable, because, being from one, things correspond. There is a scale: and the correspondence of heaven to earth, of matter to mind, of the part to the whole, is our guide. As there is a science of stars, called astronomy; a science of quantities, called mathematics; a science of qualities, called chemistry; so there is a science of sciences,—I call it Dialectic,—which is the Intellect discriminating the false and the true. It rests on the observation of identity and diversity; for, to judge, is to unite to an object the notion which belongs to it. The sciences, even the best—mathematics and astronomy—

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22 Gorgias, one of Plato's works • 46 contests here. The quotations in this paragraph are from the Gorgias • 56 Atlantis, a mythical western continent mentioned by Plato and other ancient writers

are like sportsmen, who seize whatever prey offers, even without being able to make any use of it. Dialectic must teach the use of them. "This is of that rank that no intellectual man will enter on any study for its own sake, but only with a view to advance himself in that one sole science which embraces all."

"The essence or peculiarity of man is to comprehend a whole; or that which, in the diversity of sensations, can be comprised under a rational unity." "The soul which has never perceived the truth cannot pass into the human form." I announce to men the Intellect. I announce the good of being interpenetrated by the mind that made nature: this benefit, namely, that it can understand nature, which it made and maketh. Nature is good, but intellect is better: as the law-giver is before the law-receiver. I give you joy, O sons of men! that truth is altogether wholesome; that we have hope to search out what might be the very self of everything. The misery of man is to be baulked of the sight of essence, and to be stuffed with conjectures: but the supreme good is reality; the supreme beauty is reality; and all virtue and all felicity depend on this science of the real: for courage is nothing else than knowledge: the fairest fortune that can befall man, is to be guided by his dæmon to that which is truly his own. This also is the essence of justice—to attend every one his own; nay, the notion of virtue is not to be arrived at, except through direct contemplation of the divine essence. Courage, then! for, "the persuasion that we must search that which we do not know, will render us, beyond comparison, better, braver, and more industrious than if we thought it impossible to discover what we do not know, and useless to search for it." He secures a position not to be commanded, by his passion for reality; valuing philosophy only as it is the pleasure of conversing with real being.

Thus, full of the genius of Europe, he said, *Culture*. He saw the institutions of Sparta, and recognized more genially, one would say, than any since, the hope of education. He delighted in every accomplishment, in every graceful and useful and truthful performance; above all, in the splendors of genius and intellectual achievement. "The whole of life, O Socrates, said Glauco, is, with the wise, the measure of hearing such discourses as these." What a price he sets on the feats of talent, on the powers of Pericles, of Isocrates, of Parmenides! What price, above price, on the talents themselves! He called the several faculties, gods, in his beautiful personation. What value he gives to the art of gymnastic in education; what to geometry; what to music; what to astronomy, whose appeasing and medicinal power he celebrates! In the "Timæus," he indicates the highest employment of the eyes. "By us it is asserted, that God invented and bestowed sight on us for this purpose—that, on surveying the circles of intelligence in the heavens, we might properly employ those of our own minds, which, though disturbed when compared with the others that are uniform, are still allied to their circulations; and that, having thus learned, and being naturally possessed of a correct reasoning faculty, we might, by imitating the uniform revolutions of divinity, set right our own wanderings and blunders." And in the "Republic"—"By each of these disciplines, a certain organ of the soul is both purified and re-animated, which is blinded and buried by studies of another kind; an organ better worth saving than ten thousand eyes, since truth is perceived by this alone."

He said, Culture; but he first admitted its basis, and gave immeasurably the first place to advantages of nature. His patrician tastes laid stress on the distinctions of birth. In the doctrine of the organic character and disposition is the origin of caste. "Such as were fit to govern, into their composition the informing Deity mingled gold; into the military, silver; iron and brass for husbandmen and artificers." The East confirms itself, in all ages, in this faith. The Koran is explicit on this point of caste. "Men have their metal, as of gold and silver. Those of you who were the worthy ones in the state of ignorance, will be the worthy ones in the state of faith, as soon as you embrace it." Plato was not less firm. "Of the five orders of things, only four can be taught to the generality of men." In the "Republic," he insists on the temperaments of the youth, as first of the first.

A happier example of the stress laid on nature, is in the dialogue with the young Theages, who wishes to receive lessons from Socrates. Socrates declares that, if some have grown wise by associating with him, no thanks are due to him; but, simply, whilst they were with him, they grew wise, not because of him; he pretends not to

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3 This . . . all. Compare Plato's Republic, Bk. VII • 7 The essence . . . form, from Plato's Phaedrus • 45 Isocrates (436-338 B.C.), Athenian orator and teacher of rhetoric • 45 Parmenides, a Greek philosopher before Plato

know the way of it. "It is adverse to many, nor can those be benefited by associating with me, whom the Dæmon opposes; so that it is not possible for me to live with these. With many, however, he does not prevent me from conversing, who yet are not at all benefited by associating with me. Such, O Theages, is the association with me; for, if it pleases the God, you will make great and rapid proficiency; you will not, if he does not please. Judge whether it is not safer to be instructed by some one of those who have power over the benefit which they impart to men, than by me, who benefit or not, just as it may happen." As if he had said, "I have no system. I cannot be answerable for you. You will be what you must. If there is love between us, inconceivably delicious and profitable will our intercourse be; if not, your time is lost, and you will only annoy me. I shall seem to you stupid, and the reputation I have, false. Quite above us, beyond the will of you or me, is this secret affinity or repulsion laid. All my good is magnetic, and I educate, not by lessons, but by going about my business."

He said, Culture; he said, Nature: and he failed not to add, "There is also the divine." There is no thought in any mind, but it quickly tends to convert itself into a power, and organizes a huge instrumentality of means. Plato, lover of limits, loved the illimitable, saw the enlargement and nobility which come from truth itself, and good itself, and attempted, as if on the part of the human intellect, once for all, to do it adequate homage—homage fit for the immense soul to receive, and yet homage becoming the intellect to render. He said, then, "Our faculties run out into infinity, and return to us thence. We can define but a little way; but here is a fact which will not be skipped, and which to shut our eyes upon is suicide. All things are in a scale; and, begin where we will, ascend and ascend. All things are symbolical; and what we call results are beginnings."

A key to the method and completeness of Plato is his twice-bisected line. After he has illustrated the relation between the absolute good and true, and the forms of the intelligible world, he says:—"Let there be a line cut in two unequal parts. Cut again each of these two parts—one representing the visible, the other the intelligible world—and these two new sections, representing the bright part and the dark part of these worlds, you will have, for one of the sections of the visible world—images, that is, both shadows and reflections; for the other section, the objects of these images—that is, plants, animals, and the works of art and nature. Then divide the intelligible world in like manner; the one section will be of opinions and hypotheses, and the other section, of truths." To these four sections, the four operations of the soul correspond—conjecture, faith, understanding, reason. As every pool reflects the image of the sun, so every thought and thing restores us an image and creature of the supreme Good. The universe is perforated by a million channels for his activity. All things mount and mount.

All his thought has this ascension; in "Phædrus," teaching that "beauty is the most lovely of all things, exciting hilarity, and shedding desire and confidence through the universe, wherever it enters; and it enters, in some degree, into all things: but that there is another, which is as much more beautiful than beauty, as beauty is than chaos; namely, wisdom, which our wonderful organ of sight cannot reach unto, but which, could it be seen, would ravish us with its perfect reality." He has the same regard to it as the source of excellence in works of art. "When an artificer, in the fabrication of any work, looks to that which always subsists according *to the same;* and, employing a model of this kind, expresses its idea and power in his work; it must follow, that his production should be beautiful. But when he beholds that which is born and dies, it will be far from beautiful."

Thus ever: the "Banquet" is a teaching in the same spirit, familiar now to all the poetry, and to all the sermons of the world, that the love of the sexes is initial; and symbolizes, at a distance, the passion of the soul for that immense lake of beauty it exists to seek. This faith in the Divinity is never out of mind, and constitutes the limitation of all his dogmas. Body cannot teach wisdom—God only. In the same mind, he constantly affirms that virtue cannot be taught; that it is not a science, but an inspiration; that the greatest goods are produced to us through mania, and are assigned to us by a divine gift.

This leads me to that central figure, which he has established in his Academy, as the organ through which every considered opinion shall be announced, and whose biography he has likewise so labored, that the historic facts are lost in the light of Plato's mind. Socrates and

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40 **Let . . . truths.** See Plato's **Republic**, Bk. VI • 74 **Banquet**, another of Plato's works, more commonly known as the **Symposium**

Plato are the double star, which the most powerful instruments will not entirely separate. Socrates, again, in his traits and genius, is the best example of that synthesis which constitutes Plato's extraordinary power. Socrates, a man of humble stem, but honest enough; of the commonest history; of a personal homeliness so remarkable, as to be a cause of wit in others—the rather that his broad good nature and exquisite taste for a joke invited the sally, which was sure to be paid. The players personated him on the stage; the potters copied his ugly face on their stone jugs. He was a cool fellow, adding to his humor a perfect temper, and a knowledge of his man, be he who he might whom he talked with, which laid the companion open to certain defeat in any debate —and in debate he immoderately delighted. The young men are prodigiously fond of him, and invite him to their feasts, whither he goes for conversation. He can drink, too; has the strongest head in Athens; and, after leaving the whole party under the table, goes away, as if nothing had happened, to begin new dialogues with somebody that is sober. In short, he was what our country-people call *an old one.*

He affected a good many citizen-like tastes, was monstrously fond of Athens, hated trees, never willingly went beyond the walls, knew the old characters, valued the bores and Philistines, thought everything in Athens a little better than anything in any other place. He was plain as a Quaker in habit and speech, affected low phrases, and illustrations from cocks and quails, souppans and sycamore-spoons, grooms and farriers, and unnameable offices—especially if he talked with any superfine person. He had a Franklin-like wisdom. Thus, he showed one who was afraid to go on foot to Olympia, that it was no more than his daily walk within doors, if continuously extended, would easily reach.

Plain old uncle as he was, with his great ears—an immense talker—the rumor ran, that, on one or two occasions, in the war with Bœotia, he had shown a determination which had covered the retreat of a troop; and there was some story that, under cover of folly, he had, in the city government, when one day he chanced to hold a seat there, evinced a courage in opposing singly the popular voice, which had well-nigh ruined him. He is very poor; but then he is hardy as a soldier, and can live on a few olives; usually, in the strictest sense, on bread and water, except when entertained by his friends. His necessary expenses were exceedingly small, and no one could live as he did. He wore no under garment; his upper garment was the same for summer and winter; and he went barefooted; and it is said that, to procure the pleasure, which he loves, of talking at his ease all day with the most elegant and cultivated young men, he will now and then return to his shop, and carve statues, good or bad, for sale. However that be, it is certain that he had grown to delight in nothing else than this conversation; and that, under his hypocritical pretence of knowing nothing, he attacks and brings down all the fine speakers, all of the fine philosophers of Athens, whether natives, or strangers from Asia Minor and the islands. Nobody can refuse to talk to him, he is so honest, and really curious to know; a man who was willingly confuted, if he did not speak the truth, and who willingly confuted others, asserting what was false; and not less pleased when confuted than when confuting; for he thought not any evil happened to men, of such a magnitude as false opinion respecting the just and unjust. A pitiless disputant, who knows nothing, but the bounds of whose conquering intelligence no man had ever reached; whose temper was imperturbable; whose dreadful logic was always leisurely and sportive; so careless and ignorant, as to disarm the wariest, and draw them, in the pleasantest manner, into horrible doubts and confusion. But he always knew the way out; knew it, yet would not tell it. No escape; he drives them to terrible choices by his dilemmas, and tosses the Hippiases and Gorgiases, with their grand reputations, as a boy tosses his balls. The tyrannous realist!—Meno has discoursed a thousand times, at length, on virtue, before many companies, and very well, as it appeared to him; but, at this moment, he cannot even tell what it is—this crampfish of a Socrates has so bewitched him.

This hard-headed humorist, whose strange conceits, drollery, and *bonhommie* diverted the young patricians, whilst the rumor of his sayings and quibbles gets abroad every day, turns out, in the sequel, to have a probity as invincible as his logic, and to be either insane, or, at least, under cover of this play, enthusiastic in his religion. When accused before the judges of subverting the popular creed, he affirms the immortality of the soul,

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75 **Hippiases, Gorgiases.** Hippias and Gorgias were early Greek philosophers

the future reward and punishment, and, refusing to recant, in a caprice of the popular government, was condemned to die, and sent to the prison. Socrates entered the prison, and took away all ignominy from the place, which could not be a prison whilst he was there. Crito bribed the jailer; but Socrates would not go out by treachery. "Whatever inconvenience ensue, nothing is to be preferred before justice. These things I hear like pipes and drums, whose sound makes me deaf to everything you say." The fame of this prison, the fame of the discourses there, and the drinking of the hemlock, are one of the most precious passages in the history of the world.

The rare coincidence, in one ugly body, of the droll and the martyr, the keen street and market debater with the sweetest saint known to any history at that time, had forcibly struck the mind of Plato, so capacious of these contrasts; and the figure of Socrates, by a necessity, placed itself in the foreground of the scene, as the fittest dispenser of the intellectual treasures he had to communicate. It was a rare fortune, that this Æsop of the mob, and this robed scholar, should meet, to make each other immortal in their mutual faculty. The strange synthesis, in the character of Socrates, capped the synthesis in the mind of Plato. Moreover, by this means, he was able, in the direct way, and without envy, to avail himself of the wit and weight of Socrates, to which unquestionably his own debt was great; and these derived again their principal advantage from the perfect art of Plato.

It remains to say, that the defect of Plato in power is only that which results inevitably from his quality. He is intellectual in his aim; and, therefore, in expression, literary. Mounting into heaven, diving into the pit, expounding the laws of the state, the passion of love, the remorse of crime, the hope of the parting soul—he is literary, and never otherwise. It is almost the sole deduction from the merit of Plato, that his writings have not—what is, no doubt, incident to this regnancy of intellect in his work—the vital authority which the screams of prophets and the sermons of unlettered Arabs and Jews possess. There is an interval; and to cohesion, contact is necessary.

I know not what can be said in reply to this criticism, but that we have come to a fact in the nature of things; an oak is not an orange. The qualities of sugar remain with sugar, and those of salt, with salt.

In the second place, he has not a system. The dearest defenders and disciples are at fault. He attempted a theory of the universe, and his theory is not complete or self-evident. One man thinks he means this; and another, that: he has said one thing in one place, and the reverse of it in another place. He is charged with having failed to make the transition from ideas to matter. Here is the world, sound as a nut, perfect, not the smallest piece of chaos left, never a stitch nor an end, nor a mark of haste, or botching, or second thought; but the theory of the world is a thing of shreds and patches.

The longest wave is quickly lost in the sea. Plato would willingly have a Platonism, a known and accurate expression for the world, and it should be accurate. It shall be the world passed through the mind of Plato—nothing less. Every atom shall have the Platonic tinge; every atom, every relation or quality you knew before, you shall know again, and find here, but now ordered; not nature, but art. And you shall feel that Alexander indeed overran, with men and horses, some countries of the planet; but countries, and things of which countries are made, elements, planet itself, laws of planet and of men, have passed through this man as bread into his body, and become no longer bread, but body: so all this mammoth morsel has become Plato. He has clapped copyright on the world. This is the ambition of individualism. But the mouthful proves too large. *Boa constrictor* has good will to eat it, but he is foiled. He falls abroad in the attempt; and biting, gets strangled: the bitten world holds the biter fast by his own teeth. There he perishes: unconquered nature lives on, and forgets him. So it fares with all: so must it fare with Plato. In view of eternal nature, Plato turns out to be philosophical exercitations. He argues on this side, and on that. The acutest German, the lovingest disciple, could never tell what Platonism was; indeed, admirable texts can be quoted on both sides of every great question from him.

These things we are forced to say, if we must consider the effort of Plato, or of any philosopher, to dispose of Nature—which will not be disposed of. No power of genius has ever yet had the smallest success in explaining existence. The perfect enigma remains. But there is an injustice in assuming this ambition for Plato. Let us not seem to treat with flippancy his venerable name. Men, in proportion to their intellect, have admitted his transcendent claims. The way to know him, is to compare

him, not with nature, but with other men. How many ages have gone by, and he remains unapproached! A chief structure of human wit, like Karnac, or the mediæval cathedrals, or the Etrurian remains, it requires all the breadth of human faculty to know it. I think it is truliest seen, when seen with the most respect. His sense deepens, his merits multiply, with study. When we say, here is a fine collection of fables; or, when we praise the style; or the common sense; or arithmetic; we speak as boys, and much of our impatient criticism of the dialectic, I suspect, is no better. The criticism is like our impatience of miles, when we are in a hurry; but it is still best that a mile should have seventeen hundred and sixty yards. The great-eyed Plato proportioned the lights and shades after the genius of our life.

1845·1850

3 **Karnac**, Karnak, a village in Egypt which has given its name to the ruins of Thebes • 4 **Etrurian**, pertaining to the civilization of Italy before the rise of Rome

The Rhodora:

On Being Asked, Whence Is the Flower?

In May, when sea-winds pierced our solitudes,
I found the fresh Rhodora in the woods,
Spreading its leafless blooms in a damp nook,
To please the desert and the sluggish brook.
The purple petals, fallen in the pool,
Made the black water with their beauty gay;
Here might the red-bird come his plumes to cool,
And court the flower that cheapens his array.
Rhodora! if the sages ask thee why
This charm is wasted on the earth and sky,
Tell them, dear, that if eyes were made for seeing,
Then Beauty is its own excuse for being:
Why thou wert there, O rival of the rose!
I never thought to ask, I never knew:
But, in my simple ignorance, suppose
The self-same Power that brought me there brought you.

1834·1839

Each and All

Little thinks, in the field, yon red-cloaked clown
Of thee from the hill-top looking down;
The heifer that lows in the upland farm,
Far-heard, lows not thine ear to charm;
The sexton, tolling his bell at noon,
Deems not that great Napoleon
Stops his horse, and lists with delight,
Whilst his files sweep round yon Alpine height;
Nor knowest thou what argument
Thy life to thy neighbor's creed has lent.
All are needed by each one;
Nothing is fair or good alone.
I thought the sparrow's note from heaven,
Singing at dawn on the alder bough;
I brought him home, in his nest, at even;
He sings the song, but it cheers not now,
For I did not bring home the river and sky;—
He sang to my ear,—they sang to my eye.
The delicate shells lay on the shore;
The bubbles of the latest wave
Fresh pearls to their enamel gave,
And the bellowing of the savage sea
Greeted their safe escape to me.
I wiped away the weeds and foam,
I fetched my sea-born treasures home;
But the poor, unsightly, noisome things
Had left their beauty on the shore
With the sun and the sand and the wild uproar.
The lover watched his graceful maid,
As 'mid the virgin train she strayed,
Nor knew her beauty's best attire
Was woven still by the snow-white choir.
At last she came to his hermitage,
Like the bird from the woodlands to the cage;—
The gay enchantment was undone,

The Rhodora: • 12 **Beauty . . . being.** This often-quoted line hardly represents Emerson's usual attitude. More characteristic is the following from **Nature** (1836): "Beauty in nature is not ultimate. It is the herald of inward and eternal beauty, and is not alone a solid and satisfactory good"

A gentle wife, but fairy none.
Then I said, "I covet truth;
Beauty is unripe childhood's cheat;
I leave it behind with the games of youth":—
As I spoke, beneath my feet
The ground-pine curled its pretty wreath,
Running over the club-moss burrs;
I inhaled the violet's breath;
Around me stood the oaks and firs;
Pine-cones and acorns lay on the ground;
Over me soared the eternal sky,
Full of light and of deity;
Again I saw, again I heard,
The rolling river, the morning bird;—
Beauty through my senses stole;
I yielded myself to the perfect whole.

1834?•1839

Concord Hymn

Sung at the Completion of the Battle Monument, July 4, 1837

By the rude bridge that arched the flood,
  Their flag to April's breeze unfurled,
Here once the embattled farmers stood
  And fired the shot heard round the world.

The foe long since in silence slept;
  Alike the conqueror silent sleeps;
And Time the ruined bridge has swept
  Down the dark stream which seaward creeps.

On this green bank, by this soft stream,
  We set to-day a votive stone;
That memory may their deed redeem,
  When, like our sires, our sons are gone.

Spirit, that made those heroes dare
  To die, and leave their children free,
Bid Time and Nature gently spare
  The shaft we raise to them and thee.

1837

The Problem

I like a church; I like a cowl;
I love a prophet of the soul;
And on my heart monastic aisles
Fall like sweet strains, or pensive smiles;
Yet not for all his faith can see
Would I that cowlèd churchman be.

Why should the vest on him allure,
Which I could not on me endure?

Not from a vain or shallow thought
His awful Jove young Phidias brought;
Never from lips of cunning fell
The thrilling Delphic oracle;
Out from the heart of nature rolled
The burdens of the Bible old;
The litanies of nations came,
Like the volcano's tongue of flame,
Up from the burning core below,—
The canticles of love and woe:
The hand that rounded Peter's dome
And groined the aisles of Christian Rome
Wrought in a sad sincerity;
Himself from God he could not free;
He builded better than he knew;—
The conscious stone to beauty grew.
Know'st thou what wove yon woodbird's nest
Of leaves, and feathers from her breast?
Or how the fish outbuilt her shell,
Painting with morn each annual cell?
Or how the sacred pine-tree adds

Concord Hymn • 4 **fired . . . world.** The first armed clash of the American Revolution occurred at Lexington and Concord, April 19, 1775. After having retreated from Lexington, the minutemen rallied at Concord and drove the British back to Boston

The Problem • 10 **Jove . . . Phidias,** statue of Zeus by Phidias. See note, p. 903 • 12 **Delphic oracle.** See note, p. 914 • 19 **hand . . . dome,** the famous dome of St. Peter's at Rome, designed by Michelangelo (1475-1564)

To her old leaves new myriads?
Such and so grew these holy piles,
Whilst love and terror laid the tiles.
Earth proudly wears the Parthenon,
As the best gem upon her zone,
And Morning opes with haste her lids
To gaze upon the Pyramids;
O'er England's abbeys bends the sky,
As on its friends, with kindred eye;
For out of Thought's interior sphere
These wonders rose to upper air;
And Nature gladly gave them place,
Adopted them into her race,
And granted them an equal date
With Andes and with Ararat.

These temples grew as grows the grass;
Art might obey, but not surpass.
The passive Master lent his hand
To the vast soul that o'er him planned;
And the same power that reared the shrine
Bestrode the tribes that knelt within.
Ever the fiery Pentecost
Girds with one flame the countless host,
Trances the heart through chanting choirs,
And through the priest the mind inspires.
The word unto the prophet spoken
Was writ on tables yet unbroken;
The word by seers or sibyls told,
In groves of oak, or fanes of gold,
Still floats upon the morning wind,
Still whispers to the willing mind.
One accent of the Holy Ghost
The heedless world hath never lost.
I know what say the fathers wise,—
The Book itself before me lies,
Old *Chrysostom*, best Augustine,
And he who blent both in his line,
The younger *Golden Lips* or mines,
Taylor, the Shakspeare of divines.
His words are music in my ear,
I see his cowlèd portrait dear;
And yet, for all his faith could see,
I would not the good bishop be.

1839·1840

The Snow-Storm

Announced by all the trumpets of the sky,
Arrives the snow, and, driving o'er the fields,
Seems nowhere to alight: the whited air
Hides hills and woods, the river, and the heaven,
And veils the farm-house at the garden's end.
The sled and traveller stopped, the courier's feet
Delayed, all friends shut out, the housemates sit
Around the radiant fireplace, enclosed
In a tumultuous privacy of storm.

Come see the north wind's masonry.
Out of an unseen quarry evermore
Furnished with tile, the fierce artificer
Curves his white bastions with projected roof
Round every windward stake, or tree, or door.
Speeding, the myriad-handed, his wild work
So fanciful, so savage, nought cares he
For number or proportion. Mockingly,
On coop or kennel he hangs Parian wreaths;
A swan-like form invests the hidden thorn;
Fills up the farmer's lane from wall to wall,
Maugre the farmer's sighs; and at the gate
A tapering turret overtops the work.
And when his hours are numbered, and the world
Is all his own, retiring, as he were not,
Leaves, when the sun appears, astonished Art
To mimic in slow structures, stone by stone,
Built in an age, the mad wind's nightwork,
The frolic architecture of the snow.

1841

The Problem • 47 **Master**, the creative artist • 51 **Pentecost.** See Acts 2 for the account of "the outpouring of the Spirit on the day of Pentecost" • 55 **prophet**, Moses and the Commandments. See Exodus 32, 34 • 65 **Chrysostom.** The eloquent John of Antioch (347-407), church father, was called "Chrysostom," meaning "Golden Lips" • 65 **Augustine**, St. Augustine. See note, p. 916 • 68 **Taylor**, Jeremy Taylor. See note, p. 917

The Snow-Storm • 18 **Parian**, Parian marble was used for sculptures in ancient times • 21 **Maugre**, in spite of

Grace

"Grace" was published in **The Dial** for January 1842, but Emerson did not include it in his collected **Poems** (1847) or in later collections. His reason for "rejecting" it probably was that it expresses ideas contrary to those expressed elsewhere in his writings, especially in **Self-Reliance**. In the essay he says: "Society everywhere is in conspiracy against the manhood of every one of its members. . . . Whoso would be a man, must be a nonconformist. . . . What I must do is all that concerns me, not what the people think." Although one of his best poems, "Grace" expresses a view which must have been unusual with Emerson and which we may regard as uncharacteristic. The poem shows the influence of the English religious poets of the seventeenth century.

How much, preventing God, how much I owe
To the defenses thou hast round me set;
Example, custom, fear, occasion slow,—
These scorned bondmen were my parapet.
I dare not peep over this parapet
To gauge with glance the roaring gulf below,
The depths of sin to which I had descended,
Had not these me against myself defended.

1842

Merlin

Emerson uses Merlin, famous prophet and magician of Arthurian romance, to typify the ideal poet. The ideas of the poem are similar to those of the essay on "The Poet."

I

Thy trivial harp will never please
Or fill my craving ear;
Its chords should ring as blows the breeze,
Free, peremptory, clear.
No jingling serenader's art,
Nor tinkle of piano strings,
Can make the wild blood start
In its mystic springs.
The kingly bard
Must smite the chords rudely and hard,
As with hammer or with mace;
That they may render back
Artful thunder, which conveys
Secrets of the solar track,
Sparks of the supersolar blaze.
Merlin's blows are strokes of fate,
Chiming with the forest tone,
When boughs buffet boughs in the wood;
Chiming with the gasp and moan
Of the ice-imprisoned flood;
With the pulse of manly hearts;
With the voice of orators;
With the din of city arts;
With the cannonade of wars;
With the marches of the brave;
And prayers of might from martyrs' cave.

Great is the art,
Great be the manners, of the bard.
He shall not his brain encumber
With the coil of rhythm and number;
But, leaving rule and pale forethought,
He shall aye climb
For his rhyme.
"Pass in, pass in," the angels say,
"In to the upper doors,
Nor count compartments of the floors,
But mount to paradise
By the stairway of surprise."

Blameless master of the games,
King of sport that never shames,
He shall daily joy dispense
Hid in song's sweet influence.
Forms more cheerly live and go,
What time the subtle mind

Merlin • **5 No jingling . . . strings.** Possibly Emerson was thinking of Poe, whom he once called "the jingle man" • **29 He . . . number.** Compare "The Poet," p. 907: ". . . it is not metres, but a metre-making argument that makes a poem"

Sings aloud the tune whereto
Their pulses beat,
And march their feet,
And their members are combined.

By Sybarites beguiled,
He shall no task decline;
Merlin's mighty line
Extremes of nature reconciled,—
Bereaved a tyrant of his will,
And made the lion mild.
Songs can the tempest still,
Scattered on the stormy air,
Mold the year to fair increase
And bring in poetic peace.

He shall not seek to weave,
In weak, unhappy times,
Efficacious rhymes;
Wait his returning strength.
Bird, that from the nadir's floor
To the zenith's top can soar,
The soaring orbit of the muse exceeds that journey's
length.
Nor profane affect to hit
Or compass that, by meddling wit,
Which only the propitious mind
Publishes when 'tis inclined.
There are open hours
When the God's will sallies free,
And the dull idiot might see
The flowing fortunes of a thousand years;—
Sudden, at unawares,
Self-moved, fly-to the doors,
Nor sword of angels could reveal
What they conceal.

II

The rhyme of the poet
Modulates the king's affairs;
Balance-loving Nature
Made all things in pairs.
To every foot its antipode;
Each color with its counter glowed;
To every tone beat answering tones,
Higher or graver;
Flavor gladly blends with flavor;
Leaf answers leaf upon the bough;
And match the paired cotyledons.
Hands to hands, and feet to feet,
In one body grooms and brides;
Eldest rite, two married sides
In every mortal meet.
Light's far furnace shines,
Smelting balls and bars,
Forging double stars,
Glittering twins and trines.
The animals are sick with love,
Lovesick with rhyme;
Each with all propitious Time
Into chorus wove.

Like the dancers' ordered band,
Thoughts come also hand in hand;
In equal couples mated,
Or else alternated;
Adding by their mutual gage,
One to other, health and age.
Solitary fancies go
Short-lived wandering to and fro,
Most like to bachelors,
Or an ungiven maid,
Not ancestors,
With no posterity to make the lie afraid,
Or keep truth undecayed.
Perfect-paired as eagle's wings,
Justice is the rhyme of things;
Trade and counting use
The selfsame tuneful muse;
And Nemesis,
Who with even matches odd,
Who athwart space redresses

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49 **Sybarites**, voluptuaries • 51 **Merlin's mighty line** recalls "Marlowe's mighty line" (in Ben Jonson's "To the Memory of My Beloved Master William Shakespeare," l. 30) • 67 **meddling wit.** Emerson's doctrine of inspiration disparages the rôle of the intellect in artistic creation, the intellect being denoted by "meddling wit" in the present passage and by "cunning" in "The Problem," l. 11 • 78 **The rhyme . . . affairs**, a romantic conception of the power of the poet found elsewhere in the nineteenth century; in the following, for example, from Shelley's **Defense of Poetry**: "Poets are the unacknowledged legislators of the world"

The partial wrong,
Fills the just period,
And finishes the song.

Subtle rhymes, with ruin rife,
Murmur in the house of life,
Sung by the Sisters as they spin;
In perfect time and measure they
Build and unbuild our echoing clay,
As the two twilights of the day
Fold us music-drunken in.

1846·1847

Bacchus

Bring me wine, but wine which never grew
In the belly of the grape,
Or grew on vine whose tap-roots, reaching through
Under the Andes to the Cape,
Suffered no savor of the earth to scape.

Let its grapes the morn salute
From a nocturnal root,
Which feels the acrid juice
Of Styx and Erebus;
And turns the woe of Night,
By its own craft, to a more rich delight.

We buy ashes for bread;
We buy diluted wine;
Give me of the true,—
Whose ample leaves and tendrils curled
Among the silver hills of heaven
Draw everlasting dew;
Wine of wine,
Blood of the world,
Form of forms, and mould of statures,
That I intoxicated,
And by the draught assimilated,
May float at pleasure through all natures;
The bird-language rightly spell,
And that which roses say so well.

Wine that is shed
Like the torrents of the sun
Up the horizon walls,
Or like the Atlantic streams, which run
When the South Sea calls.
Water and bread,
Food which needs no transmuting,
Rainbow-flowering, wisdom-fruiting,
Wine which is already man,
Food which teach and reason can.

Wine which music is,—
Music and wine are one,—
That I, drinking this,
Shall hear far Chaos talk with me;
Kings unborn shall walk with me;
And the poor grass shall plot and plan
What it will do when it is man.
Quickened so, will I unlock
Every crypt of every rock.

I thank the joyful juice
For all I know;—
Winds of remembering
Of the ancient being blow,
And seeming-solid walls of use
Open and flow.

Pour, Bacchus! the remembering wine;
Retrieve the loss of me and mine!
Vine for vine be antidote,
And the grape requite the lote!
Haste to cure the old despair,—
Reason in Nature's lotus drenched,

Merlin • 126 **Sisters,** the three goddesses of Greek mythology who determined the course of human life: Clotho spun the thread; Lachesis measured its length; and Atropos cut it off

Bacchus • 9 **Styx,** in Greek mythology, the river which had to be crossed in passing to the regions of the dead • 9 **Erebus,** in Greek mythology, the gloomy space through which souls passed to Hades • 21 **intoxicated.** The poet is obviously speaking of a "transcendental" intoxication • 51 **remembering wine,** wine which causes the soul to remember. Emerson has in mind the Platonic doctrines of pre-existence and reminiscence • 54 **lote.** The eating of the fruit of the lotus caused forgetfulness (compare Tennyson's poem, "The Lotus Eaters")

The memory of ages quenched;
Give them again to shine;
Let wine repair what this undid;
And where the infection slid,
A dazzling memory revive;
Refresh the faded tints,
Recut the aged prints,
And write my old adventures with the pen
Which on the first day drew,
Upon the tablets blue,
The dancing Pleiads and eternal men.

1846·1847

Ode

Inscribed to W. H. Channing

This poem was Emerson's answer to the Rev. William Henry Channing, and other reformers, who insisted that Emerson take an active part in the movement for the abolition of slavery.

Though loath to grieve
The evil time's sole patriot,
I cannot leave
My honeyed thought
For the priest's cant
Or statesman's rant.

If I refuse
My study for their politique,
Which at the best is trick,
The angry Muse
Puts confusion in my brain.

But who is he that prates
Of the culture of mankind,
Of better arts and life?
Go, blindworm, go,
Behold the famous States
Harrying Mexico
With rifle and with knife!

Or who, with accent bolder,
Dare praise the freedom-loving mountaineer?
I found by thee, O rushing Contoocook!
And in thy valleys, Agiochook!
The jackals of the Negro-holder.

The God who made New Hampshire
Taunted the lofty land
With little men;—
Small bat and wren
House in the oak:—
If earth-fire cleave
The upheaved land, and bury the folk,
The southern crocodile would grieve.
Virtue palters; Right is hence;
Freedom praised, but hid;
Funeral eloquence
Rattles the coffin-lid.

What boots thy zeal,
O glowing friend,
That would indignant rend
The northland from the south?
Wherefore? to what good end?
Boston Bay and Bunker Hill
Would serve things still;—
Things are of the snake.

The horseman serves the horse,
The neatherd serves the neat,
The merchant serves the purse,
The eater serves his meat;
'Tis the day of the chattel,
Web to weave, and corn to grind;
Things are in the saddle,
And ride mankind.

17 **Mexico.** War with Mexico began in April 1846 and was formally concluded in February 1848. In New England the war was strongly opposed (compare Lowell's *Biglow Papers*, **First Series, 1846**) • 21 **Contoocook,** a river which rises in New Hampshire and flows into the Merrimac • 22 **Agiochook,** Indian name for the White Mountains • 23 **jackals.** The jackal, or wild dog, was once supposed to hunt game for the lion; the reference may be to the pursuit of fugitive slaves in New Hampshire, and in New England generally • 45 **neat,** cattle

There are two laws discrete,
Not reconciled,—
Law for man, and law for thing;
The last builds town and fleet,
But it runs wild,
And doth the man unking.

'Tis fit the forest fall,
The steep be graded,
The mountain tunnelled,
The sand shaded,
The orchard planted,
The glebe tilled,
The prairie granted,
The steamer built.

Let man serve law for man;
Live for friendship, live for love,
For truth's and harmony's behoof;
The state may follow how it can,
As Olympus follows Jove.

Yet do not I implore
The wrinkled shopman to my sounding woods,
Nor bid the unwilling senator
Ask votes of thrushes in the solitudes.
Every one to his chosen work;—
Foolish hands may mix and mar;
Wise and sure the issues are.
Round they roll till dark is light,
Sex to sex, and even to odd;—
The over-god
Who marries Right to Might,
Who peoples, unpeoples,—
He who exterminates
Races by stronger races,
Black by white faces,—
Knows to bring honey
Out of the lion;
Grafts gentlest scion
On pirate and Turk.

The Cossack eats Poland,
Like stolen fruit;
Her last noble is ruined,
Her last poet mute:
Straight, into double band
The victors divide;
Half for freedom strike and stand;—
The astonished Muse finds thousands at her side.

1847

Hamatreya

"Hamatreya" is based upon a passage in the **Vishnu Purana** (one of the sacred books of the Hindus), which Emerson transcribed in his **Journals** in 1845 as follows: "These and other kings who . . . have indulged the feeling that suggests 'This earth is mine—it is my son's—it belongs to my dynasty'—have all passed away. So, many who reigned before them, many who succeeded them, and many who are yet to come, have ceased or will cease to be. Earth laughs, as if smiling with autumnal flowers, to behold her Kings unable to effect the subjugation of themselves. I will repeat to you, Maitreya, the stanzas that were chanted by Earth. . . .

" 'How great is the folly of princes who are endowed with the faculty of reason, to cherish the confidence of ambition when they themselves are but foam upon the wave. . . . Foolishness has been the character of every King who has boasted, "All this earth is mine—everything is mine—it will be in my house forever,"—for he is dead. . . .'

"These were the verses, Maitreya, which Earth recited, and by listening to which ambitions fade away like snow before the sun."

Emerson's title is apparently a variant of "Maitreya" in the quoted passage.

52 **discrete,** separate, individual, distinct (not to be confused with "discreet") • 75 **Every one . . . work.** William James justly noted Emerson's "fidelity to the limits of his genius" • 86 **honey . . . lion.** Samson found "honey in the carcase of the lion" which he had slain. See Judges 14:5-9 • 90 **Cossack eats Poland,** a frequent occurrence. Russia had appropriated Polish territory in 1772 ("the first partition of Poland"), in 1793 ("the second partition"), and in 1795 ("the third partition"). A Polish revolution in 1830 had been suppressed by the czar

Bulkeley, Hunt, Willard, Hosmer, Meriam, Flint
Possessed the land which rendered to their toil
Hay, corn, roots, hemp, flax, apples, wool and wood.
Each of these landlords walked amidst his farm,
Saying, "'Tis mine, my children's and my name's.
How sweet the west wind sounds in my own trees!
How graceful climb those shadows on my hill!
I fancy these pure waters and the flags
Know me, as does my dog: we sympathize;
And, I affirm, my actions smack of the soil."

Where are these men? Asleep beneath their grounds:
And strangers, fond as they, their furrows plough.
Earth laughs in flowers, to see her boastful boys
Earth-proud, proud of the earth which is not theirs;
Who steer the plough, but cannot steer their feet
Clear of the grave.
They added ridge to valley, brook to pond,
And sighed for all that bounded their domain;
"This suits me for a pasture; that's my park;
We must have clay, lime, gravel, granite-ledge,
And misty lowland, where to go for peat.
The land is well,—lies fairly to the south.
'Tis good, when you have crossed the sea and back,
To find the sitfast acres where you left them."
Ah! the hot owner sees not Death, who adds
Him to his land, a lump of mould the more.
Hear what the Earth says:—

EARTH-SONG

"Mine and yours;
Mine, not yours.
Earth endures;
Stars abide—
Shine down in the old sea;
Old are the shores;
But where are old men?
I who have seen much,
Such have I never seen.

"The lawyer's deed
Ran sure,
In tail,
To them, and to their heirs
Who shall succeed,
Without fail,
Forevermore.

"Here is the land,
Shaggy with wood,
With its old valley,
Mound and flood.
But the heritors?—
Fled like the flood's foam.
The lawyer, and the laws,
And the kingdom,
Clean swept herefrom.

"They called me theirs,
Who so controlled me;
Yet every one
Wished to stay, and is gone,
How am I theirs,
If they cannot hold me,
But I hold them?"

When I heard the Earth-song
I was no longer brave;
My avarice cooled
Like lust in the chill of the grave.

1847

Give All to Love

Give all to love;
Obey thy heart;
Friends, kindred, days,
Estate, good-fame,
Plans, credit and the Muse,—
Nothing refuse.

'Tis a brave master;
Let it have scope:

Hamatreya • 1 **Bulkeley . . . Flint,** first settlers of Concord • 12 **fond,** foolish • 23 **'Tis . . . them.** These lines might have been written by Robert Frost • 39 **In tail,** entail, designating the possession of property

Follow it utterly,
Hope beyond hope:
High and more high
It dives into noon,
With wing unspent,
Untold intent;
But it is a god,
Knows its own path
And the outlets of the sky.

It was never for the mean;
It requireth courage stout.
Souls above doubt
Valor unbending,
It will reward,—
They shall return
More than they were,
And ever ascending.

Leave all for love;
Yet, hear me, yet,
One word more thy heart behoved,
One pulse more of firm endeavor,—
Keep thee to-day,
To-morrow, forever,
Free as an Arab
Of thy beloved.

Cling with life to the maid;
But when the surprise,
First vague shadow of surmise
Flits across her bosom young,
Of a joy apart from thee,
Free be she, fancy-free;
Nor thou detain her vesture's hem,
Nor the palest rose she flung
From her summer diadem.

Though thou loved her as thyself,
As a self of purer clay,
Though her parting dims the day,
Stealing grace from all alive;
Heartily know,
When half-gods go,
The gods arrive.

1847

Days

"Days" is Emerson's version of a favorite theme of the early Puritans, who often preached on "redeeming the time."

Daughters of Time, the hypocritic Days,
Muffled and dumb like barefoot dervishes,
And marching single in an endless file,
Bring diadems and fagots in their hands.
To each they offer gifts after his will,
Bread, kingdoms, stars, and sky that holds them all.
I, in my pleached garden, watched the pomp,
Forgot my morning wishes, hastily
Took a few herbs and apples, and the Day
Turned and departed silent. I, too late,
Under her solemn fillet saw the scorn.

1852? • 1857

Brahma

"Brahma" is the most notable expression of Hindu religious thought in Emerson's writings. Brahma is the underlying, unchanging reality; it can best be understood in contrast with Maya, the changing, illusory world of appearance, as shown in the following passage from the Hindu scriptures (quoted in Arthur Christy, **The Orient in American Transcendentalism**, p. 91): "Brahma is without attribute and form, Maya is endowed with both; Brahma is infinite, Maya finite; Brahma is immaculate and serene, Maya fleeting and restless; Brahma is without adjuncts, Maya is full of them; Maya is visible, Brahma invisible; Maya perceptible, Brahma imperceptible; Maya perishable, Brahma imperishable; Maya groweth, Brahma waxeth not; Maya diminisheth, Brahma waneth not; Maya appealeth to the ignorant, Brahma attracts him not; Maya is born, Brahma is birthless; Maya dieth, Brahma is deathless; Maya descendeth into cognition, Brahma is beyond cognition; Maya fructifieth, Brahma doth not; Maya dissolveth, Brahma is indissoluble; Maya palleth, Brahma is

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Give . . . Love • 48 **When . . . arrive.** Compare in the concluding paragraph of the essay on "Friendship": "True love transcends the unworthy object and dwells and broods on the eternal . . ."

a joy forever; Maya changeth, Brahma is immutable; Maya acteth, Brahma is beyond all activity; Maya assumeth various forms, Brahma is formless; Maya is . . . manifold, Brahma is one and eternal. . . . Maya is spread everywhere enveloping the Brahma, the sage alone can pierce through the mist."

If the red slayer think he slays,
  Or if the slain think he is slain,
They know not well the subtle ways
  I keep, and pass, and turn again.

Far or forgot to me is near;
  Shadow and sunlight are the same;
The vanished gods to me appear;
  And one to me are shame and fame.

They reckon ill who leave me out;
  When me they fly, I am the wings;
I am the doubter and the doubt,
  And I the hymn the Brahmin sings.

The strong gods pine for my abode,
  And pine in vain the sacred Seven;
But thou, meek lover of the good!
  Find me, and turn thy back on heaven.

1856·1857

Terminus

The poem expresses an extraordinarily clear recognition of failing powers. Emerson was correct in thinking that at sixty-three he had reached and passed the peak of his achievement. He lived on for sixteen years after "Terminus" without adding anything significant to his literary output. A few months before his death, he lost his memory completely.

The poem shows a strong vein of realism and Yankee common sense.

It is time to be old,
To take in sail:—
The god of bounds,
Who sets to seas a shore,
Came to me in his fatal rounds,
And said: "No more!
No farther shoot
Thy broad ambitious branches, and thy root.
Fancy departs: no more invent;
Contract thy firmament
To compass of a tent.
There's not enough for this and that,
Make thy option which of two;
Economize the failing river,
Not the less revere the Giver,
Leave the many and hold the few.
Timely wise accept the terms,
Soften the fall with wary foot;
A little while
Still plan and smile,
And,—fault of novel germs,—
Mature the unfallen fruit.
Curse, if thou wilt, thy sires,
Bad husbands of their fires,
Who when they gave thee breath,
Failed to bequeath
The needful sinew stark as once,
The Baresark marrow to thy bones,
But left a legacy of ebbing veins,
Inconstant heat and nerveless reins,—
Amid the Muses, left thee deaf and dumb,
Amid the gladiators, halt and numb."

  As the bird trims her to the gale,
I trim myself to the storm of time,
I man the rudder, reef the sail,
Obey the voice at eve obeyed at prime:
"Lowly faithful, banish fear,
Right onward drive unharmed;
The port, well worth the cruise, is near,
And every wave is charmed."

1866·1867

Brahma • 8 **shame and fame.** Emerson intended an opposition: bad report and good report. The line must mean, "Evil and Good are to me one and the same." Emerson is said to have suggested to a puzzled reader the substitution of "Jehovah" for "Brahma," and E. W. Emerson (**Poems**, Centenary Edition, p. 467) tells with approval the story of the child who said that the poem means simply "God everywhere." These suggestions are seriously misleading. To Jehovah, or to the God of the Christian Bible, Good and Evil are not the same • 14 **sacred Seven,** the highest saints of the Hindu hierarchy

Terminus • 3 **The god of bounds.** Terminus was the Roman god of boundaries • 5 **fatal,** appointed by fate • 21 **fault of novel,** in the lack of new • 30 **nerveless reins,** weak back



Henry David Thoreau

1817 · 1862

Henry David Thoreau was born in Concord, Massachusetts, July 12, 1817. The time and place of his birth pleased him enormously: "I have never got over my surprise that I should have been born into the most estimable place in all the world, and in the very nick of time, too." He was graduated without distinction from Harvard College in 1837, the year of *The American Scholar.* After graduation, he assisted his brother John for a while in teaching a private school. He also helped his father manufacture lead pencils in the 1840's; but when their product equaled, or perhaps surpassed, the best pencils on the market, he gave up pencil making because of a desire for fresh experiences. In 1839 he and John went on a famous journey, the literary record of which, *A Week on the Concord and Merrimack Rivers,* appeared ten years later. About the time of their journey together, both Henry and John fell in love with Ellen Sewall, who, perhaps wisely, refused them both.

Thoreau was a frequent contributor to *The Dial* from 1840 to 1844. In 1841, and again in 1847-1848, he was a member of Emerson's household, doing odd jobs; in 1842 John died; in 1843 Henry was a tutor in the family of William Emerson, a brother of Ralph Waldo, on Staten Island. In 1838 he had delivered before the Concord Lyceum his first lecture, in which he described his neighbors as "newly shingled and clapboarded, but if you knock, no one is at home." He continued to lecture for many years; indeed, much of his writing, like Emerson's,

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Panel (l. to r.): Winter scene near Concord • Thoreau's "study" at Walden • The hut near Walden Pond • Henry Thoreau at the age of 37 • His home in Concord

was done with the intention of using it as lecture material. Mr. Canby records lectures not only in Concord but in Boston, Salem, Portland, Bangor, Providence, Philadelphia, New Bedford, and Amherst (New Hampshire); at the last-named place, Thoreau lectured in December 1856 in the basement of the orthodox church, and, as he commented later, "helped to undermine it." But despite a good many attempts, he was not very successful as a lecturer; much less successful and less popular than Emerson, to whom he remarked, with a little bitterness, that "whatever succeeded with the audience was bad." He concluded in 1858 that "audiences go to the Lyceum to suck a sugar-plum."

On July 4, 1845, Thoreau began his famous residence at Walden Pond. "I went to the woods," he explains in a great passage in *Walden,* "because I wished to live deliberately, to front only the essential facts of life. . . ." On September 6, 1847, he left Walden, not from a sense of failure or disappointment but, once more, because of a desire to explore new modes of living. "I left the woods," he wrote in the concluding chapter of his book, "for as good a reason as I went there. Perhaps it seemed to me that I had several more lives to live and could not spare any more time for that one. It is remarkable how easily and insensibly we fall into a particular route and make a beaten track for ourselves. I had not lived there a week before my feet wore a path from my door to the pond-side. . . . How worn and dusty, then, must be the highways of the world, how deep the ruts of tradition and conformity!" *Walden,* published in 1854, is the immortal record of Thoreau's rich, elemental experience. It is a mistake to think of Thoreau as a hermit during the Walden period, though he has frequently been called that. While he lived in the woods, he was often in the village, he received visitors at the Pond, and he continued to do, in and around Concord, the various odd jobs at which he was so adept: fence building, house painting, carpentering, gardening, berry picking, surveying. His aim was always, in his best phrase, to "adventure on life."

In 1845, during his residence at Walden, Thoreau was arrested because of his refusal to pay the poll tax and spent perforce a night in the Concord jail. The experience itself, as he tells us in "Civil Disobedience" (1849), was "novel and interesting enough." Through the grating of his prison cell, he saw his native village from a fresh point of view. The reason for his rebellion was his opposition to Negro slavery and the movement to increase slave territory in the Southwest. He persisted courageously in this opposition. He helped at least one fugitive slave to evade the Boston police and escape into Canada (see Thoreau's *Journal,* October 1, 1851). Along with Emerson, he gave active support to John Brown. In his *Plea for Captain John Brown,* delivered in the Concord Town Hall, October 30, 1859, when Brown was under sentence of death, Thoreau likened him to Cromwell and the early New England Puritans. When the selectmen of the village refused to sanction a memorial service to Brown, Thoreau rang the bell of the Town Hall himself.

"I have traveled a good deal in Concord," Thoreau wrote in *Walden;* he traveled a good deal in other places, too. There were three excursions to the Maine Woods (in 1846, 1853, and 1857), and four excursions to Cape Cod (in 1849, 1850, 1855, and 1857). He spent a week in Canada in 1850 with Ellery Channing, a Concord friend and neighbor. He frequently journeyed to Monadnock and the White Mountains. These excursions furnished material for much writing, which appeared in part in magazines during Thoreau's lifetime and was collected after his death *(Excursions,* 1863; *The Maine Woods,* 1864; *Cape Cod,* 1865). In 1856 he went with another Concord friend, Bronson Alcott, to New York, where he saw Whitman; shortly after the visit, he wrote to a friend, "That Walt Whitman is the most interesting fact to me at present." In 1861 he traveled as far west as Minnesota; but his health was already failing. He died of tuberculosis in Concord, May 6, 1862, before he had reached his forty-fifth birthday. When asked in his last hours by his Aunt Louisa if he had "made his peace with God," he replied, "I have never quarrelled with Him."

It is only in comparatively recent years that Thoreau has attained his present high reputation in American literature. For more than a half-century after his death, he was very generally regarded as an interesting eccentric and one of the minor Emersonians. This low estimate may be attributed in part to the influence of the derogatory essays of James Russell Lowell and Robert Louis Stevenson. Lowell, the cosmopolite, cleverly ridiculed Thoreau's provincialism and "morbid self-consciousness" ("Thoreau," *My Study Windows,* 1871). Stevenson, *bon vivant* and man of the world, objected that "Thoreau is

dry, priggish, and selfish,"—"in one word, a skulker" ("Henry David Thoreau," *Familiar Studies of Men and Books,* 1882). The growth of Thoreau's fame in the third and fourth decades of the present century has no doubt been owing not only to a recognition of his fine literary qualities but also to various special appeals which his works make to modern readers. His lessons in simplicity and economy have appealed to those who are harassed by the complexity and expense of modern life. His almost primitive intimacy with nature has come home to a generation whose mode of life is largely artificial and divorced from natural influences. His sturdy, rebellious individualism has had a special attraction for members of an increasingly regimented society. His indigenousness, deeply rooted in a particular place, has been a warning and a rebuke to a generation so mobile and migratory that many people can scarcely be said to have roots anywhere. In short, we read Thoreau for those values which we have lost and which more and more seem necessary to our health and vigor and peace of mind.

The Writings of Henry David Thoreau, Walden Edition, 20 vols., Boston, 1906 (includes the complete **Journals**) • **The Heart of Thoreau's Journals,** ed. Odell Shepard, Boston, 1927 • H. S. Salt, **The Life of Henry David Thoreau,** London, 1890 • H. S. Canby, **Thoreau,** Boston, 1939

Civil Disobedience

"Civil Disobedience" was first published in **Aesthetic Papers** (1849), a collection of essays edited by Elizabeth Peabody. " 'Civil Disobedience' attracted no attention at the time, but has since gone round the world. It was Gandhi's source-book in his Indian campaign for Civil Resistance, and has been read and pondered by thousands who hope to find some way to resist seemingly irresistible force" (Canby, **Thoreau,** p. 235).

I heartily accept the motto,—"That government is best which governs least;" and I should like to see it acted up to more rapidly and systematically. Carried out, it finally amounts to this, which also I believe,—"That government is best which governs not at all;" and when men are prepared for it, that will be the kind of government which they will have. Government is at best but an expedient; but most governments are usually, and all governments are sometimes, inexpedient. The objections which have been brought against a standing army, and they are many and weighty, and deserve to prevail, may also at last be brought against a standing government. The standing army is only an arm of the standing government. The government itself, which is only the mode which the people have chosen to execute their will, is equally liable to be abused and perverted before the people can act through it. Witness the present Mexican war, the work of comparatively a few individuals using the standing government as their tool; for, in the outset, the people would not have consented to this measure.

This American government,—what is it but a tradition, though a recent one, endeavoring to transmit itself unimpaired to posterity, but each instant losing some of its integrity? It has not the vitality and force of a single living man; for a single man can bend it to his will. It is a sort of wooden gun to the people themselves. But it is not the less necessary for this; for the people must have some complicated machinery or other, and hear its din, to satisfy that idea of government which they have. Governments show thus how successfully men can be

1 **That . . . least.** The idea is Jeffersonian. In his **First Inaugural** (1801), Jefferson advocated "a wise and frugal government, which shall restrain men from injuring one another, shall leave them otherwise free to regulate their own pursuits of industry and improvement, and shall not take from the mouth of labor the bread it has earned" • 17 **Mexican war.** The Mexican War was unpopular in New England, where it was regarded as a device of the Southern Democrats to increase slave territory. Compare Lowell's protest in **The Biglow Papers, First Series**

imposed on, even impose on themselves, for their own advantage. It is excellent, we must all allow. Yet this government never of itself furthered any enterprise, but by the alacrity with which it got out of its way. *It* does not keep the country free. *It* does not settle the West. *It* does not educate. The character inherent in the American people has done all that has been accomplished; and it would have done somewhat more, if the government had not sometimes got in its way. For government is an expedient by which men would fain succeed in letting one another alone; and, as has been said, when it is most expedient, the governed are most let alone by it. Trade and commerce, if they were not made of India-rubber, would never manage to bounce over the obstacles which legislators are continually putting in their way; and, if one were to judge these men wholly by the effects of their actions and not partly by their intentions, they would deserve to be classed and punished with those mischievous persons who put obstructions on the railroads.

But, to speak practically and as a citizen, unlike those who call themselves no-government men, I ask for, not at once no government, but *at once* a better government. Let every man make known what kind of government would command his respect, and that will be one step toward obtaining it.

After all, the practical reason why, when the power is once in the hands of the people, a majority are permitted, and for a long period continue, to rule is not because they are most likely to be in the right, nor because this seems fairest to the minority, but because they are physically the strongest. But a government in which the majority rule in all cases cannot be based on justice, even as far as men understand it. Can there not be a government in which majorities do not virtually decide right and wrong, but conscience?—in which majorities decide only those questions to which the rule of expediency is applicable? Must the citizen ever for a moment, or in the least degree, resign his conscience to the legislator? Why has every man a conscience, then? I think that we should be men first, and subjects afterward. It is not desirable to cultivate a respect for the law, so much as for the right. The only obligation which I have a right to assume is to do at any time what I think right. It is truly enough said, that a corporation has no conscience; but a corporation of conscientious men is a corporation *with* a conscience. Law never made men a whit more just; and, by means of their respect for it, even the well-disposed are daily made the agents of injustice. A common and natural result of an undue respect for law is, that you may see a file of soldiers, colonel, captain, corporal, privates, powder-monkeys, and all, marching in admirable order over hill and dale to the wars, against their wills, ay, against their common sense and consciences, which makes it very steep marching indeed, and produces a palpitation of the heart. They have no doubt that it is a damnable business in which they are concerned; they are all peaceably inclined. Now, what are they? Men at all? or small movable forts and magazines, at the service of some unscrupulous man in power? Visit the Navy-Yard, and behold a marine, such a man as an American government can make, or such as it can make a man with its black arts,—a mere shadow and reminiscence of humanity, a man laid out alive and standing, and already, as one may say, buried under arms with funeral accompaniments, though it may be,—

"Not a drum was heard, not a funeral note,
As his corse to the rampart we hurried;
Not a soldier discharged his farewell shot
O'er the grave where our hero we buried."

The mass of men serve the state thus, not as men mainly, but as machines, with their bodies. They are the standing army, and the militia, jailors, constables, posse comitatus, etc. In most cases there is no free exercise whatever of the judgment or of the moral sense; but they put themselves on a level with wood and earth and stones; and wooden men can perhaps be manufactured that will serve the purpose as well. Such command no more respect than men of straw or a lump of dirt. They have the same sort of worth only as horses and dogs. Yet such as these even are commonly esteemed good citizens. Others—as most legislators, politicians, lawyers, ministers, and office-holders—serve the state chiefly with their heads; and, as they rarely make any moral distinctions, they are as likely to serve the Devil, without *intending* it, as God. A very few, as heroes, patriots, martyrs, reformers in the great sense, and *men,* serve the

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67 **Not . . . buried,** from Charles Wolfe's "The Burial of Sir John Moore" (1817) • 73 **posse comitatus,** inhabitants summoned by the sheriff to assist in preserving the peace

state with their consciences also, and so necessarily resist it for the most part; and they are commonly treated as enemies by it. A wise man will only be useful as a man, and will not submit to be "clay," and "stop a hole to keep the wind away," but leave that office to his dust at least:—

"I am too high-born to be propertied,
To be a secondary at control,
Or useful serving-man and instrument
To any sovereign state throughout the world."

He who gives himself entirely to his fellow-men appears to them useless and selfish; but he who gives himself partially to them is pronounced a benefactor and philanthropist.

How does it become a man to behave toward this American government to-day? I answer, that he cannot without disgrace be associated with it. I cannot for an instant recognize that political organization as *my* government which is the *slave's* government also.

All men recognize the right of revolution; that is, the right to refuse allegiance to, and to resist, the government, when its tyranny or its inefficiency are great and unendurable. But almost all say that such is not the case now. But such was the case, they think, in the Revolution of '75. If one were to tell me that this was a bad government because it taxed certain foreign commodities brought to its ports, it is most probable that I should not make an ado about it, for I can do without them. All machines have their friction; and possibly this does enough good to counterbalance the evil. At any rate, it is a great evil to make a stir about it. But when the friction comes to have its machine, and oppression and robbery are organized, I say, let us not have such a machine any longer. In other words, when a sixth of the population of a nation which has undertaken to be the refuge of liberty are slaves, and a whole country is unjustly overrun and conquered by a foreign army, and subjected to military law, I think that it is not too soon for honest men to rebel and revolutionize. What makes this duty the more urgent is the fact that the country so overrun is not our own, but ours is the invading army.

Paley, a common authority with many on moral questions, in his chapter on the "Duty of Submission to Civil Government," resolves all civil obligation into expediency; and he proceeds to say, "that so long as the interest of the whole society requires it, that is, so long as the established government cannot be resisted or changed without public inconveniency, it is the will of God that the established government be obeyed, and no longer. . . . This principle being admitted, the justice of every particular case of resistance is reduced to a computation of the quantity of the danger and grievance on the one side, and of the probability and expense of redressing it on the other." Of this, he says, every man shall judge for himself. But Paley appears never to have contemplated those cases to which the rule of expediency does not apply, in which a people, as well as an individual, must do justice, cost what it may. If I have unjustly wrested a plank from a drowning man, I must restore it to him though I drown myself. This, according to Paley, would be inconvenient. But he that would save his life, in such a case, shall lose it. This people must cease to hold slaves, and to make war on Mexico, though it cost them their existence as a people.

In their practice, nations agree with Paley; but does any one think that Massachusetts does exactly what is right at the present crisis?

"A drab of state, a cloth-o'-silver slut,
To have her train borne up, and her soul trail in the dirt."

Practically speaking, the opponents to a reform in Massachusetts are not a hundred thousand politicians at the South, but a hundred thousand merchants and farmers here, who are more interested in commerce and agriculture than they are in humanity, and are not prepared to do justice to the slave and to Mexico, *cost what it may.* I quarrel not with far-off foes, but with those who, near at home, coöperate with, and do the bidding of, those far away, and without whom the latter would be harmless. We are accustomed to say, that the mass of

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4 clay . . . away. Compare **Hamlet**, Act V, Scene i, ll. 236-237:
Imperious Caesar, dead and turn'd to clay
Might stop a hole to keep the wind away
7 **I . . . world**, from Shakespeare's **King John**, Act V, Scene ii, ll. 79-82 • **45 that . . . other**, from **Principles of Moral and Political Philosophy** (1785) by William Paley (1743-1805), English theologian and moralist • **62 save . . . it**. Compare Matthew 10:39 • **72 merchants**. Emerson wrote in his **Journal**, May 23, 1846: "Cotton thread holds the Union together; unites John C. Calhoun and Abbott Lawrence. Patriotism for holidays and summer evenings, with music and rockets, but cotton thread is the Union"

men are unprepared; but improvement is slow, because the few are not materially wiser or better than the many. It is not so important that many should be as good as you, as that there be some absolute goodness somewhere; for that will leaven the whole lump. There are thousands who are *in opinion* opposed to slavery and to the war, who yet in effect do nothing to put an end to them; who, esteeming themselves children of Washington and Franklin, sit down with their hands in their pockets, and say that they know not what to do, and do nothing; who even postpone the question of freedom to the question of free-trade, and quietly read the prices-current along with the latest advices from Mexico, after dinner, and, it may be, fall asleep over them both. What is the price-current of an honest man and patriot to-day? They hesitate, and they regret, and sometimes they petition; but they do nothing in earnest and with effect. They will wait, well disposed, for others to remedy the evil, that they may no longer have it to regret. At most, they give only a cheap vote, and a feeble countenance and God-speed, to the right, as it goes by them. There are nine hundred and ninety-nine patrons of virtue to one virtuous man. But it is easier to deal with the real possessor of a thing than with the temporary guardian of it.

All voting is a sort of gaming, like checkers or backgammon, with a slight moral tinge to it, a playing with right and wrong, with moral questions; and betting naturally accompanies it. The character of the voters is not staked. I cast my vote, perchance, as I think right; but I am not vitally concerned that that right should prevail. I am willing to leave it to the majority. Its obligation, therefore, never exceeds that of expediency. Even voting *for the right* is *doing* nothing for it. It is only expressing to men feebly your desire that it should prevail. A wise man will not leave the right to the mercy of chance, nor wish it to prevail through the power of the majority. There is but little virtue in the action of masses of men. When the majority shall at length vote for the abolition of slavery, it will be because they are indifferent to slavery, or because there is but little slavery left to be abolished by their vote. *They* will then be the only slaves. Only *his* vote can hasten the abolition of slavery who asserts his own freedom by his vote.

I hear of a convention to be held at Baltimore, or elsewhere, for the selection of a candidate for the Presidency, made up chiefly of editors, and men who are politicians by profession; but I think, what is it to any independent, intelligent, and respectable man what decision they may come to? Shall we not have the advantage of his wisdom and honesty, nevertheless? Can we not count upon some independent votes? Are there not many individuals in the country who do not attend conventions? But no: I find that the respectable man, so called, has immediately drifted from his position, and despairs of his country, when his country has more reason to despair of him. He forthwith adopts one of the candidates thus selected as the only *available* one, thus proving that he is himself *available* for any purposes of the demagogue. His vote is of no more worth than that of any unprincipled foreigner or hireling native, who may have been bought. O for a man who is a *man*, and, as my neighbor says, has a bone in his back which you cannot pass your hand through! Our statistics are at fault: the population has been returned too large. How many *men* are there to a square thousand miles in this country? Hardly one. Does not America offer any inducement for men to settle here? The American has dwindled into an Odd Fellow,—one who may be known by the development of his organ of gregariousness, and a manifest lack of intellect and cheerful self-reliance; whose first and chief concern, on coming into the world, is to see that the Almshouses are in good repair; and, before yet he has lawfully donned the virile garb, to collect a fund for the support of the widows and orphans that may be; who, in short, ventures to live only by the aid of the Mutual Insurance company, which has promised to bury him decently.

It is not a man's duty, as a matter of course, to devote himself to the eradication of any, even the most enormous wrong; he may still properly have other concerns to engage him; but it is his duty, at least, to wash his hands of it, and, if he gives it no thought longer, not to give it practically his support. If I devote myself to other pursuits and contemplations, I must first see, at least, that I do not pursue them sitting upon another

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5 **leaven . . . lump.** Compare I Corinthians 5:6: "Know ye not that a little leaven leaveneth the whole lump?" • 68 **Odd Fellow,** a member of a secret fraternity, the Independent Order of Odd Fellows, organized for mutual aid and social enjoyment, and comprising many lodges in England and America • 73 **virile garb.** The *toga virilis,* or manly toga, was assumed by Roman boys at the end of their fourteenth year

man's shoulders. I must get off him first, that he may pursue his contemplations too. See what gross inconsistency is tolerated. I have heard some of my townsmen say, "I should like to have them order me out to help put down an insurrection of the slaves, or to march to Mexico;—see if I would go;" and yet these very men have each, directly by their allegiance, and so indirectly, at least, by their money, furnished a substitute. The soldier is applauded who refuses to serve in an unjust war by those who do not refuse to sustain the unjust government which makes the war; is applauded by those whose own act and authority he disregards and sets at naught; as if the state were penitent to that degree that it hired one to scourge it while it sinned, but not to that degree that it left off sinning for a moment. Thus, under the name of Order and Civil Government, we are all made at last to pay homage to and support our own meanness. After the first blush of sin comes its indifference; and from immoral it becomes, as it were, *un*moral, and not quite unnecessary to that life which we have made.

The broadest and most prevalent error requires the most disinterested virtue to sustain it. The slight reproach to which the virtue of patriotism is commonly liable, the noble are most likely to incur. Those who, while they disapprove of the character and measures of a government, yield to it their allegiance and support are undoubtedly its most conscientious supporters, and so frequently the most serious obstacles to reform. Some are petitioning the state to dissolve the Union, to disregard the requisitions of the President. Why do they not dissolve it themselves,—the union between themselves and the state,—and refuse to pay their quota into its treasury? Do not they stand in the same relation to the state that the state does to the Union? And have not the same reasons prevented the state from resisting the Union which have prevented them from resisting the state?

How can a man be satisfied to entertain an opinion merely, and enjoy *it?* Is there any enjoyment in it, if his opinion is that he is aggrieved? If you are cheated out of a single dollar by your neighbor, you do not rest satisfied with knowing that you are cheated, or with saying that you are cheated, or even with petitioning him to pay you your due; but you take effectual steps at once to obtain the full amount, and see that you are never cheated again. Action from principle, the perception and the performance of right, changes things and relations; it is essentially revolutionary, and does not consist wholly with anything which was. It not only divides states and churches, it divides families; ay, it divides the *individual,* separating the diabolical in him from the divine.

Unjust laws exist: shall we be content to obey them, or shall we endeavor to amend them, and obey them until we have succeeded, or shall we transgress them at once? Men generally, under such a government as this, think that they ought to wait until they have persuaded the majority to alter them. They think that, if they should resist, the remedy would be worse than the evil. But it is the fault of the government itself that the remedy *is* worse than the evil. *It* makes it worse. Why is it not more apt to anticipate and provide for reform? Why does it not cherish its wise minority? Why does it cry and resist before it is hurt? Why does it not encourage its citizens to be on the alert to point out its faults, and *do* better than *it* would have them? Why does it always crucify Christ, and excommunicate Copernicus and Luther, and pronounce Washington and Franklin rebels?

One would think, that a deliberate and practical denial of its authority was the only offense never contemplated by government; else, why has it not assigned its definite, its suitable and proportionate penalty? If a man who has no property refuses but once to earn nine shillings for the state, he is put in prison for a period unlimited by any law that I know, and determined only by the discretion of those who placed him there; but if he should steal ninety times nine shillings from the state, he is soon permitted to go at large again.

If the injustice is part of the necessary friction of the machine of government, let it go, let it go: perchance it will wear smooth,—certainly the machine will wear out. If the injustice has a spring, or a pulley, or a rope, or a crank, exclusively for itself, then perhaps you may consider whether the remedy will not be worse than the evil; but if it is of such a nature that it requires you to be the agent of injustice to another, then, I say, break

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31 **requisitions . . . President,** President James K. Polk's call for volunteers for the war against Mexico

the law. Let your life be a counter friction to stop the machine. What I have to do is to see, at any rate, that I do not lend myself to the wrong which I condemn.

As for adopting the ways which the state has provided for remedying the evil, I know not of such ways. They take too much time, and a man's life will be gone. I have other affairs to attend to. I came into this world, not chiefly to make this a good place to live in, but to live in it, be it good or bad. A man has not everything to do, but something; and because he cannot do *everything,* it is not necessary that he should do *something* wrong. It is not my business to be petitioning the Governor or the Legislature any more than it is theirs to petition me; and if they should not hear my petition, what should I do then? But in this case the state has provided no way: its very Constitution is the evil. This may seem to be harsh and stubborn and unconciliatory; but it is to treat with the utmost kindness and consideration the only spirit that can appreciate or deserves it. So is all change for the better, like birth and death, which convulse the body.

I do not hesitate to say, that those who call themselves Abolitionists should at once effectually withdraw their support, both in person and property, from the government of Massachusetts and not wait till they constitute a majority of one, before they suffer the right to prevail through them. I think that it is enough if they have God on their side, without waiting for that other one. Moreover, any man more right than his neighbors constitutes a majority of one already.

I meet this American government, or its representative, the state government, directly, and face to face, once a year—no more—in the person of its tax-gatherer; this is the only mode in which a man situated as I am necessarily meets it; and it then says distinctly, Recognize me; and the simplest, most effectual, and, in the present posture of affairs, the indispensablest mode of treating with it on this head, of expressing your little satisfaction with and love for it, is to deny it then. My civil neighbor, the tax-gatherer, is the very man I have to deal with,—for it is, after all, with men and not with parchment that I quarrel,—and he has voluntarily chosen to be an agent of the government. How shall he ever know well what he is and does as an officer of the government, or as a man, until he is obliged to consider whether he shall treat me, his neighbor, for whom he has respect, as a neighbor and well-disposed man, or as a maniac and disturber of the peace, and see if he can get over this obstruction to his neighborliness without a ruder and more impetuous thought or speech corresponding with his action. I know this well, that if one thousand, if one hundred, if ten men whom I could name,—if ten *honest* men only,—if *one* HONEST man, in this State of Massachusetts, *ceasing to hold slaves,* were actually to withdraw from this copartnership, and be locked up in the county jail therefor, it would be the abolition of slavery in America. For it matters not how small the beginning may seem to be: what is once well done is done forever. But we love better to talk about it: that we say is our mission. Reform keeps many scores of newspapers in its service, but not one man. If my esteemed neighbor, the State's ambassador, who will devote his days to the settlement of the question of human rights in the Council Chamber, instead of being threatened with the prisons of Carolina, were to sit down the prisoner of Massachusetts, that State which is so anxious to foist the sin of slavery upon her sister,—though at present she can discover only an act of inhospitality to be the ground of a quarrel with her,—the Legislature would not wholly waive the subject the following winter.

Under a government which imprisons any unjustly, the true place for a just man is also a prison. The proper place to-day, the only place which Massachusetts has provided for her freer and less desponding spirits, is in her prisons, to be put out and locked out of the State by her own act, as they have already put themselves out by their principles. It is there that the fugitive slave, and the Mexican prisoner on parole, and the Indian come to plead the wrongs of his race should find them; on that separate, but more free and honorable ground, where the State places those who are not *with* her, but *against* her,—the only house in a slave State in which a free man can abide with honor. If any think that their influence would be lost there, and their voices no longer afflict the ear of the State, that they would not be as an enemy within its walls, they do not know by how much truth is stronger than error, nor how much more eloquently

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62 **State's ambassador,** Samuel Hoar of Concord, sent to Charleston, South Carolina, in 1844 to protest against the seizure of Negro seamen from Massachusetts, and inhospitably expelled from Charleston by "a committee of leading citizens"

and effectively he can combat injustice who has experienced a little in his own person. Cast your whole vote, not a strip of paper merely, but your whole influence. A minority is powerless while it conforms to the majority; it is not even a minority then; but it is irresistible when it clogs by its whole weight. If the alternative is to keep all just men in prison, or give up war and slavery, the State will not hesitate which to choose. If a thousand men were not to pay their tax-bills this year, that would not be a violent and bloody measure, as it would be to pay them, and enable the State to commit violence and shed innocent blood. This is, in fact, the definition of a peaceable revolution, if any such is possible. If the tax-gatherer, or any other public officer, asks me, as one has done, "But what shall I do?" my answer is, "If you really wish to do anything, resign your office." When the subject has refused allegiance, and the officer has resigned his office, then the revolution is accomplished. But even suppose blood should flow. Is there not a sort of blood shed when the conscience is wounded? Through this wound a man's real manhood and immortality flow out, and he bleeds to an everlasting death. I see this blood flowing now.

I have contemplated the imprisonment of the offender, rather than the seizure of his goods,—though both will serve the same purpose,—because they who assert the purest right, and consequently are most dangerous to a corrupt State, commonly have not spent much time in accumulating property. To such the State renders comparatively small service, and a slight tax is wont to appear exorbitant, particularly if they are obliged to earn it by special labor with their hands. If there were one who lived wholly without the use of money, the State itself would hesitate to demand it of him. But the rich man—not to make any invidious comparison—is always sold to the institution which makes him rich. Absolutely speaking, the more money, the less virtue; for money comes between a man and his objects, and obtains them for him; and it was certainly no great virtue to obtain it. It puts to rest many questions which he would otherwise be taxed to answer; while the only new question which it puts is the hard but superfluous one, how to spend it. Thus his moral ground is taken from under his feet. The opportunities of living are diminished in proportion as what are called the "means" are increased. The best thing a man can do for his culture when he is rich is to endeavor to carry out those schemes which he entertained when he was poor. Christ answered the Herodians according to their condition. "Show me the tribute-money," said he;—and one took a penny out of his pocket;—if you use the money which has the image of Cæsar on it and which he has made current and valuable, that is, *if you are men of the State,* and gladly enjoy the advantages of Cæsar's government, then pay him back some of his own when he demands it. "Render therefore to Cæsar that which is Cæsar's, and to God those things which are God's,"—leaving them no wiser than before as to which was which; for they did not wish to know.

When I converse with the freest of my neighbors, I perceive that, whatever they may say about the magnitude and seriousness of the question, and their regard for the public tranquillity, the long and the short of the matter is, that they cannot spare the protection of the existing government, and they dread the consequences to their property and families of disobedience to it. For my own part, I should not like to think that I ever rely on the protection of the State. But, if I deny the authority of the State when it presents its tax-bill, it will soon take and waste all my property, and so harass me and my children without end. This is hard. This makes it impossible for a man to live honestly, and at the same time comfortably, in outward respects. It will not be worth the while to accumulate property; that would be sure to go again. You must hire or squat somewhere, and raise but a small crop, and eat that soon. You must live within yourself, and depend upon yourself always tucked up and ready for a start, and not have many affairs. A man may grow rich in Turkey even, if he will be in all respects a good subject of the Turkish government. Confucius said: "If a state is governed by the principles of reason, poverty and misery are subjects of shame; if a state is not governed by the principles of reason, riches and honors are the subjects of shame." No: until I want the protection of Massachusetts to be extended to me in some distant Southern port, where my liberty is endangered, or until I am bent solely on building up an estate at home by peaceful enterprise, I can afford to refuse allegiance to Massachusetts, and her right to my property

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49 Show . . . God's. See Matthew 22:19-21

and life. It costs me less in every sense to incur the penalty of disobedience to the State than it would to obey. I should feel as if I were worth less in that case.

Some years ago, the State met me in behalf of the Church, and commanded me to pay a certain sum toward the support of a clergyman whose preaching my father attended, but never I myself. "Pay," it said, "or be locked up in the jail." I declined to pay. But, unfortunately, another man saw fit to pay it. I did not see why the schoolmaster should be taxed to support the priest, and not the priest the schoolmaster; for I was not the State's schoolmaster, but I supported myself by voluntary subscription. I did not see why the lyceum should not present its tax-bill, and have the State to back its demand, as well as the Church. However, at the request of the selectmen, I condescended to make some such statement as this in writing:—"Know all men by these presents, that I, Henry Thoreau, do not wish to be regarded as a member of any incorporated society which I have not joined." This I gave to the town clerk; and he has it. The State, having thus learned that I did not wish to be regarded as a member of that church, has never made a like demand on me since; though it said that it must adhere to its original presumption that time. If I had known how to name them, I should then have signed off in detail from all the societies which I never signed on to; but I did not know where to find a complete list.

I have paid no poll-tax for six years. I was put into a jail once on this account, for one night; and, as I stood considering the walls of solid stone, two or three feet thick, the door of wood and iron, a foot thick, and the iron grating which strained the light, I could not help being struck with the foolishness of that institution which treated me as if I were mere flesh and blood and bones, to be locked up. I wondered that it should have concluded at length that this was the best use it could put me to, and had never thought to avail itself of my services in some way. I saw that, if there was a wall of stone between me and my townsmen, there was a still more difficult one to climb or break through before they could get to be as free as I was. I did not for a moment feel confined, and the walls seemed a great waste of stone and mortar. I felt as if I alone of all my townsmen had paid my tax. They plainly did not know how to treat me, but behaved like persons who are underbred. In every threat and in every compliment there was a blunder; for they thought that my chief desire was to stand the other side of that stone wall. I could not but smile to see how industriously they locked the door on my meditations, which followed them out again without let or hindrance, and *they* were really all that was dangerous. As they could not reach me, they had resolved to punish my body; just as boys, if they cannot come at some person against whom they have a spite, will abuse his dog. I saw that the State was half-witted, that it was timid as a lone woman with her silver spoons, and that it did not know its friends from its foes, and I lost all my remaining respect for it, and pitied it.

Thus the State never intentionally confronts a man's sense, intellectual or moral, but only his body, his senses. It is not armed with superior wit or honesty, but with superior physical strength. I was not born to be forced. I will breathe after my own fashion. Let us see who is the strongest. What force has a multitude? They only can force me who obey a higher law than I. They force me to become like themselves. I do not hear of *men* being *forced* to live this way or that by masses of men. What sort of life were that to live? When I meet a government which says to me, "Your money or your life," why should I be in haste to give it my money? It may be in a great strait, and not know what to do: I cannot help that. It must help itself; do as I do. It is not worth the while to snivel about it. I am not responsible for the successful working of the machinery of society. I am not the son of the engineer. I perceive that, when an acorn and a chestnut fall side by side, the one does not remain inert to make way for the other, but both obey their own laws, and spring and grow and flourish as best they can, till one, perchance, overshadows and destroys the other. If a plant cannot live according to its nature, it dies; and so a man.

The night in prison was novel and interesting enough. The prisoners in their shirt-sleeves were enjoying a chat and the evening air in the doorway, when I entered. But the jailer said, "Come, boys, it is time to lock up;" and so they dispersed, and I heard the sound of their steps returning into the hollow apartments. My room-mate was introduced to me by the jailer as "a first-rate

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28 I . . . night. H. S. Canby reckons that Thoreau's famous night in jail occurred on the 23rd or 24th of July, 1846 (Thoreau, p. 473)

fellow and a clever man." When the door was locked, he showed me where to hang my hat, and how he managed matters there. The rooms were whitewashed once a month; and this one, at least, was the whitest, most simply furnished, and probably the neatest apartment in the town. He naturally wanted to know where I came from, and what brought me there; and, when I had told him, I asked him in my turn how he came there, presuming him to be an honest man, of course; and, as the world goes, I believe he was. "Why," said he, "they accuse me of burning a barn; but I never did it." As near as I could discover, he had probably gone to bed in a barn when drunk, and smoked his pipe there; and so a barn was burnt. He had the reputation of being a clever man, had been there some three months waiting for his trial to come on, and would have to wait as much longer; but he was quite domesticated and contented, since he got his board for nothing, and thought that he was well treated.

He occupied one window, and I the other; and I saw that if one stayed there long, his principal business would be to look out the window. I had soon read all the tracts that were left there, and examined where former prisoners had broken out, and where a grate had been sawed off, and heard the history of the various occupants of that room; for I found that even here there was a history and a gossip which never circulated beyond the walls of the jail. Probably this is the only house in the town where verses are composed, which are afterward printed in a circular form, but not published. I was shown quite a long list of verses which were composed by some young men who had been detected in an attempt to escape, who avenged themselves by singing them.

I pumped my fellow-prisoner as dry as I could, for fear I should never see him again; but at length he showed me which was my bed, and left me to blow out the lamp.

It was like traveling into a far country, such as I had never expected to behold, to lie there for one night. It seemed to me that I never had heard the town-clock strike before, nor the evening sounds of the village; for we slept with the windows open, which were inside the grating. It was to see my native village in the light of the Middle Ages, and our Concord was turned into a Rhine stream, and visions of knights and castles passed before me. They were the voices of old burghers that I heard in the streets. I was an involuntary spectator and auditor of whatever was done and said in the kitchen of the adjacent village-inn,—a wholly new and rare experience to me. It was a closer view of my native town. I was fairly inside of it. I never had seen its institutions before. This is one of its peculiar institutions; for it is a shire town. I began to comprehend what its inhabitants were about.

In the morning, our breakfasts were put through the hole in the door, in small oblong-square tin pans, made to fit, and holding a pint of chocolate, with brown bread, and an iron spoon. When they called for the vessels again, I was green enough to return what bread I had left; but my comrade seized it, and said that I should lay that up for lunch or dinner. Soon after he was let out to work at haying in a neighboring field, whither he went every day, and would not be back till noon; so he bade me good-day, saying that he doubted if he should see me again.

When I came out of prison,—for some one interfered, and paid that tax,—I did not perceive that great changes had taken place on the common, such as he observed who went in a youth and emerged a tottering and gray-headed man; and yet a change had to my eyes come over the scene,—the town, and State, and country,—greater than any that mere time could effect. I saw yet more distinctly the State in which I lived. I saw to what extent the people among whom I lived could be trusted as good neighbors and friends; that their friendship was for summer weather only; that they did not greatly propose to do right; that they were a distinct race from me by their prejudices and superstitions, as the Chinamen and Malays are; that in their sacrifices to humanity they ran no risks, not even to their property; that after all they were not so noble but they treated the thief as he had treated them, and hoped, by a certain outward observance and a few prayers, and by walking in a particular straight though useless path from time to time, to save their souls. This may be to judge my neighbors harshly; for I believe that many of them are not aware that they have such an institution as the jail in their village.

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1 **clever,** honest, kind, obliging; see *Dictionary of American English* • 65 **some . . . tax.** According to one report his Aunt Maria, "putting a shawl over her head, went to the jailer's door, and paid the tax and fees to Ellen Staples, her father the jailer being absent" (Canby, *Thoreau*, p. 234)

It was formerly the custom in our village, when a poor debtor came out of jail, for his acquaintances to salute him, looking through their fingers, which were crossed to represent the grating of a jail window, "How do ye do?" My neighbors did not thus salute me, but first looked at me, and then at one another, as if I had returned from a long journey. I was put into jail as I was going to the shoemaker's to get a shoe which was mended. When I was let out the next morning, I proceeded to finish my errand, and, having put on my mended shoe, joined a huckleberry party, who were impatient to put themselves under my conduct; and in half an hour,—for the horse was soon tackled,—was in the midst of a huckleberry field, on one of our highest hills, two miles off, and then the State was nowhere to be seen.

This is the whole history of "My Prisons."

I have never declined paying the highway tax, because I am as desirous of being a good neighbor as I am of being a bad subject; and as for supporting schools, I am doing my part to educate my fellow-countrymen now. It is for no particular item in the tax-bill that I refuse to pay it. I simply wish to refuse allegiance to the State, to withdraw and stand aloof from it effectually. I do not care to trace the course of my dollar, if I could, till it buys a man or a musket to shoot with,—the dollar is innocent,—but I am concerned to trace the effects of my allegiance. In fact, I quietly declare war with the State, after my fashion, though I will still make what use and get what advantage of her I can, as is usual in such cases.

If others pay the tax which is demanded of me, from a sympathy with the State, they do but what they have already done in their own case, or rather they abet injustice to a greater extent than the State requires. If they pay the tax from a mistaken interest in the individual taxed, to save his property, or prevent his going to jail, it is because they have not considered wisely how far they let their private feelings interfere with the public good.

This, then, is my position at present. But one cannot be too much on his guard in such a case, lest his action be biased by obstinacy or an undue regard for the opinions of men. Let him see that he does only what belongs to himself and to the hour.

I think sometimes, Why, this people mean well, they are only ignorant; they would do better if they knew how: why give your neighbors this pain to treat you as they are not inclined to? But I think again, This is no reason why I should do as they do, or permit others to suffer much greater pain of a different kind. Again, I sometimes say to myself, When many millions of men, without heat, without ill will, without personal feeling of any kind, demand of you a few shillings only, without the possibility, such is their constitution, of retracting or altering their present demand, and without the possibility, on your side, of appeal to any other millions, why expose yourself to this overwhelming brute force? You do not resist cold and hunger, the winds and the waves, thus obstinately; you quietly submit to a thousand similar necessities. You do not put your head into the fire. But just in proportion as I regard this as not wholly a brute force, but partly a human force, and consider that I have relations to those millions as to so many millions of men, and not of mere brute or inanimate things, I see that appeal is possible, first and instantaneously, from them to the Maker of them, and, secondly, from them to themselves. But if I put my head deliberately into the fire, there is no appeal to fire or to the Maker of fire, and I have only myself to blame. If I could convince myself that I have any right to be satisfied with men as they are, and to treat them accordingly, and not according, in some respects, to my requisitions and expectations of what they and I ought to be, then, like a good Mussulman and fatalist, I should endeavor to be satisfied with things as they are, and say it is the will of God. And, above all, there is this difference between resisting this and a purely brute or natural force, that I can resist this with some effect; but I cannot expect, like Orpheus, to change the nature of the rocks and trees and beasts.

I do not wish to quarrel with any man or nation. I do not wish to split hairs, to make fine distinctions, or set myself up as better than my neighbors. I seek rather, I may say, even an excuse for conforming to the laws of the land. I am but too ready to conform to them. Indeed, I have reason to suspect myself on this head; and each year, as the tax-gatherer comes round, I find myself

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17 **My Prisons.** Silvio Pellico (1789-1854), Italian patriot, told the story of his imprisonment by the Austrians in *Le mie prigioni* (1832), to which Thoreau seems to allude

disposed to review the acts and position of the general and State governments, and the spirit of the people, to discover a pretext for conformity.

> "We must affect our country as our parents,
> And if at any time we alienate
> Our love or industry from doing it honor,
> We must respect effects and teach the soul
> Matter of conscience and religion,
> And not desire of rule or benefit."

I believe that the State will soon be able to take all my work of this sort out of my hands, and then I shall be no better a patriot than my fellow-countrymen. Seen from a lower point of view, the Constitution, with all its faults, is very good; the law and the courts are very respectable; even this State and this American government are, in many respects, very admirable, and rare things, to be thankful for, such as a great many have described them; but seen from a point of view a little higher, they are what I have described them; seen from a higher still, and the highest, who shall say what they are, or that they are worth looking at or thinking of at all?

However, the government does not concern me much, and I shall bestow the fewest possible thoughts on it. It is not many moments that I live under a government, even in this world. If a man is thought-free, fancy-free, imagination-free, that which *is not* never for a long time appearing *to be* to him, unwise rulers or reformers cannot fatally interrupt him.

I know that most men think differently from myself; but those whose lives are by profession devoted to the study of these or kindred subjects content me as little as any. Statesmen and legislators, standing so completely within the institution, never distinctly and nakedly behold it. They speak of moving society, but have no resting-place without it. They may be men of a certain experience and discrimination, and have no doubt invented ingenious and even useful systems, for which we sincerely thank them; but all their wit and usefulness lie within certain not very wide limits. They are wont to forget that the world is not governed by policy and expediency. Webster never goes behind government, and so cannot speak with authority about it. His words are wisdom to those legislators who contemplate no essential reform in the existing government; but for thinkers, and those who legislate for all time, he never once glances at the subject. I know of those whose serene and wise speculations on this theme would soon reveal the limits of his mind's range and hospitality. Yet, compared with the cheap professions of most reformers, and the still cheaper wisdom and eloquence of politicians in general, his are almost the only sensible and valuable words, and we thank Heaven for him. Comparatively, he is always strong, original, and, above all, practical. Still, his quality is not wisdom, but prudence. The lawyer's truth is not Truth, but consistency or a consistent expediency. Truth is always in harmony with herself, and is not concerned chiefly to reveal the justice that may consist with wrong-doing. He well deserves to be called, as he has been called, the Defender of the Constitution. There are really no blows to be given by him but defensive ones. He is not a leader, but a follower. His leaders are the men of '87. "I have never made an effort," he says, "and never propose to make an effort; I have never countenanced an effort, and never mean to countenance an effort, to disturb the arrangement as originally made, by which the various States came into the Union." Still thinking of the sanction which the Constitution gives to slavery, he says, "Because it was a part of the original compact,—let it stand." Notwithstanding his special acuteness and ability, he is unable to take a fact out of its merely political relations, and behold it as it lies absolutely to be disposed of by the intellect,—what, for instance, it behooves a man to do here in America to-day with regard to slavery,—but ventures, or is driven to make some such desperate answer as the following, while professing to speak absolutely, and as a private man,—from which what new and singular code of social duties might be inferred? "The manner," says he, "in which the governments of those States where slavery exists are to regulate it is for their own consideration, under their responsibility to their constituents, to the general laws of propriety, humanity, and justice, and to God. Associations formed elsewhere, springing from a feeling of humanity, or other cause, have nothing whatever to do with it. They have never received any encouragement from me, and they never will."

They who know of no purer sources of truth, who have

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62 men of '87, the framers of the Constitution, in 1787

traced up its stream no higher, stand, and wisely stand, by the Bible and the Constitution, and drink at it there with reverence and humility; but they who behold where it comes trickling into this lake or that pool, gird up their loins once more, and continue their pilgrimage toward its fountain-head.

No man with a genius for legislation has appeared in America. They are rare in the history of the world. There are orators, politicians, and eloquent men, by the thousand; but the speaker has not yet opened his mouth to speak who is capable of settling the much-vexed questions of the day. We love eloquence for its own sake, and not for any truth which it may utter, or any heroism it may inspire. Our legislators have not yet learned the comparative value of free-trade and of freedom, of union, and of rectitude, to a nation. They have no genius or talent for comparatively humble questions of taxation and finance, commerce and manufactures and agriculture. If we were left solely to the wordy wit of legislators in Congress for our guidance, uncorrected by the seasonable experience and the effectual complaints of the people, America would not long retain her rank among the nations. For eighteen hundred years, though perchance I have no right to say it, the New Testament has been written; yet where is the legislator who has wisdom and practical talent enough to avail himself of the light which it sheds on the science of legislation?

The authority of government, even such as I am willing to submit to,—for I will cheerfully obey those who know and can do better than I, and in many things even those who neither know nor can do so well,—is still an impure one: to be strictly just, it must have the sanction and consent of the governed. It can have no pure right over my person and property but what I concede to it. The progress from an absolute to a limited monarchy, from a limited monarchy to a democracy, is a progress toward a true respect for the individual. Even the Chinese philosopher was wise enough to regard the individual as the basis of the empire. Is a democracy, such as we know it, the last improvement possible in government? Is it not possible to take a step further towards recognizing and organizing the rights of man? There will never be a really free and enlightened State until the State comes to recognize the individual as a higher and independent power, from which all its own power and authority are derived, and treats him accordingly. I please myself with imagining a State at last which can afford to be just to all men, and to treat the individual with respect as a neighbor; which even would not think it inconsistent with its own repose if a few were to live aloof from it, not meddling with it, nor embraced by it, who fulfilled all the duties of neighbors and fellow-men. A State which bore this kind of fruit, and suffered it to drop off as fast as it ripened, would prepare the way for a still more perfect and glorious State, which also I have imagined, but not yet anywhere seen.

1849

From • Walden

Where I Lived, and What I Lived For

Walden, the record of Thoreau's stay at Walden Pond from July 4, 1845, to September 6, 1847, was first published in 1854. It is Thoreau's best book and has come to be universally regarded as a great American classic. The book consists of eighteen chapters, as follows: "Economy," "Where I Lived and What I Lived For," "Reading," "Sounds," "Solitude," "Visitors," "The Bean Field," "The Village," "The Ponds," "Baker Farm," "Higher Laws," "Brute Neighbors," "House-Warming," "Former Inhabitants and Winter Visitors," "Winter Animals," "The Pond in Winter," "Spring," "Conclusion." Although "Thoreau's strength," as H. S. Canby has observed, "was in the sentence and paragraph, not in the ordered whole," F. O. Matthiessen (**American Renaissance**, pp. 168-170) has ingeniously demonstrated "the firmness with which Thoreau binds his successive links" in **Walden**.

"My purpose in going to Walden Pond," Thoreau wrote in the opening chapter, "was not to live cheaply nor to live dearly there, but to transact some private business

with the fewest obstacles." The "private business" consisted chiefly of the study of nature and in reading and writing. "My residence," he added, "was more favourable, not only to thought, but to serious reading, than a university."

At a certain season of our life we are accustomed to consider every spot as the possible site of a house. I have thus surveyed the country on every side within a dozen miles of where I live. In imagination I have bought all the farms in succession, for all were to be bought, and I knew their price. I walked over each farmer's premises, tasted his wild apples, discoursed on husbandry with him, took his farm at his price, at any price, mortgaging it to him in my mind; even put a higher price on it,—took everything but a deed of it,—took his word for his deed, for I dearly love to talk,—cultivated it, and him too to some extent, I trust, and withdrew when I had enjoyed it long enough, leaving him to carry it on. This experience entitled me to be regarded as a sort of real-estate broker by my friends. Wherever I sat, there I might live, and the landscape radiated from me accordingly. What is a house but a *sedes,* a seat?—better if a country seat. I discovered many a site for a house not likely to be soon improved, which some might have thought too far from the village, but to my eyes the village was too far from it. Well, there I might live, I said; and there I did live, for an hour, a summer and a winter life; saw how I could let the years run off, buffet the winter through, and see the spring come in. The future inhabitants of this region, wherever they may place their houses, may be sure that they have been anticipated. An afternoon sufficed to lay out the land into orchard, wood-lot, and pasture, and to decide what fine oaks or pines should be left to stand before the door, and whence each blasted tree could be seen to the best advantage; and then I let it lie, fallow perchance, for a man is rich in proportion to the number of things which he can afford to let alone.

My imagination carried me so far that I even had the refusal of several farms,—the refusal was all I wanted,—but I never got my fingers burned by actual possession. The nearest that I came to actual possession was when I bought the Hollowell place, and had begun to sort my seeds, and collected materials with which to make a wheelbarrow to carry it on or off with; but before the owner gave me a deed of it, his wife—every man has such a wife—changed her mind and wished to keep it, and he offered me ten dollars to release him. Now, to speak the truth, I had but ten cents in the world, and it surpassed my arithmetic to tell, if I was that man who had ten cents, or who had a farm, or ten dollars, or all together. However, I let him keep the ten dollars and the farm too, for I had carried it far enough; or rather, to be generous, I sold him the farm for just what I gave for it, and, as he was not a rich man, made him a present of ten dollars, and still had my ten cents, and seeds, and materials for a wheelbarrow left. I found thus that I had been a rich man without any damage to my poverty. But I retained the landscape, and I have since annually carried off what it yielded without a wheelbarrow. With respect to landscapes,—

> "I am monarch of all I *survey,*
> My right there is none to dispute."

I have frequently seen a poet withdraw, having enjoyed the most valuable part of a farm, while the crusty farmer supposed that he had got a few wild apples only. Why, the owner does not know it for many years when a poet has put his farm in rime, the most admirable kind of invisible fence, has fairly impounded it, milked it, skimmed it, and got all the cream, and left the farmer only the skimmed milk.

The real attractions of the Hollowell farm, to me, were: its complete retirement, being about two miles from the village, half a mile from the nearest neighbor, and separated from the highway by a broad field; its bounding on the river, which the owner said protected it by its fogs from frosts in the spring, though that was nothing to me; the gray color and ruinous state of the house and barn, and the dilapidated fences, which put such an

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57 I . . . dispute, from William Cowper's "Verses supposed to be written by Alexander Selkirk" (1782). By italicizing "survey," Thoreau makes a punning reference to his occupation as surveyor • 63 a poet . . . rime. The thought is Emersonian. Compare, for example, in Emerson's "The Apology" (1846):

> One harvest from thy field
> Homeward brought the oxen strong;
> A second crop thine acres yield,
> Which I gather in a song.

interval between me and the last occupant; the hollow and lichen-covered apple trees, gnawed by rabbits, showing what kind of neighbors I should have; but above all, the recollection I had of it from my earliest voyages up the river, when the house was concealed behind a dense grove of red maples, through which I heard the house-dog bark. I was in haste to buy it, before the proprietor finished getting out some rocks, cutting down the hollow apple trees, and grubbing up some young birches which had sprung up in the pasture, or, in short, had made any more of his improvements. To enjoy these advantages I was ready to carry it on; like Atlas, to take the world on my shoulders,—I never heard what compensation he received for that,—and do all those things which had no other motive or excuse but that I might pay for it and be unmolested in my possession of it; for I knew all the while that it would yield the most abundant crop of the kind I wanted, if I could only afford to let it alone. But it turned out as I have said.

All that I could say, then, with respect to farming on a large scale—I have always cultivated a garden—was, that I had had my seeds ready. Many think that seeds improve with age. I have no doubt that time discriminates between the good and the bad; and when at last I shall plant, I shall be less likely to be disappointed. But I would say to my fellows, once for all, As long as possible live free and uncommitted. It makes but little difference whether you are committed to a farm or the county jail.

Old Cato, whose "De Re Rusticâ" is my "Cultivator," says,—and the only translation I have seen makes sheer nonsense of the passage,—"When you think of getting a farm turn it thus in your mind, not to buy greedily; nor spare your pains to look at it, and do not think it enough to go round it once. The oftener you go there the more it will please you, if it is good." I think I shall not buy greedily, but go round and round it as long as I live, and be buried in it first, that it may please me the more at last.

The present was my next experiment of this kind, which I purpose to describe more at length, for convenience putting the experience of two years into one. As I have said, I do not propose to write an ode to dejection, but to brag as lustily as chanticleer in the morning, standing on his roost, if only to wake my neighbors up.

When first I took up my abode in the woods, that is, began to spend my nights as well as days there, which, by accident, was on Independence Day, or the Fourth of July, 1845, my house was not finished for winter, but was merely a defence against the rain, without plastering or chimney, the walls being of rough, weather-stained boards, with wide chinks, which made it cool at night. The upright white hewn studs and freshly planed door and window casings gave it a clean and airy look, especially in the morning, when its timbers were saturated with dew, so that I fancied that by noon some sweet gum would exude from them. To my imagination it retained throughout the day more or less of this auroral character, reminding me of a certain house on a mountain which I had visited a year before. This was an airy and unplastered cabin, fit to entertain a travelling god, and where a goddess might trail her garments. The winds which passed over my dwelling were such as sweep over the ridges of mountains, bearing the broken strains, or celestial parts only, of terrestrial music. The morning wind forever blows, the poem of creation is uninterrupted; but few are the ears that hear it. Olympus is but the outside of the earth everywhere.

The only house I had been the owner of before, if I except a boat, was a tent, which I used occasionally when making excursions in the summer, and this is still rolled up in my garret; but the boat, after passing from hand to hand, has gone down the stream of time. With this more substantial shelter about me, I had made some progress toward settling in the world. This frame, so slightly clad, was a sort of crystallization around me, and reacted on the builder. It was suggestive somewhat as a picture in outlines. I did not need to go outdoors to take the air, for the atmosphere within had lost none of its freshness. It was not so much within-doors as behind a door where I sat, even in the rainiest weather. The Harivansa says, "An abode without birds is like a meat

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30 **Old Cato,** Marcus Porcius Cato (234-149 B.C.), Roman patriot • 30 **De Re Rusticâ,** concerning country life • 30 **Cultivator,** a farm implement • 43 **ode to dejection.** Coleridge had written "Dejection: an Ode" (1802), and Shelley had composed "Stanzas Written in Dejection near Naples" (1824) • 72 **the boat.** The boat which was used in 1839 by Thoreau and his brother John on the famous voyage described in **A Week on the Concord and Merrimack Rivers** was purchased by Hawthorne in 1842 for seven dollars (see **The American Notebooks by Nathaniel Hawthorne** • 82 **Harivansa,** a Sanskrit epic poem of the fifth century A.D.

without seasoning." Such was not my abode, for I found myself suddenly neighbor to the birds; not by having imprisoned one, but having caged myself near them. I was not only nearer to some of those which commonly frequent the garden and the orchard, but to those wilder and more thrilling songsters of the forest which never, or rarely, serenade a villager,—the wood thrush, the veery, the scarlet tanager, the field sparrow, the whip-poor-will, and many others.

I was seated by the shore of a small pond, about a mile and a half south of the village of Concord and somewhat higher than it, in the midst of an extensive wood between that town and Lincoln, and about two miles south of that our only field known to fame, Concord Battle Ground; but I was so low in the woods that the opposite shore, half a mile off, like the rest, covered with wood, was my most distant horizon. For the first week, whenever I looked out on the pond it impressed me like a tarn high up on the side of a mountain, its bottom far above the surface of other lakes, and, as the sun arose, I saw it throwing off its nightly clothing of mist, and here and there, by degrees, its soft ripples or its smooth reflecting surface was revealed, while the mists, like ghosts, were stealthily withdrawing in every direction into the woods, as at the breaking up of some nocturnal conventicle. The very dew seemed to hang upon the trees later into the day than usual, as on the sides of mountains.

This small lake was of most value as a neighbor in the intervals of a gentle rain-storm in August, when, both air and water being perfectly still, but the sky overcast, mid-afternoon had all the serenity of evening, and the wood thrush sang around, and was heard from shore to shore. A lake like this is never smoother than at such a time; and the clear portion of the air above it being shallow and darkened by clouds, the water, full of light and reflections, becomes a lower heaven itself so much the more important. From a hilltop near by, where the wood had been recently cut off, there was a pleasing vista southward across the pond, through a wide indentation in the hills which form the shore there, where their opposite sides sloping toward each other suggested a stream flowing out in that direction through a wooded valley, but stream there was none. That way I looked between and over the near green hills to some distant and higher ones in the horizon, tinged with blue. Indeed, by standing on tiptoe I could catch a glimpse of some of the peaks of the still bluer and more distant mountain ranges in the northwest, those true-blue coins from heaven's own mint, and also of some portion of the village. But in other directions, even from this point, I could not see over or beyond the woods which surrounded me. It is well to have some water in your neighborhood, to give buoyancy to and float the earth. One value even of the smallest well is, that when you look into it you see that earth is not continent but insular. This is as important as that it keeps butter cool. When I looked across the pond from this peak toward the Sudbury meadows, which in time of flood I distinguished elevated perhaps by a mirage in their seething valley, like a coin in a basin, all the earth beyond the pond appeared like a thin crust insulated and floated even by this small sheet of intervening water, and I was reminded that this on which I dwelt was but *dry land.*

Though the view from my door was still more contracted, I did not feel crowded or confined in the least. There was pasture enough for my imagination. The low shrub oak plateau to which the opposite shore arose stretched away toward the prairies of the West and the steppes of Tartary, affording ample room for all the roving families of men. "There are none happy in the world but beings who enjoy freely a vast horizon,"—said Damodara, when his herds required new and larger pastures.

Both place and time were changed, and I dwelt nearer to those parts of the universe and to those eras in history which had most attracted me. Where I lived was as far off as many a region viewed nightly by astronomers. We are wont to imagine rare and delectable places in some remote and more celestial corner of the system, behind the constellation of Cassiopeia's Chair, far from noise and disturbance. I discovered that my house actually had its site in such a withdrawn, but forever new and unprofaned, part of the universe. If it were worth the while to settle in those parts near to the Pleiades or the Hyades, to Aldebaran or Altair, then I was really there, or at an equal remoteness from the life which I had left behind, dwindled and twinkling with as fine a ray to my nearest neighbor, and to be seen only in moonless nights by him. Such was that part of creation where I had squatted;—

"There was a shepherd that did live,
And held his thoughts as high

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69 Tartary, an indefinite region including Asia and Europe from the Sea of Japan to the Dnieper River • 71 Damodara, the Hindu divinity Krishna • 83 Pleiades . . . Hyades, constellations • 84 Aldebaran . . . Altair, bright stars

As were the mounts whereon his flocks
Did hourly feed him by."

What should we think of the shepherd's life if his flocks always wandered to higher pastures than his thoughts?

Every morning was a cheerful invitation to make my life of equal simplicity, and I may say innocence, with Nature herself. I have been as sincere a worshipper of Aurora as the Greeks. I got up early and bathed in the pond; that was a religious exercise, and one of the best things which I did. They say that characters were engraven on the bathing tub of King Tching-thang to this effect: "Renew thyself completely each day; do it again, and again, and forever again." I can understand that. Morning brings back the heroic ages. I was as much affected by the faint hum of a mosquito making its invisible and unimaginable tour through my apartment at earliest dawn, when I was sitting with door and windows open, as I could be by any trumpet that ever sang of fame. It was Homer's requiem; itself an Iliad and Odyssey in the air, singing its own wrath and wanderings. There was something cosmical about it; a standing advertisement, till forbidden, of the everlasting vigor and fertility of the world. The morning, which is the most memorable season of the day, is the awakening hour. Then there is least somnolence in us; and for an hour, at least, some part of us awakes which slumbers all the rest of the day and night. Little is to be expected of that day, if it can be called a day, to which we are not awakened by our Genius, but by the mechanical nudgings of some servitor, are not awakened by our own newly acquired force and aspirations from within, accompanied by the undulations of celestial music, instead of factory bells, and a fragrance filling the air—to a higher life than we fell asleep from; and thus the darkness bear its fruit, and prove itself to be good, no less than the light. That man who does not believe that each day contains an earlier, more sacred, and auroral hour than he has yet profaned, has despaired of life, and is pursuing a descending and darkening way. After a partial cessation of his sensuous life, the soul of man, or its organs rather, are reinvigorated each day, and his Genius tries again what noble life it can make. All memorable events, I should say, transpire in morning time and in a morning atmosphere. The Vedas say, "All intelligences awake with the morning." Poetry and art, and the fairest and most memorable of the actions of men, date from such an hour. All poets and heroes, like Memnon, are the children of Aurora, and emit their music at sunrise. To him whose elastic and vigorous thought keeps pace with the sun, the day is a perpetual morning. It matters not what the clocks say or the attitudes and labors of men. Morning is when I am awake and there is a dawn in me. Moral reform is the effort to throw off sleep. Why is it that men give so poor an account of their day if they have not been slumbering? They are not such poor calculators. If they had not been overcome with drowsiness, they would have performed something. The millions are awake enough for physical labor; but only one in a million is awake enough for effective intellectual exertion, only one in a hundred millions to a poetic or divine life. To be awake is to be alive. I have never yet met a man who was quite awake. How could I have looked him in the face?

We must learn to reawaken and keep ourselves awake, not by mechanical aids, but by an infinite expectation of the dawn, which does not forsake us in our soundest sleep. I know of no more encouraging fact than the unquestionable ability of man to elevate his life by a conscious endeavor. It is something to be able to paint a particular picture, or to carve a statue, and so to make a few objects beautiful; but it is far more glorious to carve and paint the very atmosphere and medium through which we look, which morally we can do. To affect the quality of the day, that is the highest of arts. Every man is tasked to make his life, even in its details, worthy of the contemplation of his most elevated and critical hour. If we refused, or rather used up, such paltry information as we get, the oracles would distinctly inform us how this might be done.

I went to the woods because I wished to live deliber-

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20 singing . . . wanderings, the wrath of Achilles in the **Iliad**, the wanderings of Odysseus in the **Odyssey** • 44 **Vedas**, the sacred literature of the Hindus • 47 **Memnon**. See note, p. 504. His statue made a harplike sound at sunrise • 78 **I . . . because**. This paragraph should be compared with the following equally notable passage in the last chapter of **Walden**: "I left the woods for as good a reason as I went there. Perhaps it seemed to me that I had several more lives to live, and could not spare any more time for that one. It is remarkable how easily and insensibly we fall into a particular route, and make a beaten track for ourselves. I had not lived there a week before my feet wore a path from my door to the pondside; and though it is five or six years since I trod it, it is still quite distinct. It is true, I fear, that others may have fallen into it, and so helped to keep it open. The surface of the earth is soft and impressible by the feet of men; and so with the paths which the mind travels. How worn and dusty, then, must be the highways of the world, how deep the ruts of tradition and conformity! I did not wish to take a cabin passage, but rather to go before the mast and on the deck of the world, for there I could best see the moonlight amid the mountains. I do not wish to go below now"

ately, to front only the essential facts of life, and see if I could not learn what it had to teach, and not, when I came to die, discover that I had not lived. I did not wish to live what was not life, living is so dear; nor did I wish to practise resignation, unless it was quite necessary. I wanted to live deep and suck out all the marrow of life, to live so sturdily and Spartan-like as to put to rout all that was not life, to cut a broad swath and shave close, to drive life into a corner, and reduce it to its lowest terms, and, if it proved to be mean, why then to get the whole and genuine meanness of it, and publish its meanness to the world; or if it were sublime, to know it by experience, and be able to give a true account of it in my next excursion. For most men, it appears to me, are in a strange uncertainty about it, whether it is of the devil or of God, and have *somewhat hastily* concluded that it is the chief end of man here to "glorify God and enjoy him forever."

Still we live meanly, like ants; though the fable tells us that we were long ago changed into men; like pygmies we fight with cranes; it is error upon error, and clout upon clout, and our best virtue has for its occasion a superfluous and evitable wretchedness. Our life is frittered away by detail. An honest man has hardly need to count more than his ten fingers, or in extreme cases he may add his ten toes, and lump the rest. Simplicity, simplicity, simplicity! I say, let your affairs be as two or three, and not a hundred or a thousand; instead of a million count half a dozen, and keep your accounts on your thumb-nail. In the midst of this chopping sea of civilized life, such are the clouds and storms and quicksands and thousand-and-one items to be allowed for, that a man has to live, if he would not founder and go to the bottom and not make his port at all, by dead reckoning, and he must be a great calculator indeed who succeeds. Simplify, simplify. Instead of three meals a day, if it be necessary eat but one; instead of a hundred dishes, five; and reduce other things in proportion. Our life is like a German Confederacy, made up of petty states, with its boundary forever fluctuating, so that even a German cannot tell you how it is bounded at any moment. The nation itself, with all its so-called internal improvements, which, by the way, are all external and superficial, is just such an unwieldy and overgrown establishment, cluttered with furniture and tripped up by its own traps, ruined by luxury and heedless expense, by want of calculation and a worthy aim, as the million households in the land; and the only cure for it, as for them, is in a rigid economy, a stern and more than Spartan simplicity of life and elevation of purpose. It lives too fast. Men think that it is essential that the *Nation* have commerce, and export ice, and talk through a telegraph, and ride thirty miles an hour, without a doubt, whether *they* do or not; but whether we should live like baboons or like men, is a little uncertain. If we do not get out sleepers, and forge rails, and devote days and nights to the work, but go to tinkering upon our *lives* to improve *them,* who will build railroads? And if railroads are not built, how shall we get to Heaven in season? But if we stay at home and mind our business, who will want railroads? We do not ride on the railroad; it rides upon us. Did you ever think what those sleepers are that underlie the railroad? Each one is a man, an Irishman, or a Yankee man. The rails are laid on them, and they are covered with sand, and the cars run smoothly over them. They are sound sleepers, I assure you. And every few years a new lot is laid down and run over; so that, if some have the pleasure of riding on a rail, others have the misfortune to be ridden upon. And when they run over a man that is walking in his sleep, a supernumerary sleeper in the wrong position, and wake him up, they suddenly stop the cars, and make a hue and cry about it, as if this were an exception. I am glad to know that it takes a gang of men for every five miles to keep the sleepers down and level in their beds as it is, for this is a sign that they may sometime get up again.

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16 **chief . . . forever,** an alluson to the Westminster Catechism, formulated by the famous Westminster Assembly in 1643 • 33 **dead reckoning,** the method of finding the position of a ship without the aid of celestial observations, from a record of the courses sailed and the distance made on each course • 37 **German Confederacy.** The German Confederation, set up by the Congress of Vienna in 1815, was loosely formed and inefficient. Modern, unified Germany dates from 1871 • 54 **sleepers,** railroad ties • 57 **railroads . . . Heaven.** Thoreau perhaps remembered Hawthorne's satirical sketch, "The Celestial Railroad" (1843) • 59 **We . . . us.** Emerson had expressed the same thought in the "Ode to Channing" (1846): "Things are in the saddle, And ride mankind." Despite Thoreau's disapproval of the railroad in theory, trains and trainmen had a romantic appeal for him. In the chapter on "Sounds" in Walden, he wrote: "On this morning of the great Snow, . . . I hear the muffled tone of their engine bell from out the fog bank of their chilled breath, which announces that the cars are coming, without long delay, notwithstanding the veto of a New England north-east snow-storm, and I behold the plowmen covered with snow and rime, their heads peering above the mould-board . . . I am refreshed and expanded when the freight train rattles past me, and I smell the stores which go dispensing their odors all the way from Long Wharf to Lake Champlain . . ."

Why should we live with such hurry and waste of life? We are determined to be starved before we are hungry. Men say that a stitch in time saves nine, and so they take a thousand stitches to-day to save nine to-morrow. As for *work,* we haven't any of any consequence. We have the Saint Vitus' dance, and cannot possibly keep our heads still. If I should only give a few pulls at the parish bell-rope, as for a fire, that is, without setting the bell, there is hardly a man on his farm in the outskirts of Concord, notwithstanding that press of engagements which was his excuse so many times this morning, nor a boy, nor a woman, I might almost say, but would forsake all and follow that sound, not mainly to save property from the flames, but, if we will confess the truth, much more to see it burn, since burn it must, and we, be it known, did not set it on fire,—or to see it put out, and have a hand in it, if that is done as handsomely; yes, even if it were the parish church itself. Hardly a man takes a half-hour's nap after dinner, but when he wakes he holds up his head and asks, "What's the news?" as if the rest of mankind had stood his sentinels. Some give directions to be waked every half-hour, doubtless for no other purpose; and then, to pay for it, they tell what they have dreamed. After a night's sleep the news is as indispensable as the breakfast. "Pray tell me anything new that has happened to a man anywhere on this globe,"—and he reads it over his coffee and rolls, that a man has had his eyes gouged out this morning on the Wachito River; never dreaming the while that he lives in the dark unfathomed mammoth cave of this world, and has but the rudiment of an eye himself.

For my part, I could easily do without the post-office. I think that there are very few important communications made through it. To speak critically, I never received more than one or two letters in my life—I wrote this some years ago—that were worth the postage. The penny-post is, commonly, an institution through which you seriously offer a man that penny for his thoughts which is so often safely offered in jest. And I am sure that I never read any memorable news in a newspaper. If we read of one man robbed, or murdered, or killed by accident, or one house burned, or one vessel wrecked, or one steamboat blown up, or one cow run over on the Western Railroad, or one mad dog killed, or one lot of grasshoppers in the winter,—we never need read of another. One is enough. If you are acquainted with the principle, what do you care for a myriad instances and applications? To a philosopher all *news,* as it is called, is gossip, and they who edit and read it are old women over their tea. Yet not a few are greedy after this gossip. There was such a rush, as I hear, the other day at one of the offices to learn the foreign news by the last arrival, that several large squares of plate glass belonging to the establishment were broken by the pressure,—news which I seriously think a ready wit might write a twelve month, or twelve years, beforehand with sufficient accuracy. As for Spain, for instance, if you know how to throw in Don Carlos and the Infanta, and Don Pedro and Seville and Granada, from time to time in the right proportions,—they may have changed the names a little since I saw the papers,—and serve up a bull-fight when other entertainments fail, it will be true to the letter, and give us as good an idea of the exact state or ruin of things in Spain as the most succinct and lucid reports under this head in the newspapers: and as for England, almost the last significant scrap of news from that quarter was the revolution of 1649; and if you have learned the history of her crops for an average year, you never need attend to that thing again, unless your speculations are of a merely pecuniary character. If one may judge who rarely looks into the newspapers, nothing new does ever happen in foreign parts, a French revolution not excepted.

What news! how much more important to know what that is which was never old! "Kieou-he-yu (great dignitary of the state of Wei) sent a man to Khoung-tseu to know his news. Khoung-tseu caused the messenger to be seated near him, and questioned him in these terms: What is your master doing? The messenger answered with respect: My master desires to diminish the number of his faults, but he cannot come to the end of them. The messenger being gone, the philosopher remarked: What

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28 **Wachito River,** Ouachita River in Arkansas, at that time a "frontier" region. A. B. Longstreet's "The Fight" in **Georgia Scenes** (1835) gives some notion of the brutality of the frontier in the old Southwest • 29 **dark . . . cave,** a double allusion to the Mammoth Cave of Kentucky and "The dark unfathomed caves" of Gray's elegy • 66 **revolution of 1649,** the English Civil War, which resulted in the victory of Cromwell and the execution of Charles I in 1649. The statement seems to show marked Puritan and democratic (or anti-royalist) sympathies • 72 **French revolution.** Since the great revolution of 1789, there had been frequent changes in the French government, the latest having been the revolution of 1848 and the coup d'état of 1851 • 74 **Kieou-he-yu . . . messenger,** from the **Analects** of Confucius

a worthy messenger! What a worthy messenger!" The preacher, instead of vexing the ears of drowsy farmers on their day of rest at the end of the week,—for Sunday is the fit conclusion of an ill-spent week, and not the fresh and brave beginning of a new one,—with this one other draggle-tail of a sermon, should shout with thundering voice, "Pause! Avast! Why so seeming fast, but deadly slow?"

Shams and delusions are esteemed for soundest truths, while reality is fabulous. If men would steadily observe realities only, and not allow themselves to be deluded, life, to compare it with such things as we know, would be like a fairy tale and the Arabian Nights' Entertainments. If we respected only what is inevitable and has a right to be, music and poetry would resound along the streets. When we are unhurried and wise, we perceive that only great and worthy things have any permanent and absolute existence, that petty fears and petty pleasures are but the shadow of the reality. This is always exhilarating and sublime. By closing the eyes and slumbering, and consenting to be deceived by shows, men establish and confirm their daily life of routine and habit everywhere, which still is built on purely illusory foundations. Children, who play life, discern its true law and relations more clearly than men, who fail to live it worthily, but who think that they are wiser by experience, that is, by failure. I have read in a Hindoo book, that "there was a king's son, who, being expelled in infancy from his native city, was brought up by a forester, and, growing up to maturity in that state, imagined himself to belong to the barbarous race with which he lived. One of his father's ministers having discovered him, revealed to him what he was, and the misconception of his character was removed, and he knew himself to be a prince. So soul," continues the Hindoo philosopher, "from the circumstances in which it is placed, mistakes its own character, until the truth is revealed to it by some holy teacher, and then it knows itself to be *Brahme*." I perceive that we inhabitants of New England live this mean life that we do because our vision does not penetrate the surface of things. We think that that *is* which *appears* to be. If a man should walk through this town and see only the reality, where, think you, would the "Mill-dam" go to? If he should give us an account of the realities he beheld there, we should not recognize the place in his description. Look at a meeting-house, or a court-house, or a jail, or a shop, or a dwelling-house, and say what that thing really is before a true gaze, and they would all go to pieces in your account of them. Men esteem truth remote, in the outskirts of the system behind the farthest star, before Adam and after the last man. In eternity there is indeed something true and sublime. But all these times and places and occasions are now and here. God himself culminates in the present moment, and will never be more divine in the lapse of all the ages. And we are enabled to apprehend at all what is sublime and noble only by the perpetual instilling and drenching of the reality that surrounds us. The universe constantly and obediently answers to our conceptions; whether we travel fast or slow, the track is laid for us. Let us spend our lives in conceiving then. The poet or the artist never yet had so fair and noble a design but some of his posterity at least could accomplish it.

Let us spend one day as deliberately as Nature, and not be thrown off the track by every nutshell and mosquito's wing that falls on the rails. Let us rise early and fast, or break fast, gently and without perturbation; let company come and let company go, let the bells ring and the children cry,—determined to make a day of it. Why should we knock under and go with the stream? Let us not be upset and overwhelmed in that terrible rapid and whirlpool called a dinner, situated in the meridian shallows. Weather this danger and you are safe, for the rest of the way is down hill. With unrelaxed nerves, with morning vigor, sail by it, looking another way, tied to the mast like Ulysses. If the engine whistles, let it whistle till it is hoarse for its pains. If the bell rings, why should we run? We will consider what kind of music they are like. Let us settle ourselves, and work and wedge our feet downward through the mud and slush of opinion, and prejudice, and tradition, and delusion, and appearance, that alluvion which covers the globe, through Paris and London, through New York and Boston and Concord, through Church and State, through poetry and philosophy and religion, till we come to a hard bottom and rocks in place, which we can call *reality*, and say, This is, and no mistake; and then begin, having a *point d'appui*, below freshet and frost and fire,

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38 **Brahme**, compare Emerson's "Brahma" and the introductory note for that poem, p. 936 • 76 **Ulysses**, so tied as a defense against the song of the Sirens, in Bk. XII of the **Odyssey** • 88 **point d'appui**, a basis of operations

a place where you might found a wall or a state, or set a lamp-post safely, or perhaps a gauge, not a Nilometer, but a Realometer, that future ages might know how deep a freshet of shams and appearances had gathered from time to time. If you stand right fronting and face to face to a fact, you will see the sun glimmer on both its surfaces, as if it were a cimeter, and feel its sweet edge dividing you through the heart and marrow, and so you will happily conclude your mortal career. Be it life or death, we crave only reality. If we are really dying, let us hear the rattle in our throats and feel cold in the extremities; if we are alive, let us go about our business.

Time is but the stream I go a-fishing in. I drink at it; but while I drink I see the sandy bottom and detect how shallow it is. Its thin current slides away, but eternity remains. I would drink deeper; fish in the sky, whose bottom is pebbly with stars. I cannot count one. I know not the first letter of the alphabet. I have always been regretting that I was not as wise as the day I was born. The intellect is a cleaver; it discerns and rifts its way into the secret of things. I do not wish to be any more busy with my hands than is necessary. My head is hands and feet. I feel all my best faculties concentrated in it. My instinct tells me that my head is an organ for burrowing, as some creatures use their snout and fore paws, and with it I would mine and burrow my way through these hills. I think that the richest vein is somewhere hereabouts; so by the divining-rod and thin rising vapors I judge; and here I will begin to mine.

1854

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2 **Nilometer,** an instrument for measuring the height of water in the Nile during a flood • 7 **cimeter,** scimitar

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From

The Journals

April 16, 1852

As I turned round the corner of Hubbard's Grove, saw a woodchuck, the first of the season, in the middle of the field, six or seven rods from the fence which bounds the wood, and twenty rods distant. I ran along the fence and cut him off, or rather overtook him, though he started at the same time. When I was only a rod and a half off, he stopped, and I did the same; then he ran again, and I ran up within three feet of him, when he stopped again, the fence being between us. I squatted down and surveyed him at my leisure. His eyes were dull black and rather inobvious, with a faint chestnut iris, with but little expression and that more of resignation than of anger. The general aspect was a coarse grayish brown, a sort of grisel. A lighter brown next the skin, then black or very dark brown and tipped with whitish rather loosely. The head between a squirrel and a bear, flat on the top and dark brown, and darker still or black on the tip of the nose. The whiskers black, two inches long. The ears very small and roundish, set far back and nearly buried in the fur. Black feet, with long and slender claws for digging. It appeared to tremble, or perchance shivered with cold. When I moved, it gritted its teeth quite loud, sometimes striking the under jaw against the other chatteringly, sometimes grinding one jaw on the other, yet as if more from instinct than anger. Whichever way I turned, that way it headed. I took a twig a foot long and touched its snout, at which it started forward and bit the stick, lessening the distance between us to two feet, and still it held all the ground it gained. I played with it tenderly awhile with the stick, trying to open its gritting jaws. Ever its long incisors, two above and two below, were presented. But I thought it would go to sleep if I stayed long enough. It did not sit upright as sometimes, but *standing* on its fore feet with its head down, *i.e.* half sitting, half standing. We sat looking at one another about half an hour, till we began to feel mesmeric influences. When I was tired, I moved away, wishing to see him run, but I could not start him. He would not stir as long as I was looking at him or could see him. I walked round him; he turned as fast and fronted me still. I sat down by his side within a foot. I talked to him *quasi* forest lingo, baby-talk, at any

rate in a conciliatory tone, and thought that I had some influence on him. He gritted his teeth less. I chewed checkerberry leaves and presented them to his nose at last without a grit; though I saw that by so much gritting of the teeth he had worn them rapidly and they were covered with a fine white powder, which, if you measured it thus, would have made his anger terrible. He did not mind any noise I might make. With a little stick I lifted one of his paws to examine it, and held it up at pleasure. I turned him over to see what color he was beneath (darker or more purely brown), though he turned himself back again sooner than I could have wished. His tail was also all brown, though not very dark, rat-tail like, with loose hairs standing out on all sides like a caterpillar brush. He had a rather mild look. I spoke to him kindly. I reached checkerberry leaves to his mouth. I stretched my hands over him, though he turned up his head and still gritted a little. I laid my hand on him, but immediately took it off again, instinct not being wholly overcome. If I had had a few fresh bean leaves, thus in advance of the season, I am sure I should have tamed him completely. It was a frizzly tail. His is a humble, terrestrial color like the partridge's, well concealed where dead wiry grass rises above darker brown or chestnut dead leaves,—a modest color. If I had had some food, I should have ended with stroking him at my leisure. Could easily have wrapped him in my handkerchief. He was not fat nor particularly lean. I finally had to leave him without seeing him move from the place. A large, clumsy, burrowing squirrel. *Arctomys,* bearmouse. I respect him as one of the natives. He lies there, by his color and habits so naturalized amid the dry leaves, the withered grass, and the bushes. A sound nap, too, he has enjoyed in his native fields, the past winter. I think I might learn some wisdom of him. His ancestors have lived here longer than mine. He is more thoroughly acclimated and naturalized than I. Bean leaves the red man raised for him, but he can do without them.

June 18, 1855

At 3 P.M., as I walked up the bank by the Hemlocks, I saw a painted tortoise just beginning its hole; then another a dozen rods from the river on the bare barren field near some pitch pines, where the earth was covered with cladonias, cinquefoil, sorrel, etc. Its hole was about two thirds done. I stooped down over it, and, to my surprise, after a slight pause it proceeded in its work, directly under and within eighteen inches of my face. I retained a constrained position for three quarters of an hour or more for fear of alarming it. It rested on its fore legs, the front part of its shell about one inch higher than the rear, and this position was not changed essentially to the last. The hole was oval, broadest behind, about one inch wide and one and three quarters long, and the dirt already removed was quite wet or moistened. It made the hole and removed the dirt with its hind legs only, not using its tail or shell, which last of course could not enter the hole, though there was some dirt on it. It first scratched two or three times with one hind foot; then took up a pinch of the loose sand and deposited it directly behind that leg, pushing it backward to its full length and then deliberately opening it and letting the dirt fall; then the same with the other hind foot. This it did rapidly, using each leg alternately with perfect regularity, standing on the other one the while, and thus tilting up its shell each time, now to this side, then to that. There was half a minute or a minute between each change. The hole was made as deep as the feet could reach, or about two inches. It was very neat about its work, not scattering the dirt about any more than was necessary. The completing of the hole occupied perhaps five minutes.

It then without any pause drew its head completely into its shell, raised the rear a little, and protruded and dropped a wet flesh-colored egg into the hole, one end foremost, the red skin of its body being considerably protruded with it. Then it put out its head again a little, slowly, and placed the egg at one side with one hind foot. After a delay of about two minutes it again drew in its head and dropped another, and so on to the fifth—drawing in its head each time, and pausing somewhat longer between the last. The eggs were placed in the hole without any *particular* care,—only well down flat and [each] out of the way of the next,—and I could plainly see them from above.

After these ten minutes or more, it without pause or turning began to scrape the moist earth into the hole with its hind legs, and, when it had half filled it, it carefully pressed it down with the edges of its hind feet, dancing on them alternately, for some time, as on its knees, tilting from side to side, pressing by the whole

weight of the rear of its shell. When it had drawn in thus all the earth that had been moistened, it stretched its hind legs further back and to each side, and drew in the dry and lichen-clad crust, and then danced upon and pressed that down, still not moving the rear of its shell more than one inch to right or left all the while, or changing the position of the forward part at all. The thoroughness with which the covering was done was remarkable. It persevered in drawing in and dancing on the dry surface which had never been disturbed, long after you thought it had done its duty, but it never moved its fore feet, nor once looked round, nor saw the eggs it had laid. There were frequent pauses throughout the whole, when it rested, or ran out its head and looked about circumspectly, at any noise or motion. These pauses were especially long during the covering of its eggs, which occupied more than half an hour. Perhaps it was hard work.

When it had done, it immediately started for the river at a pretty rapid rate (the suddenness with which it made these transitions was amusing), pausing from time to time, and I judged that it would reach it in fifteen minutes. It was not easy to detect that the ground had been disturbed there. An Indian could not have made his cache more skillfully. In a few minutes all traces of it would be lost to the eye.

The object of moistening the earth was perhaps to enable it to take it up in its hands, and also to prevent its falling back into the hole. Perhaps it also helped to make the ground more compact and harder when it was pressed down.

1852-1855·1906

Walking

Based upon materials in the Journals of 1850-1851, and delivered as a lecture in Worcester, Massachusetts, in 1851, "Walking" was first published in the Atlantic Monthly for June 1862.

I wish to speak a word for Nature, for absolute freedom and wildness, as contrasted with a freedom and culture merely civil,—to regard man as an inhabitant, or a part and parcel of Nature, rather than a member of society. I wish to make an extreme statement, if so I may make an emphatic one, for there are enough champions of civilization: the minister and the school-committee and every one of you will take care of that.

I have met with but one or two persons in the course of my life who understood the art of Walking, that is, of taking walks,—who had a genius, so to speak, for *sauntering:* which word is beautifully derived "from idle people who roved about the country, in the Middle Ages, and asked charity, under pretense of going *à la Sainte Terre,*" to the Holy Land, till the children exclaimed, "There goes a *Sainte-Terrer,*" a Saunterer, a Holy-Lander. They who never go to the Holy Land in their walks, as they pretend, are indeed mere idlers and vagabonds; but they who do go there are saunterers in the good sense, such as I mean. Some, however, would derive the word from *sans terre,* without land or home, which, therefore, in the good sense, will mean, having no particular home, but equally at home everywhere. For this is the secret of successful sauntering. He who sits still in a house all the time may be the greatest vagrant of all; but the saunterer, in the good sense, is no more vagrant than the meandering river, which is all the while sedulously seeking the shortest course to the sea. But I prefer the first, which, indeed, is the most probable derivation. For every walk is a sort of crusade, preached by some Peter the Hermit in us, to go forth and reconquer this Holy Land from the hands of the Infidels.

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30 Peter the Hermit (d. 1115), preacher of the First Crusade

It is true, we are but faint-hearted crusaders, even the walkers, nowadays, who undertake no persevering, never-ending enterprises. Our expeditions are but tours, and come round again at evening to the old hearth-side from which we set out. Half the walk is but retracing our steps. We should go forth on the shortest walk, perchance, in the spirit of undying adventure, never to return,—prepared to send back our embalmed hearts only as relics to our desolate kingdoms. If you are ready to leave father and mother, and brother and sister, and wife and child and friends, and never see them again,—if you have paid your debts, and made your will, and settled all your affairs, and are a free man, then you are ready for a walk.

To come down to my own experience, my companion and I, for I sometimes have a companion, take pleasure in fancying ourselves knights of a new, or rather an old, order,—not Equestrians or Chevaliers, not Ritters or Riders, but Walkers, a still more ancient and honorable class, I trust. The chivalric and heroic spirit which once belonged to the Rider seems now to reside in, or perchance to have subsided into, the Walker,—not the Knight, but Walker, Errant. He is a sort of fourth estate, outside of Church and State and People.

We have felt that we almost alone hereabouts practised this noble art; though, to tell the truth, at least, if their own assertions are to be received, most of my townsmen would fain walk sometimes, as I do, but they cannot. No wealth can buy the requisite leisure, freedom, and independence which are the capital in this profession. It comes only by the grace of God. It requires a direct dispensation from Heaven to become a walker. You must be born into the family of the Walkers. *Ambulator nascitur, non fit.* Some of my townsmen, it is true, can remember and have described to me some walks which they took ten years ago, in which they were so blessed as to lose themselves for half an hour in the woods; but I know very well that they have confined themselves to the highway ever since, whatever pretensions they may make to belong to this select class. No doubt they were elevated for a moment as by the reminiscence of a previous state of existence, when even they were foresters and outlaws.

"When he came to grene wode,
In a mery mornynge,
There he herde the notes small
Of byrdes mery syngynge.

"It is ferre gone, sayd Robyn,
That I was last here;
Me lyste a lytell for to shote
At the donne dere."

I think that I cannot preserve my health and spirits, unless I spend four hours a day at least,—and it is commonly more than that,—sauntering through the woods and over the hills and fields, absolutely free from all worldly engagements. You may safely say, A penny for your thoughts, or a thousand pounds. When sometimes I am reminded that the mechanics and shopkeepers stay in their shops not only all the forenoon, but all the afternoon too, sitting with crossed legs, so many of them,—as if the legs were made to sit upon, and not to stand or walk upon,—I think that they deserve some credit for not having all committed suicide long ago.

I, who cannot stay in my chamber for a single day without acquiring some rust, and when sometimes I have stolen forth for a walk at the eleventh hour or four o'clock in the afternoon, too late to redeem the day, when the shades of night were already beginning to be mingled with the daylight, have felt as if I had committed some sin to be atoned for,—I confess that I am astonished at the power of endurance, to say nothing of the moral insensibility, of my neighbors who confine themselves to shops and offices the whole day for weeks and months, aye, and years almost together. I know not what manner of stuff they are of,—sitting there now at three o'clock in the afternoon, as if it were three o'clock in the morning. Bonaparte may talk of the three-o'clock-in-the-morning courage, but it is nothing to the courage which can sit down cheerfully at this hour in the afternoon over against one's self whom you have known all the morning, to starve out a garrison to whom you are bound by such strong ties of sympathy. I wonder that about this time, or say between four and five o'clock in the afternoon, too late for the morning papers and too early for the evening ones, there is not a general explosion heard up and down the street, scattering a

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34 **Ambulator . . . fit.** The walker is born, not made.

legion of antiquated and house-bred notions and whims to the four winds for an airing,—and so the evil cure itself.

How womankind, who are confined to the house still more than men, stand it I do not know; but I have ground to suspect that most of them do not *stand* it at all. When, early in a summer afternoon, we have been shaking the dust of the village from the skirts of our garments, making haste past those houses with purely Doric or Gothic fronts, which have such an air of repose about them, my companion whispers that probably about these times their occupants are all gone to bed. Then it is that I appreciate the beauty and the glory of architecture, which itself never turns in, but forever stands out and erect, keeping watch over the slumberers.

No doubt temperament, and, above all, age, have a good deal to do with it. As a man grows older, his ability to sit still and follow indoor occupations increases. He grows vespertinal in his habits as the evening of life approaches, till at last he comes forth only just before sundown, and gets all the walk that he requires in half an hour.

But the walking of which I speak has nothing in it akin to taking exercise, as it is called, as the sick take medicine at stated hours,—as the swinging of dumb-bells or chairs; but is itself the enterprise and adventure of the day. If you would get exercise, go in search of the springs of life. Think of a man's swinging dumb-bells for his health, when those springs are bubbling up in far-off pastures unsought by him!

Moreover, you must walk like a camel, which is said to be the only beast which ruminates when walking. When a traveler asked Wordsworth's servant to show him her master's study, she answered, "Here is his library, but his study is out of doors."

Living much out of doors, in the sun and wind, will no doubt produce a certain roughness of character,—will cause a thicker cuticle to grow over some of the finer qualities of our nature, as on the face and hands, or as severe manual labor robs the hands of some of their delicacy of touch. So staying in the house, on the other hand, may produce a softness and smoothness, not to say thinness of skin, accompanied by an increased sensibility to certain impressions. Perhaps we should be more susceptible to some influences important to our intellectual and moral growth, if the sun had shone and the wind blown on us a little less; and no doubt it is a nice matter to proportion rightly the thick and thin skin. But methinks that is a scurf that will fall off fast enough,—that the natural remedy is to be found in the proportion which the night bears to the day, the winter to the summer, thought to experience. There will be so much the more air and sunshine in our thoughts. The callous palms of the laborer are conversant with finer tissues of self-respect and heroism, whose touch thrills the heart, than the languid fingers of idleness. That is mere sentimentality that lies abed by day and thinks itself white, far from the tan and callus of experience.

When we walk, we naturally go to the fields and woods: what would become of us, if we walked only in a garden or a mall? Even some sects of philosophers have felt the necessity of importing the woods to themselves, since they did not go to the woods. "They planted groves and walks of Platanes," where they took *subdiales ambulationes* in porticos open to the air. Of course it is of no use to direct our steps to the woods, if they do not carry us thither. I am alarmed when it happens that I have walked a mile into the woods bodily, without getting there in spirit. In my afternoon walk I would fain forget all my morning occupations and my obligations to society. But it sometimes happens that I cannot easily shake off the village. The thought of some work will run in my head and I am not where my body is,—I am out of my senses. In my walks I would fain return to my senses. What business have I in the woods, if I am thinking of something out of the woods? I suspect myself, and cannot help a shudder, when I find myself so implicated even in what are called good works,—for this may sometimes happen.

My vicinity affords many good walks; and though for so many years I have walked almost every day, and sometimes for several days together, I have not yet exhausted them. An absolutely new prospect is a great happiness, and I can still get this any afternoon. Two or three hours' walking will carry me to as strange a country as I expect ever to see. A single farm-house which I had not seen before is sometimes as good as the dominions of the King of Dahomey. There is in fact a sort of harmony

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64 **subdiales ambulationes,** walks in the open air • 88 **Dahomey,** a colony in French West Africa

discoverable between the capabilities of the landscape within a circle of ten miles' radius, or the limits of an afternoon walk, and the threescore years and ten of human life. It will never become quite familiar to you.

Nowadays almost all man's improvements, so called, as the building of houses, and the cutting down of the forest and of all large trees, simply deform the landscape, and make it more and more tame and cheap. A people who would begin by burning the fences and let the forest stand! I saw the fences half consumed, their ends lost in the middle of the prairie, and some worldly miser with a surveyor looking after his bounds, while heaven had taken place around him, and he did not see the angels going to and fro, but was looking for an old post-hole in the midst of paradise. I looked again, and saw him standing in the middle of a boggy stygian fen, surrounded by devils, and he had found his bounds without a doubt, three little stones, where a stake had been driven, and looking nearer, I saw that the Prince of Darkness was his surveyor.

I can easily walk ten, fifteen, twenty, any number of miles, commencing at my own door, without going by any house, without crossing a road except where the fox and the mink do: first along by the river, and then the brook, and then the meadow and the woodside. There are square miles in my vicinity which have no inhabitant. From many a hill I can see civilization and the abodes of man afar. The farmers and their works are scarcely more obvious than woodchucks and their burrows. Man and his affairs, church and state and school, trade and commerce, and manufactures and agriculture, even politics, the most alarming of them all,—I am pleased to see how little space they occupy in the landscape. Politics is but a narrow field, and that still narrower highway yonder leads to it. I sometimes direct the traveler thither. If you would go to the political world, follow the great road,—follow that market-man, keep his dust in your eyes, and it will lead you straight to it; for it, too, has its place merely, and does not occupy all space. I pass from it as from a bean-field into the forest, and it is forgotten. In one half-hour I can walk off to some portion of the earth's surface where a man does not stand from one year's end to another, and there, consequently, politics are not, for they are but as the cigar-smoke of a man.

The village is the place to which the roads tend, a sort of expansion of the highway, as a lake of a river. It is the body of which roads are the arms and legs,—a trivial or quadrivial place, the thoroughfare and ordinary of travelers. The word is from the Latin *villa*, which together with *via*, a way, or more anciently *ved* and *vella*, Varro derives from *veho*, to carry, because the villa is the place to and from which things are carried. They who got their living by teaming were said *vellaturam facere*. Hence, too, the Latin word *vilis* and our vile; also *villain*. This suggests what kind of degeneracy villagers are liable to. They are wayworn by the travel that goes by and over them, without traveling themselves.

Some do not walk at all; others walk in the highways; a few walk across lots. Roads are made for horses and men of business. I do not travel in them much, comparatively, because I am not in a hurry to get to any tavern or grocery or livery-stable or depot to which they lead. I am a good horse to travel, but not from choice a roadster. The landscape-painter uses the figures of men to mark a road. He would not make that use of my figure. I walk out into a Nature such as the old prophets and poets, Menu, Moses, Homer, Chaucer, walked in. You may name it America, but it is not America; neither Americus Vespucius, nor Columbus, nor the rest were the discoverers of it. There is a truer account of it in mythology than in any history of America, so called, that I have seen.

However, there are a few old roads that may be trodden with profit, as if they led somewhere now that they are nearly discontinued. There is the Old Marlborough Road, which does not go to Marlborough now, methinks, unless that is Marlborough where it carries me. I am the bolder to speak of it here, because I presume that there are one or two such roads in every town. . . .

At present, in this vicinity, the best part of the land is not private property; the landscape is not owned, and the walker enjoys comparative freedom. But possibly the day will come when it will be partitioned off into so-called pleasure-grounds, in which a few will take a narrow and exclusive pleasure only,—when fences shall be

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52 **Varro**, Marcus Terentius Varro (116-27 B.C.), Roman scholar • 68 **Menu**, in Hindu mythology, a progenitor of human beings and author of wisdom • 81 **town . . . .** Some verses entitled "The Old Marlborough Road" are omitted

multiplied, and man-traps and other engines invented to confine men to the *public* road, and walking over the surface of God's earth shall be construed to mean trespassing on some gentleman's grounds. To enjoy a thing exclusively is commonly to exclude yourself from the true enjoyment of it. Let us improve our opportunities, then, before the evil days come.

What is it that makes it so hard sometimes to determine whither we will walk? I believe that there is a subtle magnetism in Nature, which, if we unconsciously yield to it, will direct us aright. It is not indifferent to us which way we walk. There is a right way; but we are very liable from heedlessness and stupidity to take the wrong one. We would fain take that walk, never yet taken by us through this actual world, which is perfectly symbolical of the path which we love to travel in the interior and ideal world; and sometimes, no doubt, we find it difficult to choose our direction, because it does not yet exist distinctly in our idea.

When I go out of the house for a walk, uncertain as yet whither I will bend my steps, and submit myself to my instinct to decide for me, I find, strange and whimsical as it may seem, that I finally and inevitably settle southwest, toward some particular wood or meadow or deserted pasture or hill in that direction. My needle is slow to settle,—varies a few degrees, and does not always point due southwest, it is true, and it has good authority for this variation, but it always settles between west and south-southwest. The future lies that way to me, and the earth seems more unexhausted and richer on that side. The outline which would bound my walks would be, not a circle, but a parabola, or rather like one of those cometary orbits which have been thought to be non-returning curves, in this case opening westward, in which my house occupies the place of the sun. I turn round and round irresolute sometimes for a quarter of an hour, until I decide, for a thousandth time, that I will walk into the southwest or west. Eastward I go only by force; but westward I go free. Thither no business leads me. It is hard for me to believe that I shall find fair landscapes or sufficient wildness and freedom behind the eastern horizon. I am not excited by the prospect of a walk thither; but I believe that the forest which I see in the western horizon stretches uninterruptedly toward the setting sun, and there are no towns nor cities in it of enough consequence to disturb me. Let me live where I will, on this side is the city, on that the wilderness, and ever I am leaving the city more and more, and withdrawing into the wilderness. I should not lay so much stress on this fact, if I did not believe that something like this is the prevailing tendency of my countrymen. I must walk toward Oregon, and not toward Europe. And that way the nation is moving, and I may say that mankind progress from east to west. Within a few years we have witnessed the phenomenon of a southeastward migration, in the settlement of Australia; but this affects us as a retrograde movement, and, judging from the moral and physical character of the first generation of Australians, has not yet proved a successful experiment. The eastern Tartars think that there is nothing west beyond Thibet. "The world ends there," say they; "beyond there is nothing but a shoreless sea." It is unmitigated East where they live.

We go eastward to realize history and study the works of art and literature, retracing the steps of the race; we go westward as into the future, with a spirit of enterprise and adventure. The Atlantic is a Lethean stream, in our passage over which we have had an opportunity to forget the Old World and its institutions. If we do not succeed this time, there is perhaps one more chance for the race left before it arrives on the banks of the Styx; and that is in the Lethe of the Pacific, which is three times as wide.

I know not how significant it is, or how far it is an evidence of singularity, that an individual should thus consent in his pettiest walk with the general movement of the race; but I know that something akin to the migratory instinct in birds and quadrupeds,—which, in some instances, is known to have affected the squirrel tribe, impelling them to a general and mysterious movement, in which they were seen, say some, crossing the broadest rivers, each on its particular chip, with its tail raised for a sail, and bridging narrower streams with

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67 **The Atlantic . . . institutions.** Thoreau had doubtless read a similar statement in Cotton Mather's "Life of John Eliot," in the Magnalia: "The Atlantick Ocean, like a River of Lethe, may easily cause us to forget many of the things that happened on the other side." In the entry of January 9, 1855, he spoke of Cotton Mather's "rich phrase," and in the entry of February 3, 1856, he quoted Mather's famous letter describing the great snow of 1717

their dead,—that something like the *furor* which affects the domestic cattle in the spring, and which is referred to a worm in their tails,—affects both nations and individuals, either perennially or from time to time. Not a flock of wild geese cackles over our town, but it to some extent unsettles the value of real estate here, and, if I were a broker, I should probably take that disturbance into account.

> "Than longen folk to gon on pilgrimages,
> And palmeres for to seken strange strondes."

Every sunset which I witness inspires me with the desire to go to a West as distant and as fair as that into which the sun goes down. He appears to migrate westward daily, and tempt us to follow him. He is the Great Western Pioneer whom the nations follow. We dream all night of those mountain-ridges in the horizon, though they may be of vapor only, which were last gilded by his rays. The island of Atlantis, and the islands and gardens of the Hesperides, a sort of terrestrial paradise, appear to have been the Great West of the ancients, enveloped in mystery and poetry. Who has not seen in imagination, when looking into the sunset sky, the gardens of the Hesperides, and the foundation of all those fables?

Columbus felt the westward tendency more strongly than any before. He obeyed it, and found a New World for Castile and Leon. The herd of men in those days scented fresh pastures from afar.

> "And now the sun had stretched out all the hills,
> And now was dropped into the western bay;
> At last *he* rose, and twitched his mantle blue;
> To-morrow to fresh woods and pastures new."

Where on the globe can there be found an area of equal extent with that occupied by the bulk of our States, so fertile and so rich and varied in its productions, and at the same time so habitable by the European, as this is? Michaux, who knew but part of them, says that "the species of large trees are much more numerous in North America than in Europe; in the United States there are more than one hundred and forty species that exceed thirty feet in height; in France there are but thirty that attain this size." Later botanists more than confirm his observations. Humboldt came to America to realize his youthful dreams of a tropical vegetation, and he beheld it in its greatest perfection in the primitive forests of the Amazon, the most gigantic wilderness on the earth, which he has so eloquently described. The geographer Guyot, himself a European, goes farther,—farther than I am ready to follow him; yet not when he says: "As the plant is made for the animal, as the vegetable world is made for the animal world, America is made for the man of the Old World. . . . The man of the Old World sets out upon his way. Leaving the highlands of Asia, he descends from station to station towards Europe. Each of his steps is marked by a new civilization superior to the preceding, by a greater power of development. Arrived at the Atlantic, he pauses on the shore of this unknown ocean, the bounds of which he knows not, and turns upon his footprints for an instant." When he has exhausted the rich soil of Europe, and reinvigorated himself, "then recommences his adventurous career westward as in the earliest ages." So far Guyot.

From this western impulse coming in contact with the barrier of the Atlantic sprang the commerce and enterprise of modern times. The younger Michaux, in his "Travels West of the Alleghanies in 1802," says that the common inquiry in the newly settled West was, " 'From what part of the world have you come?' As if these vast and fertile regions would naturally be the place of meeting and common country of all the inhabitants of the globe."

To use an obsolete Latin word, I might say, *Ex Oriente lux; ex Occidente* FRUX. From the East light; from the West fruit.

Sir Francis Head, an English traveler and a Governor-General of Canada, tells us that "in both the northern and southern hemispheres of the New World, Nature has not only outlined her works on a larger scale, but

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9 **Than . . . strondes,** from the "Prologue," ll. 12-13, of Chaucer's **Canterbury Tales** • 18 **Atlantis.** See note, p. 922 • 19 **Hesperides,** the garden of classical mythology, located in the extreme West, in which grew the golden apples • 27 **Castile . . . Leon,** formerly, kingdoms in Spain • 29 **And . . . new,** from Milton's "Lycidas," ll. 190-193 • 37 **Michaux,** André Michaux (1746-1802), French botanist and traveler • 43 **Humboldt,** Friedrich Heinrich Alexander, Baron von Humboldt (1769-1859), German naturalist • 48 **Guyot,** Arnold Henry Guyot (1807-1884), Swiss naturalist and geographer in America • 76 **Sir Francis Head** (1793-1875), English author and lieutenant governor of Upper Canada

has painted the whole picture with brighter and more costly colors than she used in delineating and in beautifying the Old World. . . . The heavens of America appear infinitely higher, the sky is bluer, the air is fresher, the cold is intenser, the moon looks larger, the stars are brighter, the thunder is louder, the lightning is vivider, the wind is stronger, the rain is heavier, the mountains are higher, the rivers longer, the forests bigger, the plains broader." This statement will do at least to set against Buffon's account of this part of the world and its productions.

Linnæus said long ago, "Nescio quæ facies *læta, glabra* plantis Americanis: I know not what there is of joyous and smooth in the aspect of American plants;" and I think that in this country there are no, or at most very few, *Africanæ bestiæ,* African beasts, as the Romans called them, and that in this respect also it is peculiarly fitted for the habitation of man. We are told that within three miles of the centre of the East-Indian city of Singapore, some of the inhabitants are annually carried off by tigers; but the traveler can lie down in the woods at night almost anywhere in North America without fear of wild beasts.

These are encouraging testimonies. If the moon looks larger here than in Europe, probably the sun looks larger also. If the heavens of America appear infinitely higher, and the stars brighter, I trust that these facts are symbolical of the height to which the philosophy and poetry and religion of her inhabitants may one day soar. At length, perchance, the immaterial heaven will appear as much higher to the American mind, and the intimations that star it as much brighter. For I believe that climate does thus react on man,—as there is something in the mountain-air that feeds the spirit and inspires. Will not man grow to greater perfection intellectually as well as physically under these influences? Or is it unimportant how many foggy days there are in his life? I trust that we shall be more imaginative, that our thoughts will be clearer, fresher, and more ethereal, as our sky,—our understanding more comprehensive and broader, like our plains,—our intellect generally on a grander scale, like our thunder and lightning, our rivers and mountains and forests,—and our hearts shall even correspond in breadth and depth and grandeur to our inland seas. Perchance there will appear to the traveler something, he knows not what, of *læta* and *glabra,* of joyous and serene, in our very faces. Else to what end does the world go on, and why was America discovered?

To Americans I hardly need to say,—

> "Westward the star of empire takes its way."

As a true patriot, I should be ashamed to think that Adam in paradise was more favorably situated on the whole than the backwoodsman in this country.

Our sympathies in Massachusetts are not confined to New England; though we may be estranged from the South, we sympathize with the West. There is the home of the younger sons, as among the Scandinavians they took to the sea for their inheritance. It is too late to be studying Hebrew; it is more important to understand even the slang of to-day.

Some months ago I went to see a panorama of the Rhine. It was like a dream of the Middle Ages. I floated down its historic stream in something more than imagination, under bridges built by the Romans, and repaired by later heroes, past cities and castles whose very names were music to my ears, and each of which was the subject of a legend. There were Ehrenbreitstein and Rolandseck and Coblentz, which I knew only in history. They were ruins that interested me chiefly. There seemed to come up from its waters and its vine-clad hills and valleys a hushed music as of Crusaders departing for the Holy Land. I floated along under the spell of enchantment, as if I had been transported to an heroic age, and breathed an atmosphere of chivalry.

Soon after, I went to see a panorama of the Mississippi, and as I worked my way up the river in the light of today, and saw the steamboats wooding up, counted the rising cities, gazed on the fresh ruins of Nauvoo, beheld the Indians moving west across the stream, and, as before I had looked up the Moselle, now looked up the Ohio and

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10 **Buffon,** Comte de Buffon. See note, p. 263. The sarcastic allusion is probably to the following statement: "While America far exceeds us in the size of its reptiles, it is far inferior in its quadruped productions" (Buffon's Natural History, Abridged, London, 1828, p. 330) • 12 **Linnæus,** Carolus Linnæus. See note, p. 880 • 50 **Westward . . . way,** from Bishop George Berkeley's "Verses on the Prospect of Planting Arts and Learning in America" (1752), except that Berkeley wrote "course" instead of "star" • 67 **Ehrenbreitstein . . . Coblentz,** cities on the Rhine • 78 **ruins of Nauvoo.** The reference is to the riot against the Mormons in 1844 at Nauvoo, Illinois. The Mormons shortly afterwards migrated to Great Salt Lake • 80 **Moselle,** a river that flows through France into the Rhine

the Missouri and heard the legends of Dubuque and of Wenona's Cliff—still thinking more of the future than of the past or present,—I saw that this was a Rhine stream of a different kind; that the foundations of castles were yet to be laid, and the famous bridges were yet to be thrown over the river; and I felt that *this was the heroic age itself,* though we know it not, for the hero is commonly the simplest and obscurest of men.

The West of which I speak is but another name for the Wild; and what I have been preparing to say is, that in Wildness is the preservation of the World. Every tree sends its fibres forth in search of the Wild. The cities import it at any price. Men plough and sail for it. From the forest and wilderness come the tonics and barks which brace mankind. Our ancestors were savages. The story of Romulus and Remus being suckled by a wolf is not a meaningless fable. The founders of every state which has risen to eminence have drawn their nourishment and vigor from a similar wild source. It was because the children of the Empire were not suckled by the wolf that they were conquered and displaced by the children of the northern forests who were.

I believe in the forest, and in the meadow, and in the night in which the corn grows. We require an infusion of hemlock-spruce or arbor-vitæ in our tea. There is a difference between eating and drinking for strength and from mere gluttony. The Hottentots eagerly devour the marrow of the koodoo and other antelopes raw, as a matter of course. Some of our Northern Indians eat raw the marrow of the Arctic reindeer, as well as the various other parts, including the summits of the antlers, as long as they are soft. And herein, perchance, they have stolen a march on the cooks of Paris. They get what usually goes to feed the fire. This is probably better than stall-fed beef and slaughter-house pork to make a man of. Give me a wildness whose glance no civilization can endure,—as if we lived on the marrow of koodoos devoured raw.

There are some intervals which border the strain of the wood-thrush, to which I would migrate,—wild lands where no settler has squatted; to which, methinks, I am already acclimated.

The African hunter Cummings tells us that the skin of the eland, as well as that of most other antelopes just killed, emits the most delicious perfume of trees and grass. I would have every man so much like a wild antelope, so much a part and parcel of Nature, that his very person should thus sweetly advertise our senses of his presence, and remind us of those parts of Nature which he most haunts. I feel no disposition to be satirical, when the trapper's coat emits the odor of musquash even; it is a sweeter scent to me than that which commonly exhales from the merchant's or the scholar's garments. When I go into their wardrobes and handle their vestments, I am reminded of no grassy plains and flowery meads which they have frequented, but of dusty merchants' exchanges and libraries rather.

A tanned skin is something more than respectable, and perhaps olive is a fitter color than white for a man,—a denizen of the woods. "The pale white man!" I do not wonder that the African pitied him. Darwin the naturalist says, "A white man bathing by the side of a Tahitian was like a plant bleached by the gardener's art, compared with a fine, dark green one, growing vigorously in the open fields."

Ben Jonson exclaims,—

"How near to good is what is fair!"

So I would say,—

How near to good is what is *wild!*

Life consists with wildness. The most alive is the wildest. Not yet subdued to man, its presence refreshes him. One who pressed forward incessantly and never rested from his labors, who grew fast and made infinite demands on life, would always find himself in a new country or wilderness, and surrounded by the raw material of life. He would be climbing over the prostrate stems of primitive forest-trees.

Hope and the future for me are not in lawns and cultivated fields, not in towns and cities, but in the impervious and quaking swamps. When, formerly, I have

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1 **Dubuque . . . Cliff,** Indian legends associated with Dubuque, Iowa, and Winona, Minnesota • 16 **Romulus and Remus.** Romulus was the legendary founder of Rome; Remus was his twin brother • 22 **children . . . forests,** a reference to the Goths, who sacked Rome in 410 • 43 **The African . . . grass.** See R. G. Gordon-Cumming (1820-1866), **Five Years of Hunter's Life in the Far Interior of South Africa** • 62 **A white man . . . fields,** from Chap. XVIII of Charles Darwin's **Voyage of the Beagle**

analyzed my partiality for some farm which I had contemplated purchasing, I have frequently found that I was attracted solely by a few square rods of impermeable and unfathomable bog,—a natural sink in one corner of it. That was the jewel which dazzled me. I derive more of my subsistence from the swamps which surround my native town than from the cultivated gardens in the village. There are no richer parterres to my eyes than the dense beds of dwarf andromeda *(Cassandra calyculata)* which cover these tender places on the earth's surface. Botany cannot go farther than tell me the names of the shrubs which grow there,—the high-blueberry, panicled andromeda, lamb-kill, azalea, and rhodora, —all standing in the quaking sphagnum. I often think that I should like to have my house front on this mass of dull red bushes, omitting other flower pots and borders, transplanted spruce and trim box, even graveled walks,— to have this fertile spot under my windows, not a few imported barrow-fulls of soil only to cover the sand which was thrown out in digging the cellar. Why not put my house, my parlor, behind this plot, instead of behind that meagre assemblage of curiosities, that poor apology for a Nature and Art, which I call my front yard? It is an effort to clear up and make a decent appearance when the carpenter and mason have departed, though done as much for the passer-by as the dweller within. The most tasteful front-yard fence was never an agreeable object of study to me; the most elaborate ornaments, acorn-tops, or what not, soon wearied and disgusted me. Bring your sills up to the very edge of the swamp, then (though it may not be the best place for a dry cellar), so that there be no access on that side to citizens. Front yards are not made to walk in, but, at most, through, and you could go in the back way.

Yes, though you may think me perverse, if it were proposed to me to dwell in the neighborhood of the most beautiful garden that ever human art contrived, or else of a Dismal Swamp, I should certainly decide for the swamp. How vain, then, have been all your labors, citizens, for me!

My spirits infallibly rise in proportion to the outward dreariness. Give me the ocean, the desert, or the wilderness! In the desert, pure air and solitude compensate for want of moisture and fertility. The traveler Burton says of it: "Your *morale* improves; you become frank and cordial, hospitable and single-minded. . . . In the desert, spirituous liquors excite only disgust. There is a keen enjoyment in the mere animal existence." They who have been traveling along on the steppes of Tartary say: "On reëntering cultivated lands, the agitation, perplexity, and turmoil of civilization oppressed and suffocated us; the air seemed to fail us, and we felt every moment as if about to die of asphyxia." When I would recreate myself, I seek the darkest wood, the thickest and most interminable and, to the citizen, most dismal swamp. I enter a swamp as a sacred place,—a *sanctum sanctorum.* There is the strength, the marrow of Nature. The wild-wood covers the virgin-mould,—and the same soil is good for men and for trees. A man's health requires as many acres of meadow to his prospect as his farm does loads of muck. There are the strong meats on which he feeds. A town is saved, not more by the righteous men in it than by the woods and swamps that surround it. A township where one primitive forest waves above while another primitive forest rots below,—such a town is fitted to raise not only corn and potatoes, but poets and philosophers for the coming ages. In such a soil grew Homer and Confucius and the rest, and out of such a wilderness comes the Reformer eating locusts and wild honey.

To preserve wild animals implies generally the creation of a forest for them to dwell in or resort to. So it is with man. A hundred years ago they sold bark in our streets peeled from our own woods. In the very aspect of those primitive and rugged trees there was, methinks, a tanning principle which hardened and consolidated the fibres of men's thoughts. Ah! already I shudder for these comparatively degenerate days of my native village, when you cannot collect a load of bark of good thickness,—and we no longer produce tar and turpentine.

The civilized nations—Greece, Rome, England—have been sustained by the primitive forests which anciently rotted where they stand. They survive as long as the soil is not exhausted. Alas for human culture! little is to be expected of a nation, when the vegetable mould is exhausted, and it is compelled to make manure of the

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38 **Dismal Swamp,** in Virginia. Thoreau had probably read William Byrd's account of "the Dismal" in his **History of the Dividing Line** (see p. 105), first published in 1841 • 45 **Burton, Sir Richard Francis** Burton (1821-1890), English traveler and author • 56 **sanctum sanctorum,** the holy of holies, the most holy place • 69 **locusts . . . honey.** The allusion is to John the Baptist; see Matthew 3:1-4

bones of its fathers. There the poet sustains himself merely by his own superfluous fat, and the philosopher comes down on his marrow-bones.

It is said to be the task of the American "to work the virgin soil," and that "agriculture here already assumes proportions unknown everywhere else." I think that the farmer displaces the Indian even because he redeems the meadow, and so makes himself stronger and in some respects more natural. I was surveying for a man the other day a single straight line one hundred and thirty-two rods long, through a swamp, at whose entrance might have been written the words which Dante read over the entrance to the infernal regions,—"Leave all hope, ye that enter,"—that is, of ever getting out again; where at one time I saw my employer actually up to his neck and swimming for his life in his property, though it was still winter. He had another similar swamp which I could not survey at all, because it was completely under water, and nevertheless, with regard to a third swamp, which I did *survey* from a distance, he remarked to me, true to his instincts, that he would not part with it for any consideration, on account of the mud which it contained. And that man intends to put a girdling ditch round the whole in the course of forty months, and so redeem it by the magic of his spade. I refer to him only as the type of a class.

The weapons with which we have gained our most important victories, which should be handed down as heirlooms from father to son, are not the sword and the lance, but the bushwhack, the turf-cutter, the spade, and the boghoe, rusted with the blood of many a meadow, and begrimed with the dust of many a hard-fought field. The very winds blew the Indian's corn-field into the meadow, and pointed out the way which he had not the skill to follow. He had no better implement with which to intrench himself in the land than a clam-shell. But the farmer is armed with plough and spade.

In literature it is only the wild that attracts us. Dullness is but another name for tameness. It is the uncivilized free and wild thinking in "Hamlet" and the "Iliad," in all the Scriptures and Mythologies, not learned in the schools, that delights us. As the wild duck is more swift and beautiful than the tame, so is the wild—the mallard—thought, which 'mid falling dews wings its way above the fens. A truly good book is something as natural, and as unexpectedly and unaccountably fair and perfect, as a wild flower discovered on the prairies of the West or in the jungles of the East. Genius is a light which makes the darkness visible, like the lightning's flash, which perchance shatters the temple of knowledge itself,—and not a taper lighted at the hearthstone of the race, which pales before the light of common day.

English literature, from the days of the minstrels to the Lake Poets,—Chaucer and Spenser and Milton, and even Shakespeare, included,—breathes no quite fresh and, in this sense, wild strain. It is an essentially tame and civilized literature, reflecting Greece and Rome. Her wilderness is a greenwood, her wild man a Robin Hood. There is plenty of genial love of Nature, but not so much of Nature herself. Her chronicles inform us when her wild animals, but not when the wild man in her, became extinct.

The science of Humboldt is one thing, poetry is another thing. The poet to-day, notwithstanding all the discoveries of science, and the accumulated learning of mankind, enjoys no advantage over Homer.

Where is the literature which gives expression to Nature? He would be a poet who could impress the winds and streams into his service, to speak for him; who nailed words to their primitive senses, as farmers drive down stakes in the spring, which the frost has heaved; who derived his words as often as he used them,—transplanted them to his page with earth adhering to their roots; whose words were so true and fresh and natural that they would appear to expand like the buds at the approach of spring, though they lay half-smothered between two musty leaves in a library,—ay, to bloom and bear fruit there, after their kind, annually, for the faithful reader, in sympathy with surrounding Nature.

I do not know of any poetry to quote which adequately expresses this yearning for the Wild. Approached from this side, the best poetry is tame. I do not know where to find in any literature, ancient or modern, any account which contents me of that Nature with which even I am acquainted. You will perceive that I demand something which no Augustan nor Elizabethan age, which

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44 **'mid . . . dews.** Thoreau remembered Bryant's "To a Waterfowl" (see p. 468), the opening line of which he echoes here • 49 **darkness visible.** The phrase is from Milton's *Paradise Lost*, Bk. I, l. 63 • 52 **the light . . . day.** The phrase is from Wordsworth's "Ode on Intimations of Immortality," l. 76

no *culture,* in short, can give. Mythology comes nearer to it than anything. How much more fertile a Nature, at least, has Grecian mythology its root in than English literature! Mythology is the crop which the Old World bore before its soil was exhausted, before the fancy and imagination were affected with blight; and which it still bears, wherever its pristine vigor is unabated. All other literatures endure only as the elms which overshadow our houses; but this is like the great dragon-tree of the Western Isles, as old as mankind, and, whether that does or not, will endure as long; for the decay of other literatures makes the soil in which it thrives.

The West is preparing to add its fables to those of the East. The valleys of the Ganges, the Nile, and the Rhine having yielded their crop, it remains to be seen what the valleys of the Amazon, the Plate, the Orinoco, the St. Lawrence, and the Mississippi will produce. Perchance, when, in the course of ages, American liberty has become a fiction of the past,—as it is to some extent a fiction of the present,—the poets of the world will be inspired by American mythology.

The wildest dreams of wild men, even, are not the less true, though they may not recommend themselves to the sense which is most common among Englishmen and Americans to-day. It is not every truth that recommends itself to the common sense. Nature has a place for the wild clematis as well as for the cabbage. Some expressions of truth are reminiscent,—others merely *sensible,* as the phrase is,—others prophetic. Some forms of disease, even, may prophesy forms of health. The geologist has discovered that the figures of serpents, griffins, flying dragons, and other fanciful embellishments of heraldry, have their prototypes in the forms of fossil species which were extinct before man was created, and hence "indicate a faint and shadowy knowledge of a previous state of organic existence." The Hindoos dreamed that the earth rested on an elephant, and the elephant on a tortoise, and the tortoise on a serpent; and though it may be an unimportant coincidence, it will not be out of place here to state, that a fossile tortoise has lately been discovered in Asia large enough to support an elephant. I confess that I am partial to these wild fancies, which transcend the order of time and development. They are the sublimest recreation of the intellect. The partridge loves peas, but not those that go with her into the pot.

In short, all good things are wild and free. There is something in a strain of music, whether produced by an instrument or by the human voice,—take the sound of a bugle in a summer night, for instance,—which by its wildness, to speak without satire, reminds me of the cries emitted by wild beasts in their native forests. It is so much of their wildness as I can understand. Give me for my friends and neighbors wild men, not tame ones. The wildness of the savage is but a faint symbol of the awful ferity with which good men and lovers meet.

I love even to see the domestic animals reassert their native rights,—any evidence that they have not wholly lost their original wild habits and vigor; as when my neighbor's cow breaks out of her pasture early in the spring and boldly swims the river, a cold, gray tide, twenty-five or thirty rods wide, swollen by the melted snow. It is the buffalo crossing the Mississippi. This exploit confers some dignity on the herd in my eyes,—already dignified. The seeds of instinct are preserved under the thick hides of cattle and horses, like seeds in the bowels of the earth, an indefinite period.

Any sportiveness in cattle is unexpected. I saw one day a herd of a dozen bullocks and cows running about and frisking in unwieldy sport, like huge rats, even like kittens. They shook their heads, raised their tails, and rushed up and down a hill, and I perceived by their horns, as well as by their activity, their relation to the deer tribe. But, alas! a sudden loud *Whoa!* would have damped their ardor at once, reduced them from venison to beef, and stiffened their sides and sinews like the locomotive. Who but the Evil One has cried, "Whoa!" to mankind? Indeed, the life of cattle, like that of many men, is but a sort of locomotiveness; they move a side at a time, and man, by his machinery, is meeting the horse and the ox half-way. Whatever part the whip has touched is thenceforth palsied. Who would ever think of a *side* of any of the supple cat tribe, as we speak of a *side* of beef?

I rejoice that horses and steers have to be broken before they can be made the slaves of men, and that men themselves have some wild oats still left to sow before they become submissive members of society. Undoubtedly, all men are not equally fit subjects for civilization; and because the majority, like dogs and sheep, are tame

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56 ferity, wild or untamed state, savageness

by inherited disposition, this is no reason why the others should have their natures broken that they may be reduced to the same level. Men are in the main alike, but they were made several in order that they might be various. If a low use is to be served, one man will do nearly or quite as well as another; if a high one, individual excellence is to be regarded. Any man can stop a hole to keep the wind away, but no other man could serve so rare a use as the author of this illustration did. Confucius says, "The skins of the tiger and the leopard, when they are tanned, are as the skins of the dog and the sheep tanned." But it is not the part of a true culture to tame tigers, any more than it is to make sheep ferocious; and tanning their skins for shoes is not the best use to which they can be put.

When looking over a list of men's names in a foreign language, as of military officers, or of authors who have written on a particular subject, I am reminded once more that there is nothing in a name. The name Menschikoff, for instance, has nothing in it to my ears more human than a whisker, and it may belong to a rat. As the names of the Poles and Russians are to us, so are ours to them. It is as if they had been named by the child's rigmarole, —*Iery wiery ichery van, tittle-tol-tan.* I see in my mind a herd of wild creatures swarming over the earth, and to each the herdsman has affixed some barbarous sound in his own dialect. The names of men are of course as cheap and meaningless as *Bose* and *Tray,* the names of dogs.

Methinks it would be some advantage to philosophy, if men were named merely in the gross, as they are known. It would be necessary only to know the genus and perhaps the race or variety, to know the individual. We are not prepared to believe that every private soldier in a Roman army had a name of his own,—because we have not supposed that he had a character of his own.

At present our only true names are nicknames. I knew a boy who, from his peculiar energy, was called "Buster" by his playmates, and this rightly supplanted his Christian name. Some travelers tell us that an Indian had no name given him at first, but earned it, and his name was his fame; and among some tribes he acquired a new name with every new exploit. It is pitiful when a man bears a name for convenience merely, who has earned neither name nor fame.

I will not allow mere names to make distinctions for me, but still see men in herds for all them. A familiar name cannot make a man less strange to me. It may be given to a savage who retains in secret his own wild title earned in the woods. We have a wild savage in us, and a savage name is perchance somewhere recorded as ours. I see that my neighbor, who bears the familiar epithet William, or Edwin, takes it off with his jacket. It does not adhere to him when asleep or in anger, or aroused by any passion or inspiration. I seem to hear pronounced by some of his kin at such a time his original wild name in some jaw-breaking or else melodious tongue.

Here is this vast, savage, howling mother of ours, Nature, lying all around, with such beauty, and such affection for her children, as the leopard; and yet we are so early weaned from her breast to society, to that culture which is exclusively an interaction of man on man, —a sort of breeding in and in, which produces at most a merely English nobility, a civilization destined to have a speedy limit.

In society, in the best institutions of men, it is easy to detect a certain precocity. When we should still be growing children, we are already little men. Give me a culture which imports much muck from the meadows, and deepens the soil,—not that which trusts to heating manures, and improved implements and modes of culture only!

Many a poor sore-eyed student that I have heard of would grow faster, both intellectually and physically, if, instead of sitting up so very late, he honestly slumbered a fool's allowance.

There may be an excess even of informing light. Niepce, a Frenchman, discovered "actinism," that power in the sun's rays which produces a chemical effect; that granite rocks, and stone structures, and statues of metal, "are all alike destructively acted upon during the hours of sunshine, and, but for provisions of Nature no less wonderful, would soon perish under the delicate touch of the most subtile of the agencies of the universe." But he observed that "those bodies which underwent this change during the daylight possessed the power of restoring themselves to their original conditions during the

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7 stop . . . away. See note, p. 942 • 9 author, Shakespeare • 19 Menschikoff, Prince Aleksandr Menshikov (1787-1869), Russian general • 77 Niepce, Joseph Nicephore Niepce (1765-1833), French chemist and inventor of photography

hours of night, when this excitement was no longer influencing them." Hence it has been inferred that "the hours of darkness are as necessary to the inorganic creation as we know night and sleep are to the organic kingdom." Not even does the moon shine every night, but gives place to darkness.

I would not have every man nor every part of a man cultivated, any more than I would have every acre of earth cultivated: part will be tillage, but the greater part will be meadow and forest, not only serving an immediate use, but preparing a mould against a distant future, by the annual decay of the vegetation which it supports.

There are other letters for the child to learn than those which Cadmus invented. The Spaniards have a good term to express this wild and dusky knowledge, *Gramática parda,* tawny grammar, a kind of mother-wit derived from that same leopard to which I have referred.

We have heard of a Society for the Diffusion of Useful Knowledge. It is said that knowledge is power; and the like. Methinks there is equal need of a Society for the Diffusion of Useful Ignorance, what we will call Beautiful Knowledge, a knowledge useful in a higher sense: for what is most of our boasted so-called knowledge but a conceit that we know something, which robs us of the advantage of our actual ignorance? What we call knowledge is often our positive ignorance; ignorance our negative knowledge. By long years of patient industry and reading of the newspapers,—for what are the libraries of science but files of newspapers?—a man accumulates a myriad facts, lays them up in his memory, and then when in some spring of his life he saunters abroad into the Great Fields of thought, he, as it were, goes to grass like a horse and leaves all his harness behind in the stable. I would say to the Society for the Diffusion of Useful Knowledge, sometimes,—Go to grass. You have eaten hay long enough. The spring has come with its green crop. The very cows are driven to their country pastures before the end of May; though I have heard of one unnatural farmer who kept his cow in the barn and fed her on hay all the year round. So, frequently, the Society for the Diffusion of Useful Knowledge treats its cattle.

A man's ignorance sometimes is not only useful, but beautiful,—while his knowledge, so called, is oftentimes worse than useless, besides being ugly. Which is the best man to deal with,—he who knows nothing about a subject, and, what is extremely rare, knows that he knows nothing, or he who really knows something about it, but thinks that he knows all?

My desire for knowledge is intermittent; but my desire to bathe my head in atmospheres unknown to my feet is perennial and constant. The highest that we can attain to is not Knowledge, but Sympathy with Intelligence. I do not know that this higher knowledge amounts to anything more definite than a novel and grand surprise on a sudden revelation of the insufficiency of all that we called Knowledge before,—a discovery that there are more things in heaven and earth than are dreamed of in our philosophy. It is the lighting up of the mist by the sun. Man cannot *know* in any higher sense than this, any more than he can look serenely and with impunity in the face of the sun: Ὡς τί νοῶν, οὐ κεῖνον νοήσεις,—"You will not perceive that, as perceiving a particular thing," say the Chaldean Oracles.

There is something servile in the habit of seeking after a law which we may obey. We may study the laws of matter at and for our convenience, but a successful life knows no law. It is an unfortunate discovery certainly, that of a law which binds us where we did not know before that we were bound. Live free, child of the mist,—and with respect to knowledge we are all children of the mist. The man who takes the liberty to live is superior to all the laws, by virtue of his relation to the law-maker. "That is active duty," says the Vishnu Purana, "which is not for our bondage; that is knowledge which is for our liberation: all other duty is good only unto weariness; all other knowledge is only the cleverness of an artist."

It is remarkable how few events or crises there are in our histories; how little exercised we have been in our minds; how few experiences we have had. I would fain be assured that I am growing apace and rankly, though my very growth disturb this dull equanimity,—though it be with struggle through long, dark, muggy nights or seasons of gloom. It would be well, if all our lives were

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14 **Cadmus.** In Greek mythology, Cadmus introduced the alphabet from Phoenicia into Greece • 57 **there . . . philosophy,** famous words of Hamlet to Horatio, **Hamlet,** Act I, Scene v, ll. 166-167 • 64 **Chaldean Oracles,** religious teachings of ancient Babylonia • 74 **Vishnu Purana,** one of the sacred books of the Hindus; compare introductory note to Emerson's "Hamatreya," p. 934

a divine tragedy even, instead of this trivial comedy or farce. Dante, Bunyan, and others appear to have been exercised in their minds more than we: they were subjected to a kind of culture such as our district schools and colleges do not contemplate. Even Mahomet, though many may scream at his name, had a good deal more to live for, aye, and to die for, than they have commonly.

When, at rare intervals, some thought visits one, as perchance he is walking on a railroad, then indeed the cars go by without his hearing them. But soon, by some inexorable law our life goes by and the cars return.

"Gentle breeze, that wanderest unseen,
And bendest the thistles round Loira of storms,
Traveler of the windy glens,
Why hast thou left my ear so soon?"

While almost all men feel an attraction drawing them to society, few are attracted strongly to Nature. In their reaction to Nature men appear to me for the most part, notwithstanding their arts, lower than the animals. It is not often a beautiful relation, as in the case of the animals. How little appreciation of the beauty of the landscape there is among us! We have to be told that the Greeks called the world Κόσμος, Beauty, or Order, but we do not see clearly why they did so, and we esteem it at best only a curious philological fact.

For my part, I feel that with regard to Nature I live a sort of border life, on the confines of a world into which I make occasional and transient forays only, and my patriotism and allegiance to the State into whose territories I seem to retreat are those of a moss-trooper. Unto a life which I call natural I would gladly follow even a will-o'-the-wisp through bogs and sloughs unimaginable, but no moon nor firefly has shown me the causeway to it. Nature is a personality so vast and universal that we have never seen one of her features. The walker in the familiar fields which stretch around my native town sometimes finds himself in another land than is described in their owners' deeds, as it were in some far-away field on the confines of the actual Concord, where her jurisdiction ceases, and the idea which the word Concord suggests ceases to be suggested. These farms which I have myself surveyed, these bounds which I have set up, appear dimly still as through a mist; but they have no chemistry to fix them; they fade from the surface of the glass; and the picture which the painter painted stands out dimly from beneath. The world with which we are commonly acquainted leaves no trace, and it will have no anniversary.

I took a walk on Spaulding's Farm the other afternoon. I saw the setting sun lighting up the opposite side of a stately pine wood. Its golden rays straggled into the aisles of the wood as into some noble hall. I was impressed as if some ancient and altogether admirable and shining family had settled there in that part of the land called Concord, unknown to me,—to whom the sun was servant,—who had not gone into society in the village, —who had not been called on. I saw their park, their pleasure-ground, beyond through the wood, in Spaulding's cranberry-meadow. The pines furnished them with gables as they grew. Their house was not obvious to vision; the trees grew through it. I do not know whether I heard the sounds of a suppressed hilarity or not. They seemed to recline on the sunbeams. They have sons and daughters. They are quite well. The farmer's cart-path, which leads directly through their hall, does not in the least put them out, as the muddy bottom of a pool is sometimes seen through the reflected skies. They never heard of Spaulding, and do not know that he is their neighbor,—notwithstanding I heard him whistle as he drove his team through the house. Nothing can equal the serenity of their lives. Their coat of arms is simply a lichen. I saw it painted on the pines and oaks. Their attics were in the tops of the trees. They are of no politics. There was no noise of labor. I did not perceive that they were weaving or spinning. Yet I did detect, when the wind lulled and hearing was done away, the finest imaginable sweet musical hum,—as of a distant hive in May, which perchance was the sound of their thinking. They had no idle thoughts, and no one without could see their work, for their industry was not as in knots and excrescences embayed.

But I find it difficult to remember them. They fade irrevocably out of my mind even now while I speak,

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5 **Mahomet.** Thoreau's respect for Mahomet doubtless owed much to Carlyle's **Heroes and Hero Worship** (1841), where Mahomet is the "hero as prophet." Thoreau wrote a notable essay on Carlyle ("Thomas Carlyle and His Works"), published in 1847 • 30 **moss-trooper,** one of a class of marauders that formerly infested the border country between England and Scotland, so called because of the mossy or boggy character of much of the country

and endeavor to recall them and recollect myself. It is only after a long and serious effort to recollect my best thoughts that I become again aware of their cohabitancy. If it were not for such families as this, I think I should move out of Concord.

We are accustomed to say in New England that few and fewer pigeons visit us every year. Our forests furnish no mast for them. So, it would seem, few and fewer thoughts visit each growing man from year to year, for the grove in our minds is laid waste,—sold to feed unnecessary fires of ambition, or sent to mill, and there is scarcely a twig left for them to perch on. They no longer build nor breed with us. In some more genial season, perchance, a faint shadow flits across the landscape of the mind, cast by the *wings* of some thought in its vernal or autumnal migration, but, looking up, we are unable to detect the substance of the thought itself. Our winged thoughts are turned to poultry. They no longer soar, and they attain only to a Shanghai and Cochin-China grandeur. Those *gra-a-ate thoughts,* those *gra-a-ate men* you hear of!

We hug the earth,—how rarely we mount! Methinks we might elevate ourselves a little more. We might climb a tree, at least. I found my account in climbing a tree once. It was a tall white-pine, on the top of a hill; and though I got well pitched, I was well paid for it, for I discovered new mountains in the horizon which I had never seen before,—so much more of the earth and the heavens. I might have walked about the foot of the tree for three-score years and ten, and yet I certainly should never have seen them. But, above all, I discovered around me,—it was near the end of June,—on the ends of the topmost branches only, a few minute and delicate red cone-like blossoms, the fertile flower of the white pine looking heavenward. I carried straightway to the village the topmost spire, and showed it to stranger jurymen who walked the streets,—for it was court-week, —and the farmers and lumber-dealers and wood-choppers and hunters, and not one had ever seen the like before, but they wondered as at a star dropped down. Tell of ancient architects finishing their works on the tops of columns as perfectly as on the lower and more visible parts! Nature has from the first expanded the minute blossoms of the forest only toward the heavens, above men's heads and unobserved by them. We see only the flowers that are under our feet in the meadows. The pines have developed their delicate blossoms on the highest twigs of the wood every summer for ages, as well over the heads of Nature's red children as of her white ones: yet scarcely a farmer or hunter in the land has ever seen them.

Above all, we cannot afford not to live in the present. He is blessed over all mortals who loses no moment of the passing life in remembering the past. Unless our philosophy hears the cock crow in every barn-yard within our horizon, it is belated. That sound commonly reminds us that we are growing rusty and antique in our employments and habits of thought. His philosophy comes down to a more recent time than ours. There is something suggested by it that is a newer testament,—the gospel according to this moment. He has not fallen astern; he has got up early and kept up early, and to be where he is is to be in season, in the foremost rank of time. It is an expression of the health and soundness of Nature, a brag for all the world,—healthiness as of a spring burst forth, a new fountain of the Muses, to celebrate this last instant of time. Where he lives no fugitive slave laws are passed. Who has not betrayed his master many times since last he heard that note?

The merit of this bird's strain is in its freedom from all plaintiveness. The singer can easily move us to tears or to laughter, but where is he who can excite in us a pure morning joy? When, in doleful dumps, breaking the awful stillness of our wooden sidewalk on a Sunday, or perchance, a watcher in the house of mourning, I hear a cockerel crow far or near, I think to myself, "There is one of us well, at any rate,"—and with a sudden gush return to my senses.

We had a remarkable sunset one day last November. I was walking in a meadow, the source of a small brook, when the sun at last, just before setting, after a cold

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19 **Shanghai . . . Cochin-China,** breeds of domestic fowls of Asiatic origin • 68 **fugitive slave laws.** A new and drastic Fugitive Slave Law, intended to check organized assistance by the "underground railroad" to fugitives, was a part of the Compromise of 1850 • 68 **betrayed . . . note,** an allusion to Peter's denials of Jesus. After the third denial, the cock crew. See Matthew 26:69-75 • 75 **house of mourning.** The phrase occurs several times in the Bible; for example, in Ecclesiastes 7:2: "It is better to go to the house of mourning . . ."

gray day, reached a clear stratum in the horizon, and the softest, brightest morning sunlight fell on the dry grass and on the stems of the trees in the opposite horizon and on the leaves of the shrub-oaks on the hillside, while our shadows stretched long over the meadow eastward, as if we were the only motes in its beams. It was such a light as we could not have imagined a moment before, and the air also was so warm and serene that nothing was wanting to make a paradise of that meadow. When we reflected that this was not a solitary phenomenon, never to happen again, but that it would happen forever and ever an infinite number of evenings, and cheer and reassure the latest child that walked there, it was more glorious still.

The sun sets on some retired meadow, where no house is visible, with all the glory and splendor that it lavishes on cities, and perchance as it has never set before,—where there is but a solitary marsh-hawk to have his wings gilded by it, or only a musquash looks out from his cabin, and there is some little black-veined brook in the midst of the marsh, just beginning to meander, winding slowly round a decaying stump. We walked in so pure and bright a light, gilding the withered grass and leaves, so softly and serenely bright, I thought I had never bathed in such a golden flood, without a ripple or a murmur to it. The west side of every wood and rising ground gleamed like the boundary of Elysium, and the sun on our backs seemed like a gentle herdsman driving us home at evening.

So we saunter toward the Holy Land, till one day the sun shall shine more brightly than ever he has done, shall perchance shine into our minds and hearts, and light up our whole lives with a great awakening light, as warm and serene and golden as on a bankside in autumn.

1851 ·1862

Prayer

From The Dial for July 1842.

Great God, I ask thee for no meaner pelf
Than that I may not disappoint myself,
That in my action I may soar as high
As I can now discern with this clear eye.

And next in value, which thy kindness lends,
That I may greatly disappoint my friends,
Howe'er they think or hope that it may be,
They may not dream how thou'st distinguished me.

That my weak hand may equal my firm faith,
And my life practise more than my tongue saith;
    That my low conduct may not show,
        Nor my relenting lines,
    That I thy purpose did not know,
        Or overrated thy designs.

1842

Rumors from an Æolian Harp

First printed in The Dial for October 1842, the poem was reprinted in the chapter entitled "Monday" in **A Week on the Concord and Merrimack Rivers.**

There is a vale which none hath seen,
Where foot of man has never been,
Such as here lives with toil and strife,
An anxious and a sinful life.

There every virtue has its birth,
Ere it descends upon the earth,
And thither every deed returns,
Which in the generous bosom burns.

There love is warm, and youth is young,
And poetry is yet unsung,
For Virtue still adventures there,
And freely breathes her native air.

And ever, if you hearken well,
You still may hear its vesper bell,
And tread of high-souled men go by,
Their thoughts conversing with the sky.

1842

The Summer Rain

First printed in The Dial for October 1842, "The Summer Rain" was reprinted in the chapter entitled "Thursday" in A Week on the Concord and Merrimack Rivers.

My books I'd fain cast off, I cannot read,
'Twixt every page my thoughts go stray at large
Down in the meadow, where is richer feed,
And will not mind to hit their proper targe.

Plutarch was good, and so was Homer too,
Our Shakespeare's life were rich to live again,
What Plutarch read, that was not good nor true,
Nor Shakespeare's books, unless his books were men.

Here while I lie beneath this walnut bough,
What care I for the Greeks or for Troy town,
If juster battles are enacted now
Between the ants upon this hummock's crown?

Bid Homer wait till I the issue learn,
If red or black the gods will favor most,
Or yonder Ajax will the phalanx turn,
Struggling to heave some rock against the host.

Tell Shakespeare to attend some leisure hour,
For now I've business with this drop of dew,
And see you not, the clouds prepare a shower,—
I'll meet him shortly when the sky is blue.

This bed of herdsgrass and wild oats was spread
Last year with nicer skill than monarchs use,
A clover tuft is pillow for my head,
And violets quite overtop my shoes.

And now the cordial clouds have shut all in,
And gently swells the wind to say all's well;
The scattered drops are falling fast and thin,
Some in the pool, some in the flower-bell.

I am well drenched upon my bed of oats;
But see that globe come rolling down its stem,
Now like a lonely planet there it floats,
And now it sinks into my garment's hem.

Drip, drip the trees for all the country round,
And richness rare distills from every bough;
The wind alone it is makes every sound,
Shaking down crystals on the leaves below.

For shame the sun will never show himself,
Who could not with his beams e'er melt me so;
My dripping locks,—they would become an elf,
Who in a beaded coat does gayly go.

1842

Smoke

First printed in The Dial for April 1843, "Smoke" was reprinted in Chapter XIII of Walden.

Light-wingèd smoke, Icarian bird,
Melting thy pinions in thy upward flight,
Lark without song, and messenger of dawn,
Circling above the hamlets as thy nest;
Or else, departing dream, and shadowy form
Of midnight vision, gathering up thy skirts;
By night star-veiling, and by day
Darkening the light and blotting out the sun;
Go thou my incense upward from this hearth,
And ask the Gods to pardon this clear flame.

1843

The Summer Rain • 4 targe, target • 11 battles . . . ants. Thoreau's famous description of the battle between the red and black ants is in Chap. XII of Walden

Smoke • 1 Icarian. When Icarus, in Greek mythology, flew too near the sun, the wax of his artificial wings melted, and he fell into the sea and was drowned

Inspiration

Portions of "Inspiration" are found scattered through A Week on the Concord and Merrimack Rivers. The poem should be compared with Emerson's "Merlin," p. 930, noting especially the views of poetic composition expressed.

Whate'er we leave to God, God does,
  And blesses us;
The work we choose should be our own,
  God leaves alone.

If with light head erect I sing,
  Though all the Muses lend their force,
From my poor love of anything,
  The verse is weak and shallow as its source.

But if with bended neck I grope
  Listening behind me for my wit,
With faith superior to hope,
  More anxious to keep back than forward it;

Making my soul accomplice there
  Unto the flame my heart hath lit,
Then will the verse forever wear—
  Time cannot bend the line which God hath writ.

Always the general show of things
  Floats in review before my mind,
And such true love and reverence brings,
  That sometimes I forget that I am blind.

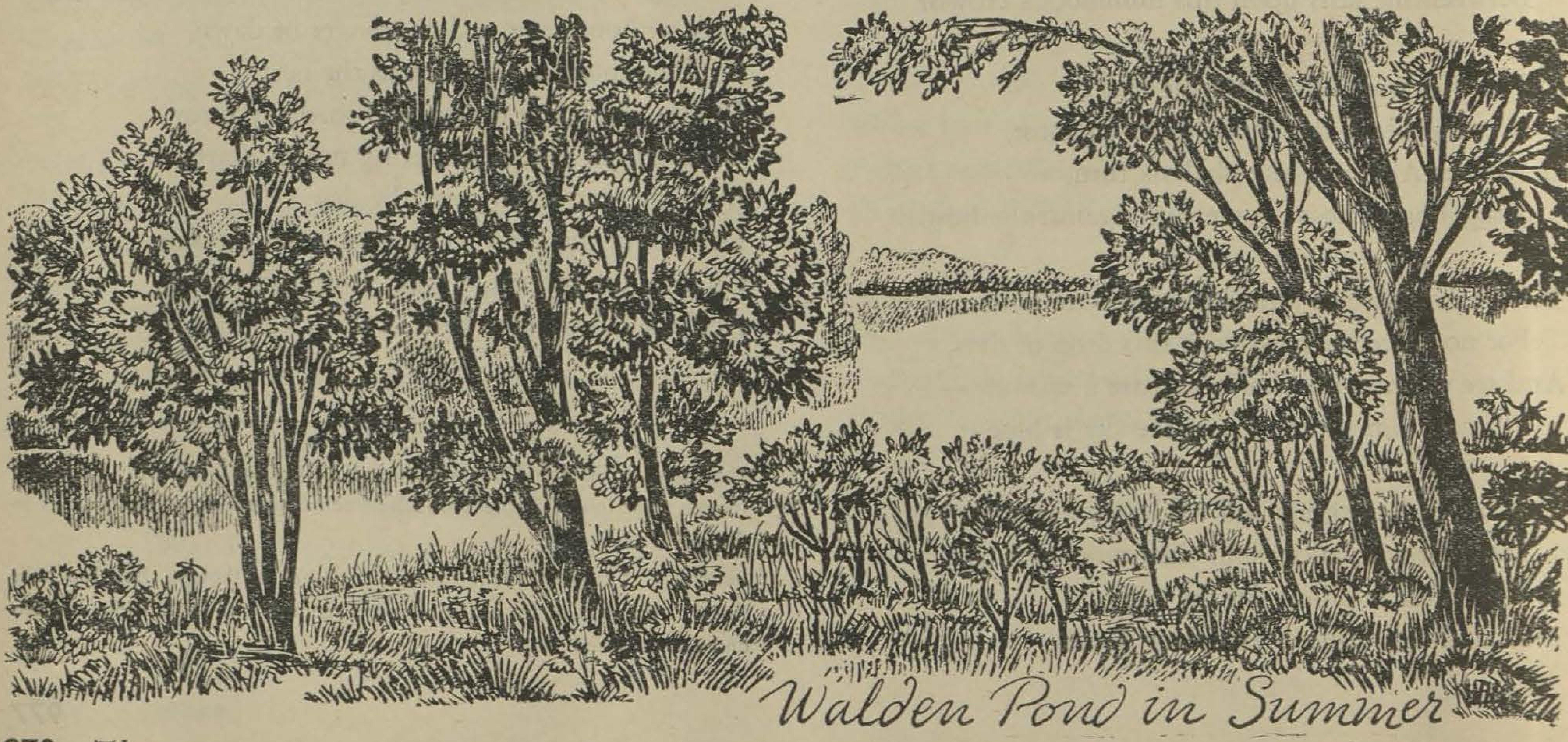
But now there comes unsought, unseen,
  Some clear divine electuary,
And I, who had but sensual been,
  Grow sensible, and as God is, am wary.

I hearing get, who had but ears,
  And sight, who had but eyes before,
I moments live, who lived but years,
  And truth discern, who knew but learning's lore.

I hear beyond the range of sound,
  I see beyond the range of sight,
New earths and skies and seas around,
  And in my day the sun doth pale his light.

A clear and ancient harmony
  Pierces my soul through all its din,
As through its utmost melody,—
  Farther behind than they, farther within.

More swift its bolt than lightning is,
  Its voice than thunder is more loud,
It doth expand my privacies
  To all, and leave me single in the crowd.



It speaks with such authority,
  With so serene and lofty tone,
That idle Time runs gadding by,
  And leaves me with Eternity alone.

Now chiefly is my natal hour,
  And only now my prime of life;
Of manhood's strength it is the flower,
  'Tis peace's end and war's beginning strife.

It comes in summer's broadest noon,
  By a grey wall or some chance place,
Unseasoning Time, insulting June,
  And vexing day with its presuming face.

Such fragrance round my couch it makes,
  More rich than are Arabian drugs,
That my soul scents its life and wakes
  The body up beneath its perfumed rugs.

Such is the Muse, the heavenly maid,
  The star that guides our mortal course,
Which shows where life's true kernel's laid,
  Its wheat's fine flour, and its undying force.

She with one breath attunes the spheres,
  And also my poor human heart,
With one impulse propels the years
  Around, and gives my throbbing pulse its start.

I will not doubt for evermore,
  Nor falter from a steadfast faith,
For though the system be turned o'er,
  God takes not back the word which once He saith.

I will not doubt the love untold
  Which not my worth nor want has bought,
Which wooed me young, and wooes me old,
  And to this evening hath me brought.

My memory I'll educate
  To know the one historic truth,
Remembering to the latest date
  The only true and sole immortal youth.

Be but thy inspiration given,
  No matter through what danger sought,
I'll fathom hell or climb to heaven,
  And yet esteem that cheap which love has bought.

Fame cannot tempt the bard
  Who's famous with his God,
Nor laurel him reward
  Who has his Maker's nod.

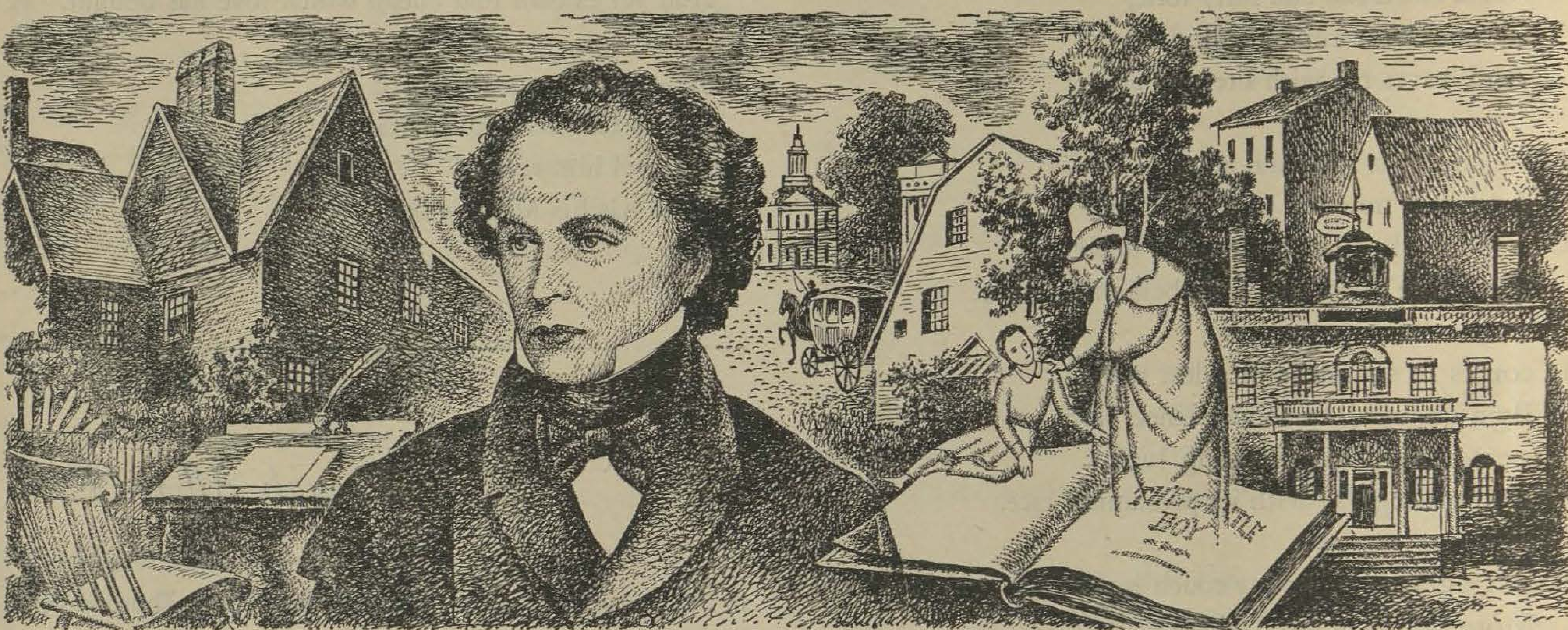
1849

Though All the Fates

In the paragraph which precedes the poem, Thoreau tells of talking with some boatmen on the Merrimack who intended, when they reached the coast, possibly to embark for "the China seas." "What grievance," he asks, "has its root among the New Hampshire hills? . . . What is wanting to human life here, that these men should make haste to the antipodes?" (See **A Week on the Concord and Merrimack Rivers.**)

Though all the fates should prove unkind,
Leave not your native land behind.
The ship, becalmed, at length stands still;
The steed must rest beneath the hill;
But swiftly still our fortunes pace,
To find us out in every place.
The vessel, though her masts be firm,
Beneath her copper bears a worm;
Around the cape, across the line,
Till fields of ice her course confine;
It matters not how smooth the breeze,
How shallow or how deep the seas,
Whether she bears Manilla twine,
Or in her hold Madeira wine,
Or China teas, or Spanish hides,
In port or quarantine she rides;
Far from New England's blustering shore,
New England's worm her hulk shall bore,
And sink her in the Indian seas,
Twine, wine, and hides, and China teas.

1849



Nathaniel Hawthorne

1804 · 1864

Nathaniel Hawthorne's first American ancestor, William Hathorne, came to Massachusetts in 1630 and, as a magistrate of the Bay Colony, was active in the 1650's in the persecution of the Quakers. William Hathorne's son, John, was one of the "witch-judges" at Salem in 1692. The seventeenth-century Hathornes were obviously men of importance, though of a sinister kind. The family declined in prominence during the century which followed. Nathaniel Hawthorne's father, a sea captain, died in Dutch Guiana when Nathaniel was only four years of age, leaving at Salem a widow and three children in reduced circumstances. Hawthorne often thought of William Hathorne, "grave, bearded, sable-cloaked and steeple-crowned progenitor," and of John Hathorne, "so conspicuous in the martyrdom of the witches that their blood may fairly be said to have left a stain upon him." He wondered if their sins might have been to blame for his family's decline and if he might have inherited some of their guilt. "I take shame upon myself for their sakes," he wrote in "The Custom House," the prefatory essay to *The Scarlet Letter,* "and pray that any curse incurred by them—as I have heard, and as the dreary and unprosperous condition of the race, for many a long year back, would argue to exist—may be now and henceforth removed." And yet, however much he might deprecate the cruelties of these early progenitors (and however alien and distasteful to them might be a descendant who was "a writer of story-books"), he could not escape his inheritance: "strong traits of their nature," he said, "have intertwined themselves with mine." It is

Panel (l. to r.): The House of the Seven Gables • Hawthorne's study • Nathaniel Hawthorne at the age of 35 • Salem • The Old Manse • Sophia Hawthorne's illustration for "The Gentle Boy" • Salem Custom House

this hereditary sense, no doubt, which explains, at least in part, Hawthorne's preoccupation with the theme of guilt and the somber tone of his stories.

He was graduated from Bowdoin College in 1825. Franklin Pierce was in the class of 1824; Longfellow was a classmate. After graduation, Hawthorne returned to his mother's house in Salem and lived there in comparative seclusion for twelve years. He later thought of himself as having been under a spell of enchantment. In a famous letter to Longfellow, written in 1837, he said: "By some witchcraft or other—for I really cannot assign any reasonable why and wherefore—I have been carried apart from the main current of life, and find it impossible to get back again. Since we last met . . . I have secluded myself from society; and yet I never meant any such thing, nor dreamed what sort of life I was going to lead. I have made a captive of myself and put me into a dungeon; and now I cannot find the key to let myself out—and if the door were open, I should be almost afraid to come out. . . . There is no fate in this world so horrible as to have no share in either its joys or sorrows. For the last ten years, I have not lived, but only dreamed about living." Those years, however, were not wasted. In his solitary chamber, Hawthorne put himself through a rigorous literary discipline. He read and wrote and destroyed much of what he had written. Recovering from a false start in *Fanshawe* (1828), a short novel based upon life at Bowdoin, he discovered the kind of composition in which he was to excel: the moral and psychological tale. After anonymous publication in magazines, his tales were first collected in *Twice-Told Tales* (1837). If these stories, as their author thought later, "have the pale tint of flowers that blossomed in too retired a shade," they illustrate, nevertheless, Hawthorne's characteristic virtues of sharpness of insight and delicacy of treatment.

We need not regret the twelve solitary years; perhaps they were necessary to Hawthorne's development as an artist. The prolongation of the period of solitude, however, might have endangered both his literary growth and his mental health. Hawthorne evidently feared as much, for soon he was attempting, in his own phrase, "to open an intercourse with the world." In 1839-1840 he was "weigher and gauger" in the Boston Custom House; for several months in 1841 he worked in the potato patch and manure pile at Brook Farm. In the meantime, he had fallen in love with Miss Sophia Peabody, whom he married in 1842. Love and marriage more than anything else, he felt, saved him from the fate of the solitary. The idyllic life of the newly married pair at the Old Manse is delightfully recorded in *The American Notebooks.*

Hawthorne returned to Salem in 1845; and in 1846 appeared a second collection of tales, entitled *Mosses from an Old Manse.* This volume, like *Twice-Told Tales,* attracted so few readers that it was with some justice that Hawthorne believed himself to be "the obscurest man of letters in America." Because of his financial needs, he was glad to accept an appointment as surveyor in the Salem Custom House. Inasmuch as he held this appointment as a loyal Democrat under the Democratic administration of James K. Polk, he was dismissed from office in 1849, after three years' service, to make room for a Whig incumbent. The loss of this place was a blow to Hawthorne. But adversity discovers virtue. The three years which followed this "misfortune" were the most productive period of his life. *The Scarlet Letter* (1850), an intense, tragic study of the psychological effects of adultery upon four people, made Hawthorne famous. His fame was enhanced by *The House of the Seven Gables* (1851), a study of the decay of an old Salem family, and *The Blithedale Romance* (1852), a satire, in part, on the socialist community at Brook Farm. *The House of the Seven Gables* was written at Lenox, in the Berkshires, where Hawthorne enjoyed the stimulating companionship of Herman Melville.

From 1853 to 1857 Hawthorne was consul at Liverpool; he had been appointed to that post by his old college friend, Franklin Pierce, then President of the United States. The office was not much to Hawthorne's liking; but he made the most of the opportunity of seeing England, his impressions of which he recorded in the posthumously printed *English Notebooks* and in *Our Old Home* (1863), a collection of essays. He spent 1858-1859 in Italy and employed Italian backgrounds in his last complete novel, *The Marble Faun* (1860). He returned in 1860 to "The Wayside" in Concord, which he had purchased a short time before going abroad. The Civil War darkened his last years. He did not share the abolitionist zeal. "I always thought that the war should have been avoided," he said in 1863, "although since it has broken out, I have longed for military success as much as any man or woman of the North." His personal loyalty to Pierce, whose public opposition to the War

seemed treacherous to many, was little short of heroic (see the dedicatory letter in *Our Old Home*). His last attempts at fiction resulted in some interesting works which were still unfinished at his death: *The Ancestral Footstep, Septimius Felton, Doctor Grimshawe's Secret,* and *The Dolliver Romance.*

Critics of Hawthorne have found a good deal to object to, but more to praise. Henry James, while deprecating Hawthorne's "provincialism" and his "abuse of the fanciful element," declared: "No one has had just that vision of life, and no one has had a literary form that more successfully expressed his vision." W. C. Brownell, the severest of Hawthorne's critics, objected to his "placidity" and his obsession with allegory, but found in *The Scarlet Letter* "our chief prose masterpiece." More recently, T. S. Eliot has said (in *The Athenaeum,* April 25, 1919): "Hawthorne had . . . the firmness, the true coldness, the hard coldness of the genuine artist. In consequence, the observation of moral life in *The Scarlet Letter,* in *The House of the Seven Gables,* and even in some of the tales and sketches, has solidity, has permanence, the permanence of art. It will always be of use. . . . The work of Hawthorne is truly a criticism—true because a fidelity of the artist and not a mere conviction of the man—of the Puritan morality, of the Transcendentalist morality, and of the world which Hawthorne knew. It is a criticism as Henry James's work is a criticism of the America of his times, and as the work of Turgenev and Flaubert is a criticism of the Russia and the France of theirs." Of all the writers of New England's flowering, Hawthorne seems the most certain to endure.

The Complete Works of Nathaniel Hawthorne, Riverside Edition, 13 vols., Boston, 1883 • **The American Notebooks by Nathaniel Hawthorne,** ed. Randall Stewart, New Haven, 1932 • **The English Notebooks by Nathaniel Hawthorne,** ed. Randall Stewart, New York, 1941 • Henry James, **Hawthorne,** New York, 1879 • W. C. Brownell, "Hawthorne," **American Prose Masters,** New York, 1909 • Newton Arvin, **Hawthorne,** Boston, 1929

The Gentle Boy

The author of this story stands apart from the warring sects of early New England. He condemns unbridled fanaticism, whether Puritan or Quaker. He recommends the golden mean of "rational piety."

"The Gentle Boy" was first published in the **Token** for 1832 and was reprinted in **Twice-Told Tales** in 1837. Hawthorne's chief source of historical information was Willem Sewel's **History of the Quakers** (see G. Harrison Orians, "The Sources and Themes of Hawthorne's 'The Gentle Boy,'" **New England Quarterly,** December 1941).

In the course of the year 1656 several of the people called Quakers, led, as they professed, by the inward movement of the Spirit, made their appearance in New England. Their reputation, as holders of mystic and pernicious principles, having spread before them, the Puritans early endeavored to banish and to prevent the further intrusion of the rising sect. But the measures by which it was intended to purge the land of heresy, though more than sufficiently vigorous, were entirely unsuccessful. The Quakers, esteeming persecution as a divine call to the post of danger, laid claim to a holy courage, unknown to the Puritans themselves, who had shunned the Cross, by providing for the peaceable exercise of their religion in a distant wilderness. Though it was the singular fact that every nation of the earth rejected the wandering enthusiasts who practised peace towards all men, the place of greatest uneasiness and peril, and therefore in their eyes the most eligible, was the province of Massachusetts Bay.

The fines, imprisonments, and stripes, liberally distributed by our pious forefathers; the popular antipathy, so strong that it endured nearly a hundred years after

21 our . . . **forefathers,** prominent among whom was Hawthorne's first American ancestor, William Hathorne. Hawthorne alludes to William Hathorne's acts of persecution in two essays: "Main Street" (in **The Snow Image and Other Twice-Told Tales**) and "The Custom House" (the prefatory essay to **The Scarlet Letter**)

actual persecution had ceased, were attractions as powerful for the Quakers as peace, honor, and reward would have been for the worldly-minded. Every European vessel brought new cargoes of the sect, eager to testify against the oppression which they hoped to share; and when shipmasters were restrained by heavy fines from affording them passage, they made long and circuitous journeys through the Indian country, and appeared in the province as if conveyed by a supernatural power. Their enthusiasm, heightened almost to madness by the treatment which they received, produced actions contrary to the rules of decency as well as of rational religion, and presented a singular contrast to the calm and staid deportment of their sectarian successors of the present day. The command of the Spirit, inaudible except to the soul, and not to be controverted on grounds of human wisdom, was made a plea for most indecorous exhibitions, which, abstractedly considered, well deserved the moderate chastisement of the rod. These extravagances, and the persecution which was at once their cause and consequence, continued to increase, till, in the year 1659, the Government of Massachusetts Bay indulged two members of the Quaker sect with the crown of martyrdom.

An indelible stain of blood is upon the hands of all who consented to this act, but a large share of the awful responsibility must rest upon the person then at the head of the government. He was a man of narrow mind and imperfect education, and his uncompromising bigotry was made hot and mischievous by violent and hasty passions; he exerted his influence indecorously and unjustifiably to compass the death of the enthusiasts, and his whole conduct in respect to them was marked by brutal cruelty. The Quakers, whose revengeful feelings were not less deep because they were inactive, remembered this man and his associates in aftertimes. The historian of the sect affirms that, by the wrath of Heaven, a blight fell upon the land in the vicinity of the "bloody town" of Boston, so that no wheat would grow there; and he takes his stand, as it were, among the graves of the ancient persecutors, and triumphantly recounts the judgments that overtook them in old age or at the parting hour. He tells us that they died suddenly, and violently, and in madness; but nothing can exceed the bitter mockery with which he records the loathsome disease and "death by rottenness" of the fierce and cruel governor.

On the evening of the autumn day that had witnessed the martyrdom of two men of the Quaker persuasion, a Puritan settler was returning from the metropolis to the neighboring country town in which he resided. The air was cool, the sky clear, and the lingering twilight was made brighter by the rays of a young moon, which had now nearly reached the verge of the horizon. The traveller, a man of middle age, wrapped in a grey frieze coat, quickened his pace when he had reached the outskirts of the town, for a gloomy extent of nearly four miles lay between him and his home. The low, straw-thatched houses were scattered at considerable intervals along the road, and the country having been settled but about thirty years, the tracts of original forest still bore no small proportion to the cultivated ground. The autumn wind wandered among the branches, whirling away the leaves from all except the pine-trees, and moaning as if it lamented the desolation of which it was the instrument. The road had penetrated the mass of woods that lay nearest to the town, and was just emerging into an open space, when the traveller's ears were saluted by a sound more mournful than even that of the wind. It was like the wailing of some one in distress, and it seemed to proceed from beneath a tall and lonely fir tree, in the centre of a cleared, but uninclosed and uncultivated field. The Puritan could not but remember that this was the very spot which had been made accursed a few hours before by the execution of the Quakers, whose bodies had been thrown together into one hasty grave, beneath the tree on which they suffered. He struggled, however, against the superstitious fears which belonged to the age, and compelled himself to pause and listen.

"The voice was most likely mortal, nor have I cause to tremble if it be otherwise," thought he, straining his eyes through the dim moonlight. "Methinks it is like the wailing of a child; some infant, it may be, which has strayed from its mother, and chanced upon the place of death. For the ease of mine own conscience, I must search this matter out."

He therefore left the path, and walked somewhat fearfully across the field. Though now so desolate, its soil was pressed down and trampled by the thousand

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35 **historian . . . sect,** Willem Sewel, author of **The History of the Quakers** (London, 1725) • 46 **governor,** John Endicott (1588-1665)

footsteps of those who had witnessed the spectacle of that day, all of whom had now retired, leaving the dead to their loneliness. The traveller at length reached the fir tree, which from the middle upward was covered with living branches, although a scaffold had been erected beneath, and other preparations made for the work of death. Under this unhappy tree, which in after-times was believed to drop poison with its dew, sat the one solitary mourner for innocent blood. It was a slender and light-clad little boy, who leaned his face upon a hillock of fresh-turned and half-frozen earth, and wailed bitterly, yet in a suppressed tone, as if his grief might receive the punishment of crime. The Puritan, whose approach had been unperceived, laid his hand upon the child's shoulder, and addressed him compassionately.

"You have chosen a dreary lodging, my poor boy, and no wonder that you weep," said he. "But dry your eyes, and tell me where your mother dwells. I promise you, if the journey be not too far, I will leave you in her arms to-night."

The boy had hushed his wailing at once, and turned his face upward to the stranger. It was a pale, bright-eyed countenance, certainly not more than six years old, but sorrow, fear, and want, had destroyed much of its infantile expression. The Puritan, seeing the boy's frightened gaze, and feeling that he trembled under his hand, endeavored to reassure him.

"Nay, if I intended to do you harm, little lad, the readiest way were to leave you here. What! you do not fear to sit beneath the gallows on a new-made grave, and yet you tremble at a friend's touch. Take heart, child, and tell me what is your name, and where is your home?"

"Friend," replied the little boy, in a sweet, though faltering voice, "they call me Ilbrahim, and my home is here."

The pale, spiritual face, the eyes that seemed to mingle with the moonlight, the sweet, airy voice, and the outlandish name, almost made the Puritan believe that the boy was in truth a being which had sprung up out of the grave on which he sat. But perceiving that the apparition stood the test of a short mental prayer, and remembering that the arm which he had touched was lifelike, he adopted a more rational supposition. "The poor child is stricken in his intellect," thought he; "but verily his words are fearful, in a place like this." He then spoke soothingly, intending to humor the boy's fantasy.

"Your home will scarce be comfortable, Ilbrahim, this cold autumn night, and I fear you are ill provided with food. I am hastening to a warm supper and bed, and if you will go with me, you shall share them!"

"I thank thee, friend, but though I be hungry and shivering with cold, thou wilt not give me food nor lodging," replied the boy, in the quiet tone which despair had taught him even so young. "My father was of the people whom all men hate. They have laid him under this heap of earth, and here is my home."

The Puritan, who had laid hold of little Ilbrahim's hand, relinquished it as if he were touching a loathsome reptile. But he possessed a compassionate heart, which not even religious prejudice could harden into stone.

"God forbid that I should leave this child to perish, though he comes of the accursed sect," said he to himself. "Do we not all spring from an evil root? Are we not all in darkness till the light doth shine upon us? He shall not perish, neither in body, nor, if prayer and instruction may avail for him, in soul." He then spoke aloud and kindly to Ilbrahim, who had again hid his face in the cold earth of the grave. "Was every door in the land shut against you, my child, that you have wandered to this unhallowed spot?"

"They drove me forth from prison when they took my father thence," said the boy; "and I stood afar off, watching the crowd of people, and when they were gone I came thither and found only his grave. I knew that my father was sleeping here, and I said, this shall be my home."

"No, child, no; not while I have a roof over my head, or a morsel to share with you!" exclaimed the Puritan, whose sympathies were now fully excited. "Rise up and come with me, and fear not any harm."

The boy wept afresh, and clung to the heap of earth, as if the cold heart beneath it were warmer to him than any in a living breast. The traveller, however, continued to entreat him tenderly, and seeming to acquire some degree of confidence, he at length arose. But his slender limbs tottered with weakness, his little head grew dizzy, and he leaned against the tree of death for support.

"My poor boy, are you so feeble?" said the Puritan. "When did you taste food last?"

"I ate bread and water with my father in the prison," replied Ilbrahim, "but they brought him none neither yesterday nor to-day, saying that he had eaten enough to

bear him to his journey's end. Trouble not thyself for my hunger, kind friend, for I have lacked food many times ere now."

The traveller took the child in his arms and wrapped his cloak about him, while his heart stirred with shame and anger against the gratuitous cruelty of the instruments in this persecution. In the awakened warmth of his feelings, he resolved that, at whatever risk, he would not forsake the poor little defenseless being whom Heaven had confided to his care. With this determination he left the accursed field, and resumed the homeward path from which the wailing of the boy had called him. The light and motionless burthen scarcely impeded his progress, and he soon beheld the fire-rays from the windows of the cottage which he, a native of a distant clime, had built in the western wilderness. It was surrounded by a considerable extent of cultivated ground, and the dwelling was situated in the nook of a wood-covered hill, whither it seemed to have crept for protection.

"Look up, child," said the Puritan to Ilbrahim, whose faint head had sunk upon his shoulder; "there is our home."

At the word, "home," a thrill passed through the child's frame, but he continued silent. A few moments brought them to the cottage door, at which the owner knocked; for at that early period, when savages were wandering everywhere among the settlers, bolt and bar were indispensable to the security of a dwelling. The summons was answered by a bond-servant, a coarse-clad and dull-featured piece of humanity, who, after ascertaining that his master was the applicant, undid the door, and held a flaring pine-knot torch to light him in. Farther back in the passage-way the red blaze discovered a matronly woman, but no little crowd of children came bounding forth to greet their father's return. As the Puritan entered, he thrust aside his cloak, and displayed Ilbrahim's face to the female.

"Dorothy, here is a little outcast, whom Providence hath put into our hands," observed he. "Be kind to him, even as if he were of those dear ones who have departed from us."

"What pale and bright-eyed little boy is this, Tobias?" she inquired. "Is he one whom the wilderness folk have ravished from some Christian mother?"

"No, Dorothy, this poor child is no captive from the wilderness," he replied. "The heathen savage would have given him to eat of his scanty morsel, and to drink of his birchen cup; but Christian men, alas! had cast him out to die."

Then he told her how he had found him beneath the gallows, upon his father's grave; and how his heart had prompted him, like the speaking of an inward voice, to take the little outcast home, and be kind to him. He acknowledged his resolutions to feed and clothe him, as if he were his own child, and to afford him the instruction which should counteract the pernicious errors hitherto instilled into his infant mind. Dorothy was gifted with even a quicker tenderness than her husband, and she approved of all of his doings and intentions.

"Have you a mother, dear child?" she inquired.

The tears burst forth from his full heart as he attempted to reply; but Dorothy at length understood that he had a mother, who, like the rest of her sect, was a persecuted wanderer. She had been taken from the prison a short time before, carried into the uninhabited wilderness, and left to perish there by hunger or wild beasts; this was no uncommon method of disposing of the Quakers, and they were accustomed to boast that the inhabitants of the desert were more hospitable to them than civilized man.

"Fear not, little boy, you shall not need a mother, and a kind one," said Dorothy, when she had gathered this information. "Dry your tears, Ilbrahim, and be my child, as I will be your mother."

The good woman prepared the little bed from which her own children had successively been borne to another resting-place. Before Ilbrahim would consent to occupy it, he knelt down, and as Dorothy listened to his simple and affecting prayer, she marvelled how the parents that had taught it to him could have been judged worthy of death. When the boy had fallen asleep, she bent over his pale and spiritual countenance, pressed a kiss upon his white brow, drew the bedclothes up about his neck, and went away with a pensive gladness in her heart.

Tobias Pearson was not among the earliest emigrants from the old country. He had remained in England during the first years of the civil war, in which he had borne some share as a cornet of dragoons under Cromwell. But when the ambitious designs of his leader began

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33 **discovered**, revealed

to develop themselves, he quitted the army of the parliament and sought a refuge from the strife, which was no longer holy, among the people of his persuasion in the colony of Massachusetts. A more worldly consideration had perhaps an influence in drawing him thither; for New England offered advantages to men of unprosperous fortunes as well as to dissatisfied religionists, and Pearson had hitherto found it difficult to provide for a wife and increasing family. To this supposed impurity of motive, the more bigoted Puritans were inclined to impute the removal by death of all the children for whose earthly good the father had been over-thoughtful. They had left their native country blooming like roses, and like roses they had perished in a foreign soil. Those expounders of the ways of Providence, who had thus judged their brother, and attributed his domestic sorrows to his sin, were not more charitable when they saw him and Dorothy endeavoring to fill up the void in their hearts, by the adoption of an infant of the accursed sect. Nor did they fail to communicate their disapprobation to Tobias; but the latter, in reply, merely pointed at the little, quiet, lovely boy, whose appearance and deportment were indeed as powerful arguments as could possibly have been adduced in his own favor. Even his beauty, however, and his winning manners, sometimes produced an effect ultimately unfavorable; for the bigots, when the outer surfaces of their iron hearts had been softened and again grew hard, affirmed that no merely natural cause could have so worked upon them.

Their antipathy to the poor infant was also increased by the ill success of divers theological discussions, in which it was attempted to convince him of the errors of his sect. Ilbrahim, it is true, was not a skilful controversialist; but the feeling of his religion was strong as instinct in him, and he could neither be enticed nor driven from the faith which his father had died for. The odium of this stubbornness was shared in a great measure by the child's protectors, insomuch that Tobias and Dorothy very shortly began to experience a most bitter species of persecution, in the cold regards of many a friend whom they had valued. The common people manifested their opinions more openly. Pearson was a man of some consideration, being a Representative to the General Court, and an approved Lieutenant in the train-bands, yet within a week after his adoption of Ilbrahim, he had been both hissed and hooted. Once, also, when walking through a solitary piece of woods, he heard a loud voice from some invisible speaker; and it cried, "What shall be done to the backslider? Lo! the scourge is knotted for him, even the whip of nine cords, and every cord three knots!" These insults irritated Pearson's temper for the moment; they entered also into his heart, and became imperceptible but powerful workers towards an end which his most secret thought had not yet whispered.

On the second Sabbath after Ilbrahim became a member of their family, Pearson and his wife deemed it proper that he should appear with them at public worship. They had anticipated some opposition to this measure from the boy, but he prepared himself in silence, and at the appointed hour was clad in the new mourning suit which Dorothy had wrought for him. As the parish was then, and during many subsequent years, unprovided with a bell, the signal for the commencement of religious exercises was the beat of a drum. At the first sound of that martial call to the place of holy and quiet thoughts, Tobias and Dorothy set forth, each holding a hand of little Ilbrahim, like two parents linked together by the infant of their love. On their path through the leafless woods, they were overtaken by many persons of their acquaintance, all of whom avoided them, and passed by on the other side; but a severer trial awaited their constancy when they had descended the hill, and drew near the pine-built and undecorated house of prayer. Around the door, from which the drummer still sent forth his thundering summons, was drawn up a formidable phalanx, including several of the oldest members of the congregation, many of the middle-aged, and nearly all the younger males. Pearson found it difficult to sustain their united and disapproving gaze, but Dorothy, whose mind was differently circumstanced, merely drew the boy closer to her, and faltered not in her approach. As they entered the door, they overheard the muttered sentiments of the assemblage, and when the reviling voices of the little children smote Ilbrahim's ear, he wept.

The interior aspect of the meeting-house was rude. The low ceiling, the unplastered walls, the naked wood-work, and the undraperied pulpit, offered nothing to excite the devotion, which, without such external aids, often remains latent in the heart. The floor of the building was occupied by rows of long, cushionless benches, supplying the place of pews, and the broad aisle formed a

sexual division, impassable except by children beneath a certain age.

Pearson and Dorothy separated at the door of the meeting-house, and Ilbrahim, being within the years of infancy, was retained under the care of the latter. The wrinkled beldams involved themselves in their rusty cloaks as he passed by; even the mild-featured maidens seemed to dread contamination; and many a stern old man arose, and turned his repulsive and unheavenly countenance upon the gentle boy, as if the sanctuary were polluted by his presence. He was a sweet infant of the skies that had strayed away from his home, and all the inhabitants of this miserable world closed up their impure hearts against him, drew back their earth-soiled garments from his touch, and said, "We are holier than thou."

Ilbrahim, seated by the side of his adopted mother, and retaining fast hold of her hand, assumed a grave and decorous demeanor, such as might befit a person of matured taste and understanding, who should find himself in a temple dedicated to some worship which he did not recognize, but felt himself bound to respect. The exercises had not yet commenced, however, when the boy's attention was arrested by an event, apparently of trifling interest. A woman having her face muffled in a hood, and a cloak drawn completely about her form, advanced slowly up the broad aisle, and took a place upon the foremost bench. Ilbrahim's faint color varied, his nerves fluttered, he was unable to turn his eyes from the muffled female.

When the preliminary prayer and hymn were over, the minister arose, and having turned the hour-glass which stood by the great Bible, commenced his discourse. He was now well stricken in years, a man of pale, thin countenance, and his grey hairs were closely covered by a black velvet skull-cap. In his younger days he had practically learned the meaning of persecution from Archbishop Laud, and he was not now disposed to forget the lesson against which he had murmured then. Introducing the often-discussed subject of the Quakers, he gave a history of that sect, and a description of their tenets, in which error predominated, and prejudice distorted the aspect of what was true. He adverted to the recent measures in the province, and cautioned his hearers of weaker parts against calling in question the just severity which God-fearing magistrates had at length been compelled to exercise. He spoke of the danger of pity, in some cases a commendable and Christian virtue but inapplicable to this pernicious sect. He observed that such was their devilish obstinacy in error, that even the little children, the sucking babes, were hardened and desperate heretics. He affirmed that no man, without Heaven's especial warrant, should attempt their conversion, lest while he lent his hand to draw them from the slough, he should himself be precipitated into its lowest depths.

The sands of the second hour were principally in the lower half of the glass, when the sermon concluded. An approving murmur followed, and the clergyman, having given out a hymn, took his seat with much self-congratulation, and endeavored to read the effect of his eloquence in the visages of the people. But while voices from all parts of the house were tuning themselves to sing, a scene occurred which, though not very unusual at that period in the province, happened to be without precedent in this parish.

The muffled female, who had hitherto sat motionless in the front rank of the audience, now arose, and with slow, stately, and unwavering step, ascended the pulpit stairs. The quiverings of incipient harmony were hushed, and the divine sat in speechless and almost terrified astonishment, while she undid the door, and stood up in the sacred desk from which his maledictions had just been thundered. She then divested herself of the cloak and hood, and appeared in a most singular array. A shapeless robe of sackcloth was girded about her waist with a knotted cord; her raven hair fell down upon her shoulders, and its blackness was defiled by pale streaks of ashes, which she had strewn upon her head. Her eyebrows, dark and strongly defined, added to the deathly whiteness of a countenance, which, emaciated with want, and wild with enthusiasm and strange sorrows, retained no trace of earlier beauty. This figure stood gazing earnestly on the audience, and there was no sound, nor any movement, except a faint shuddering which every man observed in his neighbor, but was scarcely conscious of in himself. At length, when her fit of inspiration came, she spoke, for the first few moments, in a low voice, and not invariably distinct utterance. Her discourse gave evidence of an imagination hopelessly entangled

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6 **involved**, wrapped, enveloped (a Latinism) • 35 **Archbishop Laud**, William Laud (1573-1645), Archbishop of Canterbury, whose acts of persecution caused many of the early Puritans to leave England

with her reason; it was a vague and incomprehensible rhapsody, which, however, seemed to spread its own atmosphere round the hearer's soul, and to move his feeling by some influence unconnected with the words. As she proceeded, beautiful but shadowy images would sometimes be seen, like bright things moving in a turbid river; or a strong and singularly shaped idea leapt forth, and seized at once on the understanding or the heart. But the course of her unearthly eloquence soon led her to the persecution of her sect, and from thence the step was short to her own peculiar sorrows. She was naturally a woman of mighty passions, and hatred and revenge now wrapped themselves in the garb of piety; the character of her speech was changed, her images became distinct though wild, and her denunciations had an almost hellish bitterness.

"The governor and his mighty men," she said, "have gathered together, taking counsel among themselves and saying, 'What shall we do unto this people—even unto the people that have come into this land to put our iniquity to the blush?' And lo! the devil entereth into the council-chamber, like a lame man of low stature and gravely apparelled, with a dark and twisted countenance, and a bright, downcast eye. And he standeth up among the rulers; yea, he goeth to and fro, whispering to each; and every man lends his ear, for his word is, 'Slay, slay!' But I say unto ye, Woe to them that slay! Woe to them that shed the blood of saints! Woe to them that have slain the husband, and cast forth the child, the tender infant, to wander homeless, and hungry, and cold, till he die; and have saved the mother alive, in the cruelty of their tender mercies! Woe to them in their lifetime, cursed are they in the delight and pleasure of their hearts! Woe to them in their death-hour, whether it come swiftly with blood and violence, or after long and lingering pain! Woe, in the dark house, in the rottenness of the grave, when the children's children shall revile the ashes of the fathers! Woe, woe, woe, at the judgment, when all the persecuted and all the slain in this bloody land, and the father, the mother, and the child, shall await them in the day that they cannot escape! Seed of the faith, seed of the faith, ye whose hearts are moving with a power that ye know not, arise, wash your hands of this innocent blood! Lift your voices, chosen ones, cry aloud, and call down a woe and a judgment with me!"

Having thus given vent to the flood of malignity which she mistook for inspiration, the speaker was silent. Her voice was succeeded by the hysteric shrieks of several women, but the feelings of the audience generally had not been drawn onward in the current with her own. They remained stupefied, stranded, as it were, in the midst of a torrent, which deafened them by its roaring, but might not move them by its violence. The clergyman, who could not hitherto have ejected the usurper of his pulpit otherwise than by bodily force, now addressed her in the tone of just indignation and legitimate authority.

"Get you down, woman, from the holy place which you profane," he said. "Is it to the Lord's house that you come to pour forth the foulness of your heart, and the inspiration of the devil? Get you down, and remember that the sentence of death is on you; yea, and shall be executed, were it but for this day's work!"

"I go, friend, I go, for the voice hath had its utterance," replied she, in a depressed and even mild tone. "I have done my mission unto thee and to thy people. Reward me with stripes, imprisonment, or death, as ye shall be permitted."

The weakness of exhausted passion caused her steps to totter as she descended the pulpit stairs. The people in the meanwhile were stirring to and fro on the floor of the house, whispering among themselves and glancing towards the intruder. Many of them now recognized her as the woman who had assaulted the governor with frightful language as he passed by the window of her prison; they knew, also, that she was adjudged to suffer death, and had been preserved only by an involuntary banishment into the wilderness. The new outrage by which she had provoked her fate seemed to render further lenity impossible; and a gentleman in military dress, with a stout man of inferior rank, drew towards the door of the meeting-house and awaited her approach. Scarcely did her feet press the floor, however, when an unexpected scene occurred. In that moment of her peril when every eye frowned with death, a little timid boy pressed forth and threw his arms round his mother.

"I am here, mother—it is I; and I will go with thee to prison," he exclaimed.

She gazed at him with a doubtful and almost frightened expression, for she knew that the boy had been cast out to perish, and she had not hoped to see his face again. She feared, perhaps, that it was but one of the

happy visions with which her excited fancy had often deceived her, in the solitude of the desert or in prison. But when she felt his hand warm within her own, and heard his little eloquence of childish love, she began to know that she was yet a mother.

"Blessed art thou, my son," she sobbed. "My heart was withered; yea, dead with thee and with thy father; and now it leaps as in the first moment when I pressed thee to my bosom."

She knelt down and embraced him again and again, while the joy that could find no words expressed itself in broken accents, like the bubbles gushing up to vanish at the surface of a deep fountain. The sorrows of past years, and the darker peril that was nigh, cast not a shadow on the brightness of that fleeting moment. Soon, however, the spectators saw a change upon her face, as the consciousness of her sad estate returned, and grief supplied the fount of tears which joy had opened. By the words she uttered, it would seem that the indulgence of natural love had given her mind a momentary sense of its errors, and made her know how far she had strayed from duty in following the dictates of a wild fanaticism.

"In a doleful hour art thou returned to me, poor boy," she said, "for thy mother's path has gone darkening onward till now the end is death. Son, son, I have borne thee in my arms when my limbs were tottering, and I have fed thee with the food that I was fainting for; yet I have ill performed a mother's part by thee in life, and now I leave thee no inheritance but woe and shame. Thou wilt go seeking through the world, and find all hearts closed against thee, and their sweet affections turned to bitterness for my sake. My child, my child, how many a pang awaits thy gentle spirit, and I the cause of all!"

She hid her face on Ilbrahim's head, and her long, raven hair, discolored with the ashes of her mourning, fell down about him like a veil. A low and interrupted moan was the voice of her heart's anguish, and it did not fail to move the sympathies of many who mistook their involuntary virtue for a sin. Sobs were audible in the female section of the house, and every man who was a father drew his hand across his eyes. Tobias Pearson was agitated and uneasy, but a certain feeling like the consciousness of guilt oppressed him, so that he could not go forth and offer himself as the protector of the child. Dorothy, however, had watched her husband's eye. Her mind was free from the influence that had begun to work on his, and she drew near the Quaker woman, and addressed her in the hearing of all the congregation.

"Stranger, trust this boy to me, and I will be his mother," she said, taking Ilbrahim's hand. "Providence has signally marked out my husband to protect him, and he has fed at our table and lodged under our roof now many days, till our hearts have grown very strongly unto him. Leave the tender child with us, and be at ease concerning his welfare."

The Quaker rose from the ground, but drew the boy closer to her while she gazed earnestly in Dorothy's face. Her mild, but saddened features, and neat, matronly attire, harmonized together, and were like a verse of fireside poetry. Her very aspect proved that she was blameless, so far as mortal could be so, in respect to God and man; while the enthusiast, in her robe of sackcloth and girdle of knotted cord, had as evidently violated the duties of the present life and the future, by fixing her attention wholly on the latter. The two females, as they held each a hand of Ilbrahim, formed a practical allegory; it was rational piety and unbridled fanaticism contending for the empire of a young heart.

"Thou art not of our people," said the Quaker, mournfully.

"No, we are not of your people," replied Dorothy with mildness; "but we are Christians, looking upward to the same Heaven with you. Doubt not that your boy shall meet you there, if there be a blessing on our tender and prayerful guidance of him. Thither, I trust, my own children have gone before me, for I also have been a mother. I am no longer so," she added, in a faltering tone; "and your son will have all my care."

"But will ye lead him in the path which his parents have trodden?" demanded the Quaker. "Can ye teach him the enlightened faith which his father has died for, and for which I, even I, am soon to become an unworthy

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64 **enthusiast** implied irrational and fanatical emotion and was a term of reproach in seventeenth-century Puritan usage as well as in the usage of eighteenth-century Neoclassicism • 68 **allegory.** Hawthorne's allegorical characters recall similar figures in Spenser's **Faerie Queene**, Bk. II, Canto II, where Elissa and Perissa represent opposite extremes of temperament and "the faire Medina" represents the golden mean. For a discussion of Spenser's influence on Hawthorne, see Randall Stewart, "Hawthorne and **The Faerie Queene**," *Philological Quarterly*, April 1933

martyr? The boy has been baptised in blood; will ye keep the mark fresh and ruddy upon his forehead?"

"I will not deceive you," answered Dorothy. "If your child become our child, we must breed him up in the instruction which Heaven has imparted to us; we must pray for him the prayers of our own faith; we must do towards him according to the dictates of our own consciences, and not of yours. Were we to act otherwise, we should abuse your trust even in complying with your wishes."

The mother looked down upon her boy with a troubled countenance, and then turned her eyes upward to heaven. She seemed to pray internally, and the contention of her soul was evident.

"Friend," she said at length to Dorothy, "I doubt not that my son shall receive all earthly tenderness at thy hands. Nay, I will believe that even thy imperfect lights may guide him to a better world; for surely thou art on the path thither. But thou hast spoken of a husband. Doth he stand here among this multitude of people? Let him come forth, for I must know to whom I commit this most precious trust."

She turned her face upon the male auditors, and after a momentary delay, Tobias Pearson came forth from among them. The Quaker saw the dress which marked his military rank, and shook her head; but then she noted the hesitating air, the eyes that struggled with her own, and were vanquished; the color that went and came, and could find no resting-place. As she gazed, an unmirthful smile spread over her features, like sunshine that grows melancholy in some desolate spot. Her lips moved inaudibly, but at length she spake.

"I hear it, I hear it. The voice speaketh within me and saith, 'Leave thy child, Catherine, for his place is here, and go hence, for I have other work for thee. Break the bonds of natural affection, martyr thy love, and know that in all these things eternal wisdom hath its ends.' I go, friends, I go. Take ye my boy, my precious jewel. I go hence, trusting that all shall be well, and that even for his infant hands there is a labor in the vineyard."

She knelt down and whispered to Ilbrahim, who at first struggled and clung to his mother, with sobs and tears, but remained passive when she had kissed his cheek and arisen from the ground. Having held her hands over his head in mental prayer, she was ready to depart.

"Farewell, friends in mine extremity," she said to Pearson and his wife; "the good deed ye have done me is a treasure laid up in heaven, to be returned a thousandfold hereafter. And farewell ye, mine enemies, to whom it is not permitted to harm so much as a hair of my head nor to stay my footsteps even for a moment. The day is coming when ye shall call upon me to witness for ye to this one sin uncommitted, and I will rise up and answer."

She turned her steps towards the door, and the men, who had stationed themselves to guard it, withdrew, and suffered her to pass. A general sentiment of pity overcame the virulence of religious hatred. Sanctified by her love and her affliction, she went forth, and all the people gazed after her till she had journeyed up the hill, and was lost behind its brow. She went, the apostle of her own unquiet heart, to renew the wanderings of past years. For her voice had been already heard in many lands of Christendom; and she had pined in the cells of Catholic Inquisition, before she felt the lash and lay in the dungeons of the Puritans. Her mission had extended also to the followers of the Prophet, and from them she had received the courtesy and kindness which all the contending sects of our purer religion united to deny her. Her husband and herself had resided many months in Turkey, where even the Sultan's countenance was gracious to them; in that pagan land, too, was Ilbrahim's birthplace, and his oriental name was a mark of gratitude for the good deeds of an unbeliever.

When Pearson and his wife had thus acquired all the rights over Ilbrahim that could be delegated, their affection for him became, like the memory of their native land, or their mild sorrow for the dead, a piece of the immovable furniture of their hearts. The boy, also, after a week or two of mental disquiet, began to gratify his protectors by many inadvertent proofs that he considered them as parents, and their house as home. Before the winter snows were melted, the persecuted infant, the little wanderer from a remote and heathen country, seemed native in the New England cottage, and inseparable from the warmth and security of its hearth. Under the influence of kind treatment, and in the consciousness that he was loved, Ilbrahim's demeanor lost

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68 Prophet, Mahomet

a premature manliness, which had resulted from his earlier situation; he became more childlike, and his natural character displayed itself with freedom. It was in many respects a beautiful one, yet the disordered imaginations of both his father and mother had perhaps propagated a certain unhealthiness in the mind of the boy. In his general state, Ilbrahim would derive enjoyment from the most trifling events, and from every object about him; he seemed to discover rich treasures of happiness, by a faculty analogous to that of the witch-hazel, which points to hidden gold where all is barren to the eye. His airy gaiety, coming to him from a thousand sources, communicated itself to the family, and Ilbrahim was like a domesticated sunbeam, brightening moody countenances, and chasing away the gloom from the dark corners of the cottage.

On the other hand, as the susceptibility of pleasure is also that of pain, the exuberant cheerfulness of the boy's prevailing temper sometimes yielded to moments of deep depression. His sorrows could not always be followed up to their original source, but most frequently they appeared to flow, though Ilbrahim was young to be sad for such a cause, from wounded love. The flightiness of his mirth rendered him often guilty of offences against the decorum of a Puritan household, and on these occasions he did not invariably escape rebuke. But the slightest word of real bitterness, which he was infallible in distinguishing from pretended anger, seemed to sink into his heart and poison all his enjoyments, till he became sensible that he was entirely forgiven. Of the malice which generally accompanies a superfluity of sensitiveness Ilbrahim was altogether destitute; when trodden upon, he would not turn; when wounded, he could but die. His mind was wanting in the stamina for self-support; it was a plant that would twine beautifully round something stronger than itself, but if repulsed, or torn away, it had no choice but to wither on the ground. Dorothy's acuteness taught her that severity would crush the spirit of the child, and she nurtured him with the gentle care of one who handles a butterfly. Her husband manifested an equal affection, although it grew daily less productive of familiar caresses.

The feelings of the neighboring people, in regard to the Quaker infant and his protectors, had not undergone a favorable change, in spite of the momentary triumph which the desolate mother had obtained over their sympathies. The scorn and bitterness of which he was the object were very grievous to Ilbrahim, especially when any circumstance made him sensible that the children, his equals in age, partook of the enmity of their parents. His tender and social nature had already overflowed in attachments to everything about him, and still there was a residue of unappropriated love, which he yearned to bestow upon the little ones who were taught to hate him. As the warm days of spring came on, Ilbrahim was accustomed to remain for hours, silent and inactive, within hearing of the children's voices at their play; yet, with his usual delicacy of feeling, he avoided their notice, and would flee and hide himself from the smallest individual among them. Chance, however, at length seemed to open a medium of communication between his heart and theirs; it was by means of a boy about two years older than Ilbrahim, who was injured by a fall from a tree in the vicinity of Pearson's habitation. As the sufferer's own home was at some distance, Dorothy willingly received him under her roof, and became his tender and careful nurse.

Ilbrahim was the unconscious possessor of much skill in physiognomy, and it would have deterred him, in other circumstances, from attempting to make a friend of this boy. The countenance of the latter immediately impressed a beholder disagreeably, but it required some examination to discover that the cause was a very slight distortion of the mouth, and the irregular, broken line and near approach of the eyebrows. Analogous, perhaps, to those trifling deformities was an almost imperceptible twist of every joint, and the uneven prominence of the breast; forming a body regular in its general outline, but faulty in almost all its details. The disposition of the boy was sullen and reserved, and the village schoolmaster stigmatized him as obtuse in intellect; although, at a later period of life, he evinced ambition and very peculiar talents. But whatever might be his personal or moral irregularities, Ilbrahim's heart seized upon, and clung to him, from the moment that he was brought wounded into the cottage; the child of persecution seemed to compare his own fate with that of the sufferer, and to feel that even different modes of misfortune had created a sort of relation-

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14 like . . . sunbeam, a favorite figure of Hawthorne's. See Walter Blair, "Color, Light, and Shadow in Hawthorne's Fiction," New England Quarterly, March 1942

ship between them. Food, rest, and the fresh air, for which he languished, were neglected; he nestled continually by the bedside of the little stranger, and, with a fond jealousy, endeavored to be the medium of all the cares that were bestowed upon him. As the boy became convalescent, Ilbrahim contrived games suitable to his situation, or amused him by a faculty which he had perhaps breathed in with the air of his barbaric birthplace. It was that of reciting imaginary adventures on the spur of the moment, and apparently in exhaustless succession. His tales were of course monstrous, disjointed, and without aim; but they were curious, on account of a vein of human tenderness which ran through them all, and was like a sweet, familiar face encountered in the midst of wild and unearthly scenery. The auditor paid much attention to these romances, and sometimes interrupted them by brief remarks upon the incidents, displaying shrewdness above his years, mingled with a moral obliquity which grated very harshly against Ilbrahim's instinctive rectitude. Nothing, however, could arrest the progress of the latter's affection, and there were many proofs that it met with a response from the dark and stubborn nature on which it was lavished. The boy's parents at length removed him, to complete his cure under their own roof.

Ilbrahim did not visit his new friend after his departure; but he made anxious and continual inquiries respecting him, and informed himself of the day when he was to reappear among his playmates. On a pleasant summer afternoon, the children of the neighborhood had assembled in the little forest-crowned amphitheatre behind the meeting-house, and the recovering invalid was there, leaning on a staff. The glee of a score of untainted bosoms was heard in light and airy voices, which danced among the trees like sunshine become audible; the grown men of this weary world, as they journeyed by the spot, marvelled why life, beginning in such brightness, should proceed in gloom; and their hearts, or their imaginations, answered them and said, that the bliss of childhood gushes from its innocence. But it happened that an unexpected addition was made to the heavenly little band. It was Ilbrahim, who came towards the children with a look of sweet confidence on his fair and spiritual face, as if, having manifested his love to one of them, he had no longer to fear a repulse from their society. A hush came over their mirth the moment they beheld him, and they stood whispering to each other while he drew nigh; but all at once the devil of their fathers entered into these unbreeched fanatics, and sending up a fierce shrill cry, they rushed upon the poor Quaker child. In an instant he was the centre of a brood of baby-fiends, who lifted sticks against him, pelted him with stones, and displayed an instinct of destruction far more loathsome than the bloodthirstiness of manhood.

The invalid in the meanwhile stood apart from the tumult, crying out with a loud voice, "Fear not, Ilbrahim, come hither and take my hand;" and his unhappy friend endeavored to obey him. After watching the victim's struggling approach with a calm smile and unabashed eye, the foul-hearted little villain lifted his staff and struck Ilbrahim on the mouth so forcibly that the blood issued in a stream. The poor child's arms had been raised to guard his head from the storm of blows; but now he dropped them at once. His persecutors beat him down, trampled upon him, dragged him by his long, fair locks, and Ilbrahim was on the point of becoming as veritable a martyr as ever entered bleeding into heaven. The uproar, however, attracted the notice of a few neighbors, who put themselves to the trouble of rescuing the little heretic, and of conveying him to Pearson's door.

Ilbrahim's bodily harm was severe, but long and careful nursing accomplished his recovery; the injury done to his sensitive spirit was more serious, though not so visible. Its signs were principally of a negative character, and to be discovered only by those who had previously known him. His gait was thenceforth slow, even, and unvaried by the sudden bursts of sprightlier motion which had once corresponded to his overflowing gladness; his countenance was heavier, and its former play of expression, the dance of sunshine reflected from moving water, was destroyed by the cloud over his existence; his notice was attracted in a far less degree by passing events, and he appeared to find greater difficulty in comprehending what was new to him than at a happier period. A stranger, founding his judgment upon these circumstances, would have said that the dulness of the child's intellect widely contradicted the promise of his features; but the secret was in the direction of Ilbrahim's thoughts, which were brooding within him when they should naturally have been wandering abroad. An attempt of Dorothy to revive his former sportiveness was the single occasion on which his quiet demeanor yielded to a violent display of grief; he burst into passionate weeping, and ran and

hid himself, for his heart had become so miserably sore that even the hand of kindness tortured it like fire. Sometimes, at night and probably in his dreams, he was heard to cry, "Mother! Mother!" as if her place, which a stranger had supplied while Ilbrahim was happy, admitted of no substitute in his extreme affliction. Perhaps, among the many life-weary wretches then upon the earth, there was not one who combined innocence and misery like this poor, broken-hearted infant, so soon the victim of his own heavenly nature.

While this melancholy change had taken place in Ilbrahim, one of an earlier origin and of different character had come to its perfection in his adopted father. The incident with which this tale commences found Pearson in a state of religious dulness, yet mentally disquieted, and longing for a more fervid faith than he possessed. The first effect of his kindness to Ilbrahim was to produce a softened feeling, an incipient love for the child's whole sect; but joined to this, and resulting perhaps from self-suspicion, was a proud and ostentatious contempt of their tenets and practical extravagances. In the course of much thought, however, for the subject struggled irresistibly into his mind, the foolishness of the doctrine began to be less evident, and the points which had particularly offended his reason assumed another aspect, or vanished entirely away. The work within him appeared to go on even while he slept, and that which had been a doubt when he laid down to rest would often hold the place of a truth, confirmed by some forgotten demonstration, when he recalled his thoughts in the morning. But while he was thus becoming assimilated to the enthusiasts, his contempt, in no wise decreasing towards them, grew very fierce against himself; he imagined, also, that every face of his acquaintance wore a sneer, and that every word addressed to him was a gibe. Such was his state of mind at the period of Ilbrahim's misfortune; and the emotions consequent upon that event completed the change, of which the child had been the original instrument.

In the meantime, neither the fierceness of the persecutors, nor the infatuation of their victims, had decreased. The dungeons were never empty; the streets of almost every village echoed daily with the lash; the life of a woman, whose mild and Christian spirit no cruelty could embitter, had been sacrificed; and more innocent blood was yet to pollute the hands that were so often raised in prayer. Early after the Restoration, the English Quakers represented to Charles II, that a "vein of blood was open in his dominions;" but though the displeasure of the voluptuous king was roused, his interference was not prompt. And now the tale must stride forward over many months, leaving Pearson to encounter ignominy and misfortune; his wife to a firm endurance of a thousand sorrows; poor Ilbrahim to pine and droop like a cankered rosebud; his mother to wander on a mistaken errand, neglectful of the holiest trust which can be committed to a woman.

A winter evening, a night of storm, had darkened over Pearson's habitation, and there were no cheerful faces to drive the gloom from his broad hearth. The fire, it is true, sent forth a glowing heat and a ruddy light, and large logs, dripping with half-melted snow, lay ready to be cast upon the embers. But the apartment was saddened in its aspect by the absence of much of the homely wealth which had once adorned it; for the exaction of repeated fines, and his own neglect of temporal affairs, had greatly impoverished the owner. And with the furniture of peace, the implements of war had likewise disappeared; the sword was broken, the helm and cuirass were cast away forever; the soldier had done with battles, and might not lift so much as his naked hand to guard his head. But the Holy Book remained, and the table on which it rested was drawn before the fire, while two of the persecuted sect sought comfort from its pages.

He who listened, while the other read, was the master of the house, now emaciated in form, and altered as to the expression and healthiness of his countenance; for his mind had dwelt too long among visionary thoughts, and his body had been worn by imprisonment and stripes. The hale and weather-beaten old man who sat beside him had sustained less injury from a far longer course of the same mode of life. In person he was tall and dignified, and, which alone would have made him hateful to the Puritans, his grey locks fell from beneath the broad-brimmed hat, and rested on his shoulders. As the old man read the sacred page, the snow drifted against the windows, or eddied in at the crevices of the door, while a blast kept laughing in the chimney, and the blaze leaped fiercely up to seek it. And sometimes, when the wind struck the hill at a certain angle, and swept down by the cottage across the wintry plain, its voice was the most doleful that can be conceived; it came as if the Past were speaking, as if the Dead had contributed each a whisper,

as if the Desolation of Ages were breathed in that one lamenting sound.

The Quaker at length closed the book, retaining, however, his hand between the pages which he had been reading, while he looked steadfastly at Pearson. The attitude and features of the latter might have indicated the endurance of bodily pain; he leaned his forehead on his hands, his teeth were firmly closed, and his frame was tremulous at intervals with a nervous agitation.

"Friend Tobias," inquired the old man, compassionately, "hast thou found no comfort in these many blessed passages of Scripture?"

"Thy voice has fallen on my ear like a sound afar off and indistinct," replied Pearson without lifting his eyes. "Yea, and when I have hearkened carefully, the words seemed cold and lifeless, and intended for another and a lesser grief than mine. Remove the book," he added, in a tone of sullen bitterness. "I have no part in its consolations, and they do but fret my sorrow the more."

"Nay, feeble brother, be not as one who hath never known the light," said the elder Quaker, earnestly, but with mildness. "Art thou he that wouldst be content to give all, and endure all, for conscience' sake; desiring even peculiar trials, that thy faith might be purified, and thy heart weaned from worldly desires? And wilt thou sink beneath an affliction which happens alike to them that have their portion here below, and to them that lay up treasure in heaven? Faint not, for thy burthen is yet light."

"It is heavy! It is heavier than I can bear!" exclaimed Pearson, with the impatience of a variable spirit. "From my youth upward I have been a man marked out for wrath; and year by year, yea, day after day, I have endured sorrows, such as others know not in their lifetime. And now I speak not of the love that has been turned to hatred, the honor to ignominy, the ease and plentifulness of all things to danger, want, and nakedness. All this I could have borne, and counted myself blessed. But when my heart was desolate with many losses, I fixed it upon the child of a stranger, and he became dearer to me than all my buried ones; and now he too must die as if my love were poison. Verily, I am an accursed man, and I will lay me down in the dust, and lift up my head no more."

"Thou sinnest, brother, but it is not for me to rebuke thee; for I also have had my hours of darkness, wherein I have murmured against the cross," said the old Quaker. He continued, perhaps in the hope of distracting his companion's thoughts from his own sorrows. "Even of late was the light obscured within me, when the men of blood had banished me on pain of death, and the constables led me onward from village to village, towards the wilderness. A strong and cruel hand was wielding the knotted cords; they sunk deep into the flesh, and thou mightst have tracked every reel and totter of my footsteps by the blood that followed. As we went on——"

"Have I not borne all this, and have I murmured?" interrupted Pearson, impatiently.

"Nay, friend, but hear me," continued the other. "As we journeyed on, night darkened on our path, so that no man could see the rage of the persecutors, or the constancy of my endurance, though Heaven forbid that I should glory therein. The lights began to glimmer in the cottage windows, and I could discern the inmates as they gathered, in comfort and security, every man with his wife and children by their own evening hearth. At length we came to a tract of fertile land; in the dim light the forest was not visible around it; and behold! there was a straw-thatched dwelling, which bore the very aspect of my home, far over the wild ocean, far in our own England. Then came bitter thoughts upon me; yea, remembrances that were like death to my soul. The happiness of my early days was painted to me; the disquiet of my manhood, the altered faith of my declining years. I remembered how I had been moved to go forth a wanderer, when my daughter, the youngest, the dearest of my flock, lay on her dying bed, and——"

"Couldst thou obey the command at such a moment?" exclaimed Pearson, shuddering.

"Yea, yea," replied the old man, hurriedly. "I was kneeling by her bedside when the voice spoke loud within me: but immediately I rose, and took my staff, and gat me gone. Oh! that it were permitted me to forget her woful look when I thus withdrew my arm, and left her journeying through the dark valley alone! for her soul was faint, and she had leaned upon my prayers. Now in that night of horror I was assailed by the thought that I had been an erring Christian, and a cruel parent; yea, even my daughter, with her pale, dying features, seemed to stand by me and whisper, 'Father, you are deceived; go home and shelter your grey head.' Oh! Thou to whom I have looked in my farthest wanderings," continued the

Quaker, raising his agitated eyes to heaven, "inflict not upon the bloodiest of our persecutors the unmitigated agony of my soul, when I believed that all I had done and suffered for Thee was at the instigation of a mocking fiend! But I yielded not; I knelt down and wrestled with the tempter, while the scourge bit more fiercely into the flesh. My prayer was heard, and I went on in peace and joy towards the wilderness."

The old man, though his fanaticism had generally all the calmness of reason, was deeply moved while reciting this tale; and his unwonted emotion seemed to rebuke and keep down that of his companion. They sat in silence, with their faces to the fire, imagining perhaps, in its red embers, new scenes of persecution yet to be encountered. The snow still drifted hard against the windows, and sometimes, as the blaze of the logs had gradually sunk, came down the spacious chimney and hissed upon the hearth. A cautious footstep might now and then be heard in a neighboring apartment, and the sound invariably drew the eyes of both Quakers to the door which led thither. When a fierce and riotous gust of wind had led his thoughts, by a natural association, to homeless travellers on such a night, Pearson resumed the conversation.

"I have well nigh sunk under my own share of this trial," observed he, sighing heavily; "yet I would that it might be doubled to me, if so the child's mother could be spared. Her wounds have been deep and many, but this will be the sorest of all."

"Fear not for Catherine," replied the old Quaker; "for I know that valiant woman, and have seen how she can bear the cross. A mother's heart, indeed, is strong in her, and may seem to contend mightily with her faith; but soon she will stand up and give thanks that her son has been thus early an accepted sacrifice. The boy hath done his work, and she will feel that he is taken hence in kindness both to him and her. Blessed, blessed are they that with so little suffering can enter into peace!"

The fitful rush of the wind was now disturbed by a portentous sound: it was a quick and heavy knocking at the outer door. Pearson's wan countenance grew paler, for many a visit of persecution had taught him what to dread; the old man, on the other hand, stood up erect, and his glance was firm as that of the tried soldier who awaits his enemy.

"The men of blood have come to seek me," he observed, with calmness. "They have heard how I was moved to return from banishment; and now am I to be led to prison, and thence to death. It is an end I have long looked for. I will open unto them, lest they say, 'Lo, he feareth!' "

"Nay, I will present myself before them," said Pearson, with recovered fortitude. "It may be that they seek me alone, and know not that thou abidest with me."

"Let us go boldly, both one and the other," rejoined his companion. "It is not fitting that thou or I should shrink."

They therefore proceeded through the entry to the door, which they opened, bidding the applicant "Come in, in God's name!" A furious blast of wind drove the storm into their faces, and extinguished the lamp; they had barely time to discern a figure, so white from head to foot with the drifted snow, that it seemed like Winter's self, come in human shape to seek refuge from its own desolation.

"Enter, friend, and do thy errand, be it what it may," said Pearson. "It must needs be pressing, since thou comest on such a bitter night."

"Peace be with this household," said the stranger, when they stood on the floor of the inner apartment.

Pearson started, the elder Quaker stirred the slumbering embers of the fire, till they sent up a clear and lofty blaze; it was a female voice that had spoken; it was a female form that shone out, cold and wintry, in that comfortable light.

"Catherine, blessed woman," exclaimed the old man, "art thou come to this darkened land again? art thou come to bear a valiant testimony as in former years? The scourge hath not prevailed against thee, and from the dungeon hast thou come forth triumphant; but strengthen, strengthen now thy heart, Catherine, for Heaven will prove thee yet this once, ere thou go to thy reward."

"Rejoice friends!" she replied. "Thou who hast long been of our people, and thou whom a little child hath led to us, rejoice! Lo! I come, the messenger of glad tidings, for the day of persecution is overpast. The heart of the king, even Charles, hath been moved in gentleness toward us, and he hath sent forth his letters to stay the hands of the men of blood. A ship's company of our friends hath arrived at yonder town, and I also sailed joyfully among them."

As Catherine spoke, her eyes were roaming about the room, in search of him for whose sake security was dear

to her. Pearson made a silent appeal to the old man, nor did the latter shrink from the painful task assigned him.

"Sister," he began, in a softened yet perfectly calm tone, "thou tellest us of His love, manifested in temporal good; and now must we speak to thee of that self-same love, displayed in chastenings. Hitherto, Catherine, thou hast been as one journeying in a darksome and difficult path, and leading an infant by the hand; fain wouldst thou have looked heavenward continually, but still the cares of that little child have drawn thine eyes, and thy affections, to the earth. Sister! go on rejoicing, for his tottering footsteps shall impede thine own no more."

But the unhappy mother was not thus to be consoled; she shook like a leaf, she turned white as the very snow that hung drifted into her hair. The firm old man extended his hand and held her up, keeping his eye upon hers, as if to repress any outbreak of passion.

"I am a woman, I am but a woman; will He try me above my strength?" said Catherine, very quickly, and almost in a whisper. "I have been wounded sore; I have suffered much; many things in the body, many in the mind; crucified in myself and in them that were dearest to me. Surely," added she, with a long shudder, "He hath spared me in this one thing." She broke forth with sudden and irrepressible violence. "Tell me, man of cold heart, what has God done to me? Hath He cast me down, never to rise again? Hath He crushed my very heart in his hand? And thou, to whom I committed my child, how hast thou fulfilled thy trust? Give me back my boy, well, sound, alive, alive; or earth and heaven shall avenge me!"

The agonized shriek of Catherine was answered by the faint, the very faint voice of a child.

On this day it had become evident to Pearson, to his aged guest, and to Dorothy, that Ilbrahim's brief and troubled pilgrimage drew near its close. The two former would willingly have remained by him, to make use of the prayers and pious discourses which they deemed appropriate to the time, and which, if they be impotent as to the departing traveller's reception in the world whither it goes, may at least sustain him in bidding adieu to earth. But though Ilbrahim uttered no complaint, he was disturbed by the faces that looked upon him; so that Dorothy's entreaties, and their own conviction that the child's feet might tread heaven's pavement and not soil it, had induced the two Quakers to remove. Ilbrahim then closed his eyes and grew calm, and, except for now and then a kind and low word to his nurse, might have been thought to slumber. As nightfall came on, however, and the storm began to rise, something seemed to trouble the repose of the boy's mind, and to render his sense of hearing active and acute. If a passing wind lingered to shake the casement, he strove to turn his head towards it; if the door jarred to and fro upon its hinges, he looked long and anxiously thitherward; if the heavy voice of the old man, as he read the Scriptures, rose but a little higher, the child almost held his dying breath to listen; if a snowdrift swept by the cottage, with a sound like the trailing of a garment, Ilbrahim seemed to watch that some visitant should enter.

But, after a little time, he relinquished whatever secret hope had agitated him, and, with one low, complaining whisper, turned his cheek upon the pillow. He then addressed Dorothy with his usual sweetness, and besought her to draw near him; she did so, and Ilbrahim took her hand in both of his, grasping it with a gentle pressure, as if to assure himself that he retained it. At intervals, and without disturbing the repose of his countenance, a very faint trembling passed over him from head to foot, as if a mild but somewhat cool wind had breathed upon him, and made him shiver. As the boy thus led her by the hand, in his quiet progress over the borders of eternity, Dorothy almost imagined that she could discern the near, though dim delightfulness, of the home he was about to reach; she would not have enticed the little wanderer back, though she bemoaned herself that she must leave him and return. But just when Ilbrahim's feet were pressing on the soil of paradise, he heard a voice behind him, and it recalled him a few, few paces of the weary path which he had travelled. As Dorothy looked upon his features, she perceived that their placid expression was again disturbed; her own thoughts had been so wrapt in him, that all sounds of the storm, and of human speech, were lost to her; but when Catherine's shriek pierced through the room, the boy strove to raise himself.

"Friend, she is come! Open unto her!" cried he.

In a moment his mother was kneeling by the bedside; she drew Ilbrahim to her bosom, and he nestled there, with no violence of joy, but contentedly as if he were

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6 love . . . chastenings. Compare Hebrews 12:6: ". . . whom the Lord loveth, he chasteneth . . ."

hushing himself to sleep. He looked into her face, and reading its agony, said, with feeble earnestness, "Mourn not, dearest mother. I am happy now." And with these words, the gentle boy was dead.

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The king's mandate to stay the New England persecutors was effectual in preventing further martyrdoms; but the colonial authorities, trusting in the remoteness of their situation, and perhaps in the supposed instability of the royal government, shortly renewed their severities in all other respects. Catherine's fanaticism had become wilder by the sundering of all human ties; and wherever a scourge was lifted, there was she to receive the blow; and whenever a dungeon was unbarred, thither she came, to cast herself upon the floor. But in process of time a more Christian spirit—a spirit of forbearance, though not of cordiality or approbation, began to pervade the land in regard to the persecuted sect. And then, when the rigid old Pilgrims eyed her rather in pity than in wrath; when the matrons fed her with the fragments of their children's food, and offered her a lodging on a hard and lowly bed; when no little crowd of schoolboys left their sports to cast stones after the roving enthusiast; then did Catherine return to Pearson's dwelling, and made that her home.

As if Ilbrahim's sweetness yet lingered round his ashes; as if his gentle spirit came down from Heaven to teach his parent a true religion, her fierce and vindictive nature was softened by the same griefs which had once irritated it. When the course of years had made the features of the unobtrusive mourner familiar in the settlement, she became a subject of not deep, but general interest; a being on whom the otherwise superfluous sympathies of all might be bestowed. Every one spoke of her with that degree of pity which it is pleasant to experience; every one was ready to do her the little kindnesses which are not costly yet manifest goodwill; and when at last she died, a long train of her once bitter persecutors followed her, with decent sadness and tears that were not painful, to her place by Ilbrahim's green and sunken grave.

1832

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11 **wherever . . . floor.** Hawthorne is on sound ground both psychologically and historically when he asserts that the more fanatical of the Quakers deliberately sought persecution and enjoyed it. A famous letter of 1657 from Rhode Island (where religious liberty was enjoyed by all) to Massachusetts states that the Quakers "begin to loathe this place for that they are not opposed by the civil authority" (quoted in J. T. Adams, **The Founding of New England**, p. 267) • 38 **decent,** becoming, fitting

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The Minister's Black Veil

A Parable

"The Minister's Black Veil" was first published in the **Token** for 1836 and was reprinted in **Twice-Told Tales** in 1837. The story is a fine study of the Puritan conscience. Father Hooper may be regarded as a prototype of Arthur Dimmesdale in **The Scarlet Letter** (see **The American Notebooks by Nathaniel Hawthorne**, pp. xlvii-xlviii).

The sexton stood in the porch of Milford meeting-house pulling lustily at the bell-rope. The old people of the village came stooping along the street. Children with bright faces tript merrily beside their parents, or mimicked a graver gait in the conscious dignity of their Sunday clothes. Spruce bachelors looked sidelong at the pretty maidens, and fancied that the Sabbath sunshine made them prettier than on week-days. When the throng had mostly streamed into the porch, the sexton began to toll the bell, keeping his eye on the Reverend Mr.

A Parable. "Another clergyman in New England, Mr. Joseph Moody, of York, Maine, who died about eighty years since, made himself remarkable by the same eccentricity that is here related of the Reverend Mr. Hooper. In his case, however, the symbol had a different import. In early life he had accidentally killed a beloved friend; and from that day till the hour of his own death he hid his face from men." —Hawthorne

Hooper's door. The first glimpse of the clergyman's figure was the signal for the bell to cease its summons.

"But what has good Parson Hooper got upon his face?" cried the sexton in astonishment.

All within hearing immediately turned about, and beheld the semblance of Mr. Hooper pacing slowly in his meditative way towards the meeting-house. With one accord they started, expressing more wonder than if some strange minister were coming to dust the cushions of Mr. Hooper's pulpit.

"Are you sure it is our parson?" inquired Goodman Gray of the sexton.

"Of a certainty it is good Mr. Hooper," replied the sexton. "He was to have exchanged pulpits with Parson Shute, of Westbury; but Parson Shute sent to excuse himself yesterday, being to preach a funeral sermon."

The cause of so much amazement may appear sufficiently slight. Mr. Hooper, a gentlemanly person of about thirty, though still a bachelor, was dressed with due clerical neatness, as if a careful wife had starched his band, and brushed the weekly dust from his Sunday's garb. There was but one thing remarkable in his appearance. Swathed about his forehead, and hanging down over his face so low as to be shaken by his breath, Mr. Hooper had on a black veil. On a nearer view it seemed to consist of two folds of crape, which entirely concealed his features except the mouth and chin, but probably did not intercept his sight farther than to give a darkened aspect to all living and inanimate things. With this gloomy shade before him, good Mr. Hooper walked onward at a slow and quiet pace, stooping somewhat and looking on the ground, as is customary with abstracted men, yet nodding kindly to those of his parishioners who still waited on the meeting-house steps. But so wonder-struck were they that his greeting hardly met with a return.

"I can't really feel as if good Mr. Hooper's face was behind that piece of crape," said the sexton.

"I don't like it," muttered an old woman, as she hobbled into the meeting-house. "He has changed himself into something awful only by hiding his face."

"Our parson has gone mad!" cried Goodman Gray, following him across the threshold.

A rumor of some unaccountable phenomenon had preceded Mr. Hooper into the meeting-house, and set all the congregation astir. Few could refrain from twisting their heads towards the door; many stood upright and turned directly about; while several little boys clambered upon the seats, and came down again with a terrible racket. There was a general bustle, a rustling of the women's gowns and shuffling of the men's feet, greatly at variance with that hushed repose which should attend the entrance of the minister. But Mr. Hooper appeared not to notice the perturbation of his people. He entered with an almost noiseless step, bent his head mildly to the pews on each side, and bowed as he passed his oldest parishioner, a white-haired great-grandsire, who occupied an armchair in the centre of the aisle. It was strange to observe how slowly this venerable man became conscious of something singular in the appearance of his pastor. He seemed not fully to partake of the prevailing wonder till Mr. Hooper had ascended the stairs, and showed himself in the pulpit face to face with his congregation except for the black veil. That mysterious emblem was never once withdrawn. It shook with his measured breath as he gave out the psalm; it threw its obscurity between him and the holy page as he read the Scriptures; and while he prayed, the veil lay heavily on his uplifted countenance. Did he seek to hide it from the dread Being whom he was addressing?

Such was the effect of this simple piece of crape that more than one woman of delicate nerves was forced to leave the meeting-house. Yet perhaps the pale-faced congregation was almost as fearful a sight to the minister as his black veil to them.

Mr. Hooper had the reputation of a good preacher, but not an energetic one: he strove to win his people heavenward by mild, persuasive influences, rather than to drive them thither by the thunders of the Word. The sermon which he now delivered was marked by the same characteristics of style and manner as the general series of his pulpit oratory. But there was something either in the sentiment of the discourse itself, or in the imagination of the auditors, which made it greatly the most powerful effort that they had ever heard from their pastor's lips. It was tinged rather more darkly than usual with the gentle gloom of Mr. Hooper's temperament. The subject had reference to secret sin, and those sad mysteries which we hide from our nearest and dearest, and would fain conceal from our own consciousness, even forgetting that the Omniscient can detect them. A subtle power was breathed into his words. Each member of the

congregation, the most innocent girl, and the man of hardened breast, felt as if the preacher had crept upon them behind his awful veil, and discovered their hoarded iniquity of deed or thought. Many spread their clasped hands on their bosoms. There was nothing terrible in what Mr. Hooper said, at least, no violence; and yet, with every tremor of his melancholy voice the hearers quaked. An unsought pathos came hand in hand with awe. So sensible were the audience of some unwonted attribute in their minister, that they longed for a breath of wind to blow aside the veil, almost believing that a stranger's visage would be discovered, though the form, gesture, and voice were those of Mr. Hooper.

At the close of the service the people hurried out with indecorous confusion, eager to communicate their pent-up amazement, and conscious of lighter spirits the moment they lost sight of the black veil. Some gathered in little circles, huddled closely together, with their mouths all whispering in the centre; some went homeward alone, wrapt in silent meditation; some talked loudly, and profaned the Sabbath-day with ostentatious laughter. A few shook their sagacious heads, intimating that they could penetrate the mystery; while one or two affirmed that there was no mystery at all, but only that Mr. Hooper's eyes were so weakened by the midnight lamp as to require a shade. After a brief interval, forth came good Mr. Hooper also, in the rear of his flock. Turning his veiled face from one group to another, he paid due reverence to the hoary heads, saluted the middle-aged with kind dignity, as their friend and spiritual guide, greeted the young with mingled authority and love, and laid his hands on the little children's heads to bless them. Such was always his custom on the Sabbath-day. Strange and bewildered looks repaid him for his courtesy. None, as on former occasions, aspired to the honor of walking by their pastor's side. Old Squire Saunders, doubtless by an accidental lapse of memory, neglected to invite Mr. Hooper to his table, where the good clergyman had been wont to bless the food almost every Sunday since his settlement. He returned, therefore, to the parsonage, and, at the moment of closing the door, was observed to look back upon the people, all of whom had their eyes fixed upon the minister. A sad smile gleamed faintly from beneath the black veil, and flickered about his mouth, glimmering as he disappeared.

"How strange," said a lady, "that a simple black veil, such as any woman might wear on her bonnet, should become such a terrible thing on Mr. Hooper's face!"

"Something must surely be amiss with Mr. Hooper's intellects," observed her husband, the physician of the village. "But the strangest part of the affair is the effect of this vagary, even on a sober-minded man like myself. The black veil, though it covers only our pastor's face, throws its influence over his whole person, and makes him ghostlike from head to foot. Do you not feel it so?"

"Truly do I," replied the lady; "and I would not be alone with him for the world. I wonder he is not afraid to be alone with himself!"

"Men sometimes are so," said her husband.

The afternoon service was attended with similar circumstances. At its conclusion, the bell tolled for the funeral of a young lady. The relatives and friends were assembled in the house, and the more distant acquaintances stood about the door, speaking of the good qualities of the deceased, when their talk was interrupted by the appearance of Mr. Hooper, still covered with his black veil. It was now an appropriate emblem. The clergyman stepped into the room where the corpse was laid, and bent over the coffin to take a last farewell of his deceased parishioner. As he stooped, the veil hung straight down from his forehead, so that, if her eyelids had not been closed for ever, the dead maiden might have seen his face. Could Mr. Hooper be fearful of her glance, that he so hastily caught back the black veil? A person who watched the interview between the dead and living scrupled not to affirm that, at the instant when the clergyman's features were disclosed, the corpse had slightly shuddered, rustling the shroud and muslin cap, though the countenance retained the composure of death. A superstitious old woman was the only witness of this prodigy. From the coffin Mr. Hooper passed into the chamber of the mourners, and thence to the head of the staircase, to make the funeral prayer. It was a tender and heart-dissolving prayer, full of sorrow, yet so imbued with celestial hopes that the music of a heavenly harp, swept by the fingers of the dead, seemed faintly to be heard among the saddest accents of the minister. The people trembled, though they but darkly understood him, when he prayed that they, and himself, and all of mortal race, might be ready, as he trusted this young maiden had been, for the dreadful hour that should snatch the veil from their faces. The bearers went heavily forth, and the

mourners followed, saddening all the street, with the dead before them, and Mr. Hooper in the black veil behind.

"Why do you look back?" said one in the procession to his partner.

"I had a fancy," replied she, "that the minister and the maiden's spirit were walking hand in hand."

"And so had I at the same moment," said the other.

That night the handsomest couple in Milford village were to be joined in wedlock. Though reckoned a melancholy man, Mr. Hooper had a placid cheerfulness for such occasions which often excited a sympathetic smile where livelier merriment would have been thrown away. There was no quality of his disposition which made him more beloved than this. The company at the wedding awaited his arrival with impatience, trusting that the strange awe which had gathered over him throughout the day would now be dispelled. But such was not the result. When Mr. Hooper came, the first thing that their eyes rested on was the same horrible black veil, which had added deeper gloom to the funeral, and could portend nothing but evil to the wedding. Such was its immediate effect on the guests, that a cloud seemed to have rolled duskily from beneath the black crape and dimmed the light of the candles. The bridal pair stood up before the minister. But the bride's cold fingers quivered in the tremulous hand of the bridegroom, and her deathlike paleness caused a whisper that the maiden who had been buried a few hours before was come from her grave to be married. If ever another wedding were so dismal, it was that famous one where they tolled the wedding knell. After performing the ceremony, Mr. Hooper raised a glass of wine to his lips, wishing happiness to the new-married couple, in a strain of mild pleasantry that ought to have brightened the features of the guests, like a cheerful gleam from the hearth. At that instant, catching a glimpse of his figure in the looking-glass, the black veil involved his own spirit in the horror with which it overwhelmed all others. His frame shuddered—his lips grew white—he spilt the untasted wine upon the carpet—and rushed forth into the darkness. For the earth, too, had on her black veil.

The next day the whole village of Milford talked of little else than Parson Hooper's black veil. That, and the mystery concealed behind it, supplied a topic for discussion between acquaintances meeting in the street, and good women gossiping at their open windows. It was the first item of news that the tavern-keeper told to his guests. The children babbled of it on their way to school. One imitative little imp covered his face with an old black handkerchief, thereby so affrighting his playmates that the panic seized himself, and he well-nigh lost his wits by his own waggery.

It was remarkable that, of all the busybodies and impertinent people in the parish, not one ventured to put the plain question to Mr. Hooper, wherefore he did this thing. Hitherto, whenever there appeared the slightest call for such interference, he had never lacked advisers, nor shown himself averse to be guided by their judgment. If he erred at all, it was by so painful a degree of self-distrust that even the mildest censure would lead him to consider an indifferent action as a crime. Yet, though so well acquainted with this amiable weakness, no individual among his parishioners chose to make the black veil a subject of friendly remonstrance. There was a feeling of dread, neither plainly confessed nor carefully concealed, which caused each to shift the responsibility upon another, till at length it was found expedient to send a deputation of the church, in order to deal with Mr. Hooper about the mystery before it should grow into a scandal. Never did an embassy so ill discharge its duties. The minister received them with friendly courtesy, but became silent after they were seated, leaving to his visitors the whole burden of introducing their important business. The topic, it might be supposed, was obvious enough. There was the black veil swathed round Mr. Hooper's forehead, and concealing every feature above his placid mouth, on which at times they could perceive the glimmering of a melancholy smile. But that piece of crape, to their imagination, seemed to hang down before his heart, the symbol of a fearful secret between him and them. Were the veil but cast aside they might speak freely of it, but not till then. Thus they sat a considerable time, speechless, confused, and shrinking uneasily from Mr. Hooper's eye, which they felt to be fixed upon them with an invisible glance. Finally, the deputies returned abashed to their constituents, pronouncing the matter too weighty to be handled, except by a

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31 **famous . . . knell.** The reference is to another story of Hawthorne's, "The Wedding Knell," which appeared in the same issue of the **Token**

council of the churches, if indeed it might not require a general synod.

But there was one person in the village unappalled by the awe with which the black veil had impressed all beside herself. When the deputies returned without an explanation, or even venturing to demand one, she, with the calm energy of her character, determined to chase away the strange cloud that appeared to be settling round Mr. Hooper, every moment more darkly than before. As his plighted wife, it should be her privilege to know what the black veil concealed. At the minister's first visit, therefore, she entered upon the subject with a direct simplicity which made the task easier both for him and her. After he had seated himself she fixed her eyes steadfastly upon the veil, but could discern nothing of the dreadful gloom that had so overawed the multitude: it was but a double fold of crape, hanging down from his forehead to his mouth, and slightly stirring with his breath.

"No," said she aloud, and smiling, "there is nothing terrible in this piece of crape, except that it hides a face which I am always glad to look upon. Come, good sir, let the sun shine from behind the cloud. First lay aside your black veil: then tell me why you put it on."

Mr. Hooper's smile glimmered faintly.

"There is an hour to come," said he, "when all of us shall cast aside our veils. Take it not amiss, beloved friend, if I wear this piece of crape till then."

"Your words are a mystery too," returned the young lady. "Take away the veil from them at least."

"Elizabeth, I will," said he, "so far as my vow may suffer me. Know, then, this veil is a type and a symbol, and I am bound to wear it ever, both in light and darkness, in solitude and before the gaze of multitudes, and as with strangers, so with my familiar friends. No mortal eye will see it withdrawn. This dismal shade must separate me from the world: even you, Elizabeth, can never come behind it!"

"What grievous affliction hath befallen you," she earnestly inquired, "that you should thus darken your eyes for ever?"

"If it be a sign of mourning," replied Mr. Hooper, "I, perhaps, like most other mortals, have sorrows dark enough to be typified by a black veil."

"But what if the world will not believe that it is the type of an innocent sorrow?" urged Elizabeth. "Beloved and respected as you are, there may be whispers that you hide your face under the consciousness of secret sin. For the sake of your holy office, do away with this scandal!"

The color rose into her cheeks as she intimated the nature of the rumors that were already abroad in the village. But Mr. Hooper's mildness did not forsake him. He even smiled again—that same sad smile, which always appeared like a faint glimmering of light proceeding from the obscurity beneath the veil.

"If I hide my face for sorrow, there is cause enough," he merely replied; "and if I cover it for secret sin, what mortal might not do the same?"

And with this gentle but unconquerable obstinacy did he resist all her entreaties. At length Elizabeth sat silent. For a few moments she appeared lost in thought, considering, probably, what new methods might be tried to withdraw her lover from so dark a fantasy, which, if it had no other meaning, was perhaps a symptom of mental disease. Though of a firmer character than his own, the tears rolled down her cheeks. But in an instant, as it were, a new feeling took the place of sorrow: her eyes were fixed insensibly on the black veil, when, like a sudden twilight in the air, its terrors fell around her. She arose, and stood trembling before him.

"And do you feel it then at last?" said he mournfully.

She made no reply, but covered her eyes with her hand, and turned to leave the room. He rushed forward and caught her arm.

"Have patience with me, Elizabeth!" cried he passionately. "Do not desert me, though this veil must be between us here on earth. Be mine, and hereafter there shall be no veil over my face, no darkness between our souls! It is but a mortal veil—it is not for eternity! Oh! you know not how lonely I am, and how frightened, to be alone behind my black veil. Do not leave me in this miserable obscurity for ever!"

"Lift the veil but once and look me in the face," said she.

"Never! It cannot be!" replied Mr. Hooper.

"Then, farewell!" said Elizabeth.

She withdrew her arm from his grasp and slowly departed, pausing at the door to give one long, shuddering gaze, that seemed almost to penetrate the mystery of the black veil. But even amid his grief Mr. Hooper smiled to think that only a material emblem had separated him from happiness, though the horrors which

it shadowed forth must be drawn darkly between the fondest of lovers.

From that time no attempts were made to remove Mr. Hooper's black veil, or, by a direct appeal, to discover the secret which it was supposed to hide. By persons who claimed a superiority to popular prejudice it was reckoned merely an eccentric whim, such as often mingles with the sober actions of men otherwise rational, and tinges them all with its own semblance of insanity. But with the multitude good Mr. Hooper was irreparably a bugbear. He could not walk the streets with any peace of mind, so conscious was he that the gentle and timid would turn aside to avoid him, and that others would make it a point of hardihood to throw themselves in his way. The impertinence of the latter class compelled him to give up his customary walk at sunset to the burial-ground; for when he leaned pensively over the gate, there would always be faces behind the grave-stones peeping at his black veil. A fable went the rounds that the stare of the dead people drove him thence. It grieved him to the very depth of his kind heart to observe how the children fled from his approach, breaking up their merriest sports while his melancholy figure was yet afar off. Their instinctive dread caused him to feel more strongly than aught else that a preternatural horror was interwoven with the threads of the black crape. In truth, his own antipathy to the veil was known to be so great that he never willingly passed before a mirror, nor stooped to drink at a still fountain, lest in its peaceful bosom he should be affrighted by himself. This was what gave plausibility to the whispers, that Mr. Hooper's conscience tortured him for some great crime too horrible to be entirely concealed, or otherwise than so obscurely intimated. Thus from beneath the black veil there rolled a cloud into the sunshine, an ambiguity of sin or sorrow, which enveloped the poor minister, so that love or sympathy could never reach him. It was said that ghost and fiend consorted with him there. With self-shudderings and outward terrors he walked continually in its shadow, groping darkly within his own soul, or gazing through a medium that saddened the whole world. Even the lawless wind, it was believed, respected his dreadful secret and never blew aside the veil. But still good Mr. Hooper sadly smiled at the pale visages of the worldly throng as he passed by.

Among all its bad influences, the black veil had the one desirable effect of making its wearer a very efficient clergyman. By the aid of his mysterious emblem—for there was no other apparent cause—he became a man of awful power over souls that were in agony for sin. His converts always regarded him with a dread peculiar to themselves, affirming, though but figuratively, that, before he brought them to celestial light, they had been with him behind the black veil. Its gloom, indeed, enabled him to sympathize with all dark affections. Dying sinners cried aloud for Mr. Hooper, and would not yield their breath till he appeared; though ever, as he stooped to whisper consolation, they shuddered at the veiled face so near their own. Such were the terrors of the black veil, even when Death had bared his visage! Strangers came long distances to attend service at his church, with the mere idle purpose of gazing at his figure, because it was forbidden them to behold his face. But many were made to quake ere they departed! Once, during Governor Belcher's administration, Mr. Hooper was appointed to preach the election sermon. Covered with his black veil, he stood before the chief magistrate, the council, and the representatives, and wrought so deep an impression that the legislative measures of that year were characterized by all the gloom and piety of our earliest ancestral sway.

In this manner Mr. Hooper spent a long life, irreproachable in outward act, yet shrouded in dismal suspicions; kind and loving, though unloved, and dimly feared; a man apart from men, shunned in their health and joy, but ever summoned to their aid in mortal anguish. As years wore on, shedding their snows above his sable veil, he acquired a name throughout the New England churches, and they called him Father Hooper. Nearly all his parishioners who were of mature age when he was settled had been borne away by many a funeral: he had one congregation in the church, and a more crowded one in the church-yard; and having wrought so late into the evening, and done his work so well, it was now good Father Hooper's turn to rest.

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65 **Belcher,** Jonathan Belcher (1681-1757), royal governor of Massachusetts (1730-1741) • 66 **election sermon,** delivered before the newly elected officers of state. An appointment to preach an election sermon was the highest honor that could be conferred upon a minister in colonial New England. Election sermons were often published (see R. W. G. Vail, "A Check List of New England Election Sermons," **Proceedings of the American Antiquarian Society,** October 1935). Compare the dramatic importance of the election sermon in **The Scarlet Letter**

Several persons were visible by the shaded candlelight in the death-chamber of the old clergyman. Natural connections he had none. But there was the decorously grave though unmoved physician, seeking only to mitigate the last pangs of the patient whom he could not save. There were the deacons, and other eminently pious members of his church. There, also, was the Reverend Mr. Clark, of Westbury, a young and zealous divine, who had ridden in haste to pray by the bedside of the expiring minister. There was the nurse, no hired handmaiden of death, but one whose calm affection had endured thus long in secrecy, in solitude, amid the chill of age, and would not perish, even at the dying hour. Who, but Elizabeth! And there lay the hoary head of good Father Hooper upon the death-pillow, with the black veil still swathed about his brow and reaching down over his face, so that each more difficult gasp of his faint breath caused it to stir. All through life that piece of crape had hung between him and the world: it had separated him from cheerful brotherhood and woman's love, and kept him in that saddest of all prisons, his own heart; and still it lay upon his face, as if to deepen the gloom of his darksome chamber, and shade him from the sunshine of eternity.

For some time previous his mind had been confused, wavering doubtfully between the past and the present, and hovering forward, as it were, at intervals, into the indistinctness of the world to come. There had been feverish turns, which tossed him from side to side, and wore away what little strength he had. But in his most convulsive struggles, and in the wildest vagaries of his intellect, when no other thought retained its sober influence, he still showed an awful solicitude lest the black veil should slip aside. Even if his bewildered soul could have forgotten, there was a faithful woman at his pillow, who, with averted eyes, would have covered that aged face, which she had last beheld in the comeliness of manhood. At length the death-stricken old man lay quietly in the torpor of mental and bodily exhaustion, with an imperceptible pulse, and breath that grew fainter and fainter, except when a long, deep, and irregular inspiration seemed to prelude the flight of his spirit.

The minister of Westbury approached the bedside.

"Venerable Father Hooper," said he, "the moment of your release is at hand. Are you ready for the lifting of the veil that shuts in time from eternity?"

Father Hooper at first replied merely by a feeble motion of his head; then, apprehensive, perhaps, that his meaning might be doubtful, he exerted himself to speak.

"Yea," said he, in faint accents, "my soul hath a patient weariness until that veil be lifted."

"And is it fitting," resumed the Reverend Mr. Clark, "that a man so given to prayer, of such a blameless example, holy in deed and thought, so far as mortal judgment may pronounce; is it fitting that a father in the church should leave a shadow on his memory, that may seem to blacken a life so pure? I pray you, my venerable brother, let not this thing be! Suffer us to be gladdened by your triumphant aspect, as you go to your reward. Before the veil of eternity be lifted, let me cast aside this black veil from your face!"

And thus speaking, the Reverend Mr. Clark bent forward to reveal the mystery of so many years. But exerting a sudden energy that made all the beholders stand aghast, Father Hooper snatched both his hands from beneath the bed-clothes, and pressed them strongly on the black veil, resolute to struggle if the minister of Westbury would contend with a dying man.

"Never!" cried the veiled clergyman. "On earth, never!"

"Dark old man!" exclaimed the affrighted minister, "with what horrible crime upon your soul are you now passing to the judgment?"

Father Hooper's breath heaved; it rattled in his throat; but with a mighty effort, grasping forward with his hands, he caught hold of life, and held it back till he should speak. He even raised himself in bed; and there he sat, shivering with the arms of death around him, while the black veil hung down, awful, at the last moment, in the gathered terrors of a lifetime. And yet the faint, sad smile, so often there, now seemed to glimmer from its obscurity, and linger on Father Hooper's lips.

"Why do you tremble at me alone?" cried he, turning his veiled face round the circle of pale spectators. "Trem-

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83 **Why . . . black veil.** In his review of **Twice-Told Tales**, Poe commented on this story as follows: "The moral put into the mouth of the dying minister will be supposed to convey the true import of the narrative; and that a crime of dark dye (having reference to the 'young lady') has been committed, is a point which only minds congenial with that of the author will perceive." Poe's interpretation, though allowable, and even plausible, is by no means strictly necessary. Hawthorne here, as in so many places in his fiction, leaves the question open

ble also at each other! Have men avoided me, and women shown no pity, and children screamed and fled, only for my black veil? What but the mystery which it obscurely typified has made this piece of crape so awful? When the friend shows his inmost heart to his friend; the lover to his best beloved; when man does not vainly shrink from the eye of his Creator, loathsomely treasuring up the secret of his sin; then deem me a monster, for the symbol beneath which I have lived, and die! I look around me, and, lo! on every visage a black veil!"

While his auditors shrank from one another in mutual affright, Father Hooper fell back upon his pillow, a veiled corpse, with a faint smile lingering on the lips. Still veiled, they laid him in his coffin, and a veiled corpse they bore him to the grave. The grass of many years has sprung up and withered on that grave, the burial-stone is moss-grown, and good Mr. Hooper's face is dust; but awful is still the thought that it mouldered beneath the black veil!

1836

The Celestial Railroad

John Bunyan's **Pilgrim's Progress** (1678), of which "The Celestial Railroad" is an adaptation, tells the story of the journey of Christian from the City of Destruction to the Celestial City. In the course of the journey Christian struggled for a time in the Slough of Despond; passed through the Wicket-Gate; received religious instruction at the Interpreter's House; came to a Cross, where the great burden of sin fell from his back and dropped into the mouth of a Sepulchre; ascended the Hill Difficulty; visited the Palace Beautiful; fought with and overcame the foul fiend Apollyon in the Valley of Humiliation; traversed the Valley of the Shadow of Death, avoiding both "the ditch that was on the one hand and the quag that was on the other"; saw the cave of the two giants, Pope and Pagan; suffered persecution in Vanity Fair; refused the invitation of Demas to dig in the silver-mine on the hill called Lucre; was prisoner in the Doubting Castle of Giant Despair; talked with the shepherds of the Delectable Mountains; passed over the Enchanted Ground and through the country of Beulah; crossed the River of Death; and at last entered the Celestial City, where he was welcomed by the shining ones. It will be noticed that Hawthorne's story follows closely the stages of Bunyan's narrative; Hawthorne also uses, to a considerable extent, the actual language of Bunyan.

The author's purpose was to satirize what might be called the new Emersonian liberalism: particularly the Unitarian liberalism, and incidentally the Transcendentalism so popular at the time in the cultivated circles of Boston and Concord. His sympathies were clearly with the older, Puritan school of religious thought, of which Bunyan was his favorite, and perhaps the best, representative in English prose. It is interesting to note that "The Celestial Railroad" was written in 1843, when the new liberalism was at its height; and in Concord, where Hawthorne was a neighbor of Emerson's.

The sketch abounds in telling satirical points. Incidental satire is directed against Transcendentalism ("Giant Transcendentalist" with his "strange phraseology"); against the current vogue of German and Oriental philosophies and the Lyceum lecture; and against the social respectability of Unitarianism. The body of the satire, however, is concerned with the romantic, liberal theology which denies original sin, asserts the natural goodness of man, and regards the Christian life as pleasant and not too difficult to attain. A bridge is built over the Slough of Despond; the burden of sin is deposited in the baggage car; a tunnel is constructed through the Hill Difficulty; the Valley of the Shadow of Death is illuminated by gas lamps. Hawthorne regards these "improvements" with Puritan disapproval.

"The Celestial Railroad" has enjoyed a considerable popularity among the more "orthodox" sects and has often been reprinted as a tract. There is reason to believe, also, that the sketch displeased the liberals. Hawthorne tells of a Unitarian clergyman who, very much to his relief,

passed him by with only a curt greeting, and adds: "This is so unlike his deportment in times past, that I suspect the Celestial Railroad must have given him a pique; and if so, I shall feel as if Providence had sufficiently rewarded me for that pious labor."

Not a great while ago, passing through the gate of dreams, I visited that region of the earth in which lies the famous City of Destruction. It interested me much to learn that by the public spirit of some of the inhabitants a railroad has recently been established between this populous and flourishing town and the Celestial City. Having a little time upon my hands, I resolved to gratify a liberal curiosity by making a trip thither. Accordingly, one fine morning after paying my bill at the hotel, and directing the porter to stow my luggage behind a coach, I took my seat in the vehicle and set out for the station-house. It was my good fortune to enjoy the company of a gentleman—one Mr. Smooth-it-away—who, though he had never actually visited the Celestial City, yet seemed as well acquainted with its laws, customs, policy, and statistics, as with those of the City of Destruction, of which he was a native townsman. Being, moreover, a director of the railroad corporation and one of its largest stockholders, he had it in his power to give me all desirable information respecting that praiseworthy enterprise.

Our coach rattled out of the city, and at a short distance from its outskirts passed over a bridge of elegant construction, but somewhat too slight, as I imagined, to sustain any considerable weight. On both sides lay an extensive quagmire, which could not have been more disagreeable, either to sight or smell, had all the kennels of the earth emptied their pollution there.

"This," remarked Mr. Smooth-it-away, "is the famous Slough of Despond—a disgrace to all the neighborhood; and the greater that it might so easily be converted into firm ground."

"I have understood," said I, "that efforts have been made for that purpose from time immemorial. Bunyan mentions that above twenty thousand cartloads of wholesome instructions had been thrown in here without effect."

"Very probably! And what effect could be anticipated from such unsubstantial stuff?" cried Mr. Smooth-it-away. "You observe this convenient bridge. We obtained a sufficient foundation for it by throwing into the slough some editions of books of morality; volumes of French philosophy and German rationalism; tracts, sermons, and essays of modern clergymen; extracts from Plato, Confucius, and various Hindoo sages, together with a few ingenious commentaries upon texts of Scripture,—all of which by some scientific process, have been converted into a mass like granite. The whole bog might be filled up with similar matter."

It really seemed to me, however, that the bridge vibrated and heaved up and down in a very formidable manner; and, in spite of Mr. Smooth-it-away's testimony to the solidity of its foundation, I should be loath to cross it in a crowded omnibus, especially if each passenger were encumbered with as heavy luggage as that gentleman and myself. Nevertheless we got over without accident, and soon found ourselves at the station-house. This very neat and spacious edifice is erected on the site of the little wicket gate, which formerly, as all old pilgrims will recollect, stood directly across the highway, and, by its inconvenient narrowness, was a great obstruction to the traveller of liberal mind and expansive stomach. The reader of John Bunyan will be glad to know that Christian's old friend Evangelist, who was accustomed to supply each pilgrim with a mystic roll, now presides at the ticket office. Some malicious persons it is true deny the identity of this reputable character with the Evangelist of old times, and even pretend to bring competent evidence of an imposture. Without involving myself in a dispute I shall merely observe that, so far as my experience goes, the square pieces of pasteboard now delivered to passengers are much more convenient and useful along the road than the antique roll of parchment. Whether they will be as readily received at the gate of the Celestial City I decline giving an opinion.

A large number of passengers were already at the station-house awaiting the departure of the cars. By the aspect and demeanor of these persons it was easy to

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13 **Mr. Smooth-it-away** recalls "Mr. Smooth-man," who was a citizen of the Vanity Fair in Bunyan's **Pilgrim's Progress** • 64 **Evangelist . . . roll.** "Then Evangelist gave him [Christian] a parchment roll, and there was written within, Fly from the wrath to come."—**Pilgrim's Progress**

judge that the feelings of the community had undergone a very favorable change in reference to the celestial pilgrimage. It would have done Bunyan's heart good to see it. Instead of a lonely and ragged man with a huge burden on his back, plodding along sorrowfully on foot while the whole city hooted after him, here were parties of the first gentry and most respectable people in the neighborhood setting forth towards the Celestial City as cheerfully as if the pilgrimage were merely a summer tour. Among the gentlemen were characters of deserved eminence—magistrates, politicians, and men of wealth, by whose example religion could not but be greatly recommended to their meaner brethren. In the ladies' apartment, too, I rejoiced to distinguish some of those flowers of fashionable society who are so well fitted to adorn the most elevated circles of the Celestial City. There was much pleasant conversation about the news of the day, topics of business and politics, or the lighter matters of amusement; while religion, though indubitably the main thing at heart, was thrown tastefully into the background. Even an infidel would have heard little or nothing to shock his sensibility.

One great convenience of the new method of going on pilgrimage I must not forget to mention. Our enormous burdens, instead of being carried on our shoulders as had been the custom of old, were all snugly deposited in the baggage car, and, as I was assured, would be delivered to their respective owners at the journey's end. Another thing, likewise, the benevolent reader will be delighted to understand. It may be remembered that there was an ancient feud between Prince Beelzebub and the keeper of the wicket gate, and that the adherents of the former distinguished personage were accustomed to shoot deadly arrows at honest pilgrims while knocking at the door. This dispute, much to the credit as well of the illustrious potentate above mentioned as of the worthy and enlightened directors of the railroad, has been pacifically arranged on the principle of mutual compromise. The prince's subjects are now pretty numerously employed about the station-house, some in taking care of the baggage, others in collecting fuel, feeding the engines, and such congenial occupations; and I can conscientiously affirm that persons more attentive to their business, more willing to accommodate, or more generally agreeable to the passengers, are not to be found on any railroad. Every good heart must surely exult at so satisfactory an arrangement of an immemorial difficulty.

"Where is Mr. Greatheart?" inquired I. "Beyond a doubt the directors have engaged that famous old champion to be chief conductor on the railroad?"

"Why, no," said Mr. Smooth-it-away, with a dry cough. "He was offered the situation of brakeman; but, to tell you the truth, our friend Greatheart has grown preposterously stiff and narrow in his old age. He has so often guided pilgrims over the road on foot that he considers it a sin to travel in any other fashion. Besides, the old fellow had entered so heartily into the ancient feud with Prince Beelzebub that he would have been perpetually at blows or ill language with some of the prince's subjects, and thus have embroiled us anew. So, on the whole, we were not sorry when honest Greatheart went off to the Celestial City in a huff and left us at liberty to choose a more suitable and accommodating man. Yonder comes the engineer of the train. You will probably recognize him at once."

The engine at this moment took its station in advance of the cars, looking, I must confess, much more like a sort of mechanical demon that would hurry us to the infernal regions than a laudable contrivance for smoothing our way to the Celestial City. On its top sat a personage almost enveloped in smoke and flame, which, not to startle the reader, appeared to gush from his own mouth and stomach as well as from the engine's brazen abdomen.

"Do my eyes deceive me?" cried I. "What on earth is this! A living creature? If so, he is own brother to the engine he rides upon!"

"Poh, poh, you are obtuse!" said Mr. Smooth-it-away, with a hearty laugh. "Don't you known Apollyon, Christian's old enemy, with whom he fought so fierce a battle in the Valley of Humiliation? He was the very fellow to manage the engine; and so we have reconciled

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31 **Beelzebub.** In Matthew 12:24, Beelzebub is called "the prince of devils"; in the council of devils in **Paradise Lost,** he is second only to Satan; in **Pilgrim's Progress,** he is captain of the castle near the Wicket-Gate • 49 **Mr. Greatheart,** in the second part of **Pilgrim's Progress,** valiantly assists Christian's wife and sons on their journey to the Celestial City • 73 **appeared . . . stomach.** Bunyan describes Apollyon as follows: ". . . he was clothed with scales like a fish . . . he had wings like a dragon, feet like a bear, and out of his belly came fire and smoke, and his mouth was as the mouth of a lion"

him to the custom of going on pilgrimage, and engaged him as chief engineer."

"Bravo, bravo!" exclaimed I, with irrepressible enthusiasm; "this shows the liberality of the age; this proves, if anything can, that all musty prejudices are in a fair way to be obliterated. And how will Christian rejoice to hear of this happy transformation of his old antagonist! I promise myself great pleasure in informing him of it when we reach the Celestial City."

The passengers being all comfortably seated, we now rattled away merrily, accomplishing a greater distance in ten minutes than Christian probably trudged over in a day. It was laughable, while we glanced along, as it were, at the tail of a thunderbolt, to observe two dusty foot travelers in the old pilgrim guise, with cockle shell and staff, their mystic rolls of parchment in their hands and their intolerable burdens on their backs. The preposterous obstinacy of these honest people in persisting to groan and stumble along the difficult pathway rather than take advantage of modern improvements, excited great mirth among our wiser brotherhood. We greeted the two pilgrims with many pleasant gibes and a roar of laughter; whereupon they gazed at us with such woful and absurdly compassionate visages that our merriment grew tenfold more obstreperous. Apollyon also entered heartily into the fun, and contrived to flirt the smoke and flame of the engine, or of his own breath, into their faces, and envelop them in an atmosphere of scalding steam. These little practical jokes amused us mightily, and doubtless afforded the pilgrims the gratification of considering themselves martyrs.

At some distance from the railroad Mr. Smooth-it-away pointed to a large, antique edifice, which, he observed, was a tavern of long standing, and had formerly been a noted stopping-place for pilgrims. In Bunyan's road-book it is mentioned as the Interpreter's House.

"I have long had a curiosity to visit that old mansion," remarked I.

"It is not one of our stations, as you perceive," said my companion. "The keeper was violently opposed to the railroad; and well he might be, as the track left his house of entertainment on one side, and thus was pretty certain to deprive him of all his reputable customers. But the footpath still passes his door, and the old gentleman now and then receives a call from some simple traveller, and entertains him with fare as old-fashioned as himself."

Before our talk on this subject came to a conclusion we were rushing by the place where Christian's burden fell from his shoulders at the sight of the Cross. This served as a theme for Mr. Smooth-it-away, Mr. Live-for-the-world, Mr. Hide-sin-in-the-heart, Mr. Scaly-conscience, and a knot of gentlemen from the town of Shun-repentance, to descant upon the inestimable advantages resulting from the safety of our baggage. Myself, and all the passengers indeed, joined with great unanimity in this view of the matter; for our burdens were rich in many things esteemed precious throughout the world; and, especially, we each of us possessed a great variety of favorite Habits, which we trusted would not be out of fashion even in the polite circles of the Celestial City. It would have been a sad spectacle to see such an assortment of valuable articles tumbling into the sepulchre. Thus pleasantly conversing on the favorable circumstances of our position as compared with those of past pilgrims and of narrow-minded ones at the present day, we soon found ourselves at the foot of the Hill Difficulty. Through the very heart of this rocky mountain a tunnel has been constructed of most admirable architecture, with a lofty arch and a spacious double track; so that, unless the earth and rocks should chance to crumble down, it will remain an eternal monument of the builder's skill and enterprise. It is a great though incidental advantage that the materials from the heart of the Hill Difficulty have been employed in filling up the Valley of Humiliation, thus obviating the necessity of descending into that disagreeable and unwholesome hollow.

"This is a wonderful improvement, indeed," said I. "Yet I should have been glad of an opportunity to visit the Palace Beautiful and be introduced to the charming young ladies—Miss Prudence, Miss Piety, Miss Charity, and the rest—who have the kindness to entertain pilgrims there."

"Young ladies!" cried Mr. Smooth-it-away, as soon as he could speak for laughing. "And charming young ladies! Why, my dear fellow, they are old maids, every soul of them—prim, starched, dry, and angular; and

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50 **Mr. Live-for-the-world. . . .** Here, as elsewhere, Hawthorne's names are similar to, but not identical with, Bunyan's. "Mr. Love-lust," "Mr. Live-loose," "Lord Time-server," "Mr. Facing-both-ways" are examples from Pilgrim's Progress

not one of them, I will venture to say, has altered so much as the fashion of her gown since the days of Christian's pilgrimage."

"Ah, well," said I, much comforted, "then I can very readily dispense with their acquaintance."

The respectable Apollyon was now putting on the steam at a prodigious rate, anxious, perhaps, to get rid of the unpleasant reminiscences connected with the spot where he had so disastrously encountered Christian. Consulting Mr. Bunyan's road-book, I perceived that we must now be within a few miles of the Valley of the Shadow of Death, into which doleful region, at our present speed, we should plunge much sooner than seemed at all desirable. In truth, I expected nothing better than to find myself in the ditch on one side or the quag on the other; but on communicating my apprehensions to Mr. Smooth-it-away, he assured me that the difficulties of this passage, even in its worst condition, had been vastly exaggerated, and that, in its present state of improvement, I might consider myself as safe as on any railroad in Christendom.

Even while we were speaking the train shot into the entrance of this dreaded Valley. Though I plead guilty to some foolish palpitations of the heart during our headlong rush over the causeway here constructed, yet it were unjust to withhold the highest encomiums on the boldness of its original conception and the ingenuity of those who executed it. It was gratifying, likewise, to observe how much care had been taken to dispel the everlasting gloom and supply the defect of cheerful sunshine, not a ray of which has ever penetrated among these awful shadows. For this purpose, the inflammable gas which exudes plentifully from the soil is collected by means of pipes, and thence communicated to a quadruple row of lamps along the whole extent of the passage. Thus a radiance has been created even out of the fiery and sulphurous curse that rests forever upon the valley—a radiance hurtful, however, to the eyes, and somewhat bewildering, as I discovered by the changes which it wrought in the visages of my companions. In this respect, as compared with natural daylight, there is the same difference as between truth and falsehood; but if the reader have ever travelled through the dark Valley, he will have learned to be thankful for any light that he could get—if not from the sky above, then from the blasted soil beneath. Such was the red brilliancy of these lamps that they appeared to build walls of fire on both sides of the track, between which we held our course at lightning speed, while a reverberating thunder filled the Valley with its echoes. Had the engine run off the track,—a catastrophe, it is whispered, by no means unprecedented,—the bottomless pit, if there be any such place, would undoubtedly have received us. Just as some dismal fooleries of this nature had made my heart quake there came a tremendous shriek, careering along the valley as if a thousand devils had burst their lungs to utter it, but which proved to be merely the whistle of the engine on arriving at a stopping-place.

The spot where we had now paused is the same that our friend Bunyan—a truthful man, but infected with many fantastic notions—has designated, in terms plainer than I like to repeat, as the mouth of the infernal region. This, however, must be a mistake, inasmuch as Mr. Smooth-it-away, while we remained in the smoky and lurid cavern, took occasion to prove that Tophet has not even a metaphorical existence. The place, he assured us, is no other than the crater of a half-extinct volcano, in which the directors had caused forges to be set up for the manufacture of railroad iron. Hence, also, is obtained a plentiful supply of fuel for the use of the engines. Whoever had gazed into the dismal obscurity of the broad cavern mouth, whence ever and anon darted huge tongues of dusky flame, and had seen the strange, half-shaped monsters, and visions of faces horribly grotesque, into which the smoke seemed to wreathe itself, and had heard the awful murmurs, and shrieks, and deep, shuddering whispers of the blast, sometimes forming themselves into words almost articulate, would have seized upon Mr. Smooth-it-away's comfortable explanation as greedily as we did. The inhabitants of the cavern, moreover, were unlovely personages, dark, smoke-begrimed, generally deformed, with misshapen feet, and a glow of dusky redness in their eyes as if their hearts had caught fire and were blazing out of the upper windows. It struck me as a peculiarity that the laborers at the forge and those who brought fuel to the engine, when they began to draw short breath, positively emitted smoke from their mouth and nostrils.

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61 terms . . . repeat. Bunyan's statement is, "About the mist of this valley I perceived the mouth of hell to be, and it stood also hard by the wayside" • **65 Tophet,** here used for "hell"

Among the idlers about the train, most of whom were puffing cigars which they had lighted at the flame of the crater, I was perplexed to notice several who, to my certain knowledge, had heretofore set forth by railroad for the Celestial City. They looked dark, wild, and smoky, with a singular resemblance, indeed, to the native inhabitants, like whom, also, they had a disagreeable propensity to ill-natured gibes and sneers, the habit of which had wrought a settled contortion of their visages. Having been on speaking terms with one of these persons,—an indolent, good-for-nothing fellow, who went by the name of Take-it-easy,—I called him, and inquired what was his business there.

"Did you not start," said I, "for the Celestial City?"

"That's a fact," said Mr. Take-it-easy, carelessly puffing some smoke into my eyes. "But I heard such bad accounts that I never took pains to climb the hill on which the city stands. No business doing, no fun going on, nothing to drink, and no smoking allowed, and a thrumming of church music from morning till night. I would not stay in such a place if they offered me house room and living free."

"But, my good Mr. Take-it-easy," cried I, "why take up your residence here, of all places in the world?"

"Oh," said the loafer, with a grin, "it is very warm hereabouts, and I meet with plenty of old acquaintances, and altogether the place suits me. I hope to see you back again some day soon. A pleasant journey to you."

While he was speaking the bell of the engine rang, and we dashed away after dropping a few passengers, but receiving no new ones. Rattling onward through the Valley, we were dazzled with the fiercely gleaming gas lamps, as before. But sometimes, in the dark of intense brightness, grim faces, that bore the aspect and expression of individual sins, or evil passions, seemed to thrust themselves through the veil of light, glaring upon us, and stretching forth a great, dusky hand, as if to impede our progress. I almost thought that they were my own sins that appalled me there. These were freaks of imagination—nothing more, certainly—mere delusions, which I ought to be heartily ashamed of; but all through the Dark Valley I was tormented, and pestered, and dolefully bewildered with the same kind of waking dreams. The mephitic gases of that region intoxicate the brain. As the light of natural day, however, began to struggle with the glow of the lanterns, these vain imaginations lost their vividness, and finally vanished from the first ray of sunshine that greeted our escape from the Valley of the Shadow of Death. Ere we had gone a mile beyond it I could well-nigh have taken my oath that this whole gloomy passage was a dream.

At the end of the valley, as John Bunyan mentions, is a cavern, where, in his days, dwelt two cruel giants, Pope and Pagan, who had strown the ground about their residence with the bones of slaughtered pilgrims. These vile old troglodytes are no longer there; but into their deserted cave another terrible giant has thrust himself, and makes it his business to seize upon honest travellers and fatten them for his table with plentiful meals of smoke, mist, moonshine, raw potatoes, and sawdust. He is a German by birth, and is called Giant Transcendentalist; but as to his form, his features, his substance, and his nature generally, it is the chief peculiarity of this huge miscreant that neither he for himself, nor anybody for him, has ever been able to describe them. As we rushed by the cavern's mouth we caught a hasty glimpse of him, looking somewhat like an ill-proportioned figure, but considerably more like a heap of fog and duskiness. He shouted after us, but in so strange a phraseology that we knew not what he meant, nor whether to be encouraged or affrighted.

It was late in the day when the train thundered into the ancient city of Vanity, where Vanity Fair is still at the height of prosperity, and exhibits an epitome of whatever is brilliant, gay, and fascinating beneath the sun. As I purposed to make a considerable stay here, it gratified me to learn that there is no longer the want of harmony between the town's-people and pilgrims, which impelled the former to such lamentably mistaken measures as the persecution of Christian and the fiery martyrdom of Faithful. On the contrary, as the new railroad brings with it great trade and a constant influx of strangers, the lord of Vanity Fair is its chief patron, and the capitalists of the city are among the largest stockholders. Many passengers stop to take their pleasure or make their profit in the Fair, instead of going onward to the Celestial City. Indeed, such are the charms of the place that people often affirm it to be the true and only heaven; stoutly contending that there is no other, that those who seek further are mere dreamers, and that, if the fabled brightness of the Celestial City lay but a

bare mile beyond the gates of Vanity, they would not be fools enough to go thither. Without subscribing to these perhaps exaggerated ecomiums, I can truly say that my abode in the city was mainly agreeable, and my intercourse with the inhabitants productive of much amusement and instruction.

Being naturally of a serious turn, my attention was directed to the solid advantages derivable from a residence here, rather than to the effervescent pleasures which are the grand object with too many visitants. The Christian reader, if he have had no accounts of the city later than Bunyan's time, will be surprised to hear that almost every street has its church, and that the reverend clergy are nowhere held in higher respect than at Vanity Fair. And well do they deserve such honorable estimation; for the maxims of wisdom and virtue which fall from their lips come from as deep a spiritual source, and tend to as lofty a religious aim, as those of the sagest philosophers of old. In justification of this high praise I need only mention the names of the Rev. Mr. Shallow-deep, the Rev. Mr. Stumble-at-truth, that fine old clerical character the Rev. Mr. This-to-day, who expects shortly to resign his pulpit to the Rev. Mr. That-tomorrow; together with the Rev. Mr. Bewilderment, the Rev. Mr. Clog-the-spirit, and, last and greatest, the Rev. Dr. Wind-of-doctrine. The labors of these eminent divines are aided by those of innumerable lecturers, who diffuse such a various profundity, in all subjects of human or celestial science, that any man may acquire an omnigenous erudition without the trouble of even learning to read. Thus literature is etherealized by assuming for its medium the human voice; and knowledge, depositing all its heavier particles, except, doubtless, its gold, becomes exhaled into a sound, which forthwith steals into the ever-open ear of the community. These ingenious methods constitute a sort of machinery, by which thought and study are done to every person's hand without his putting himself to the slightest inconvenience in the matter. There is another species of machine for the wholesale manufacture of individual morality. This excellent result is effected by societies for all manner of virtuous purposes, with which a man has merely to connect himself, throwing, as it were, his quota of virtue into the common stock, and the president and directors will take care that the aggregate amount be well applied. All these, and other wonderful improvements in ethics, religion, and literature, being made plain to my comprehension by the ingenious Mr. Smooth-it-away, inspired me with a vast admiration of Vanity Fair.

It would fill a volume, in an age of pamphlets, were I to record all my observations in this great capital of human business and pleasure. There was an unlimited range of society—the powerful, the wise, the witty, and the famous in every walk of life; princes, presidents, poets, generals, artists, actors, and philanthropists,—all making their own market at the fair, and deeming no price too exorbitant for such commodities as hit their fancy. It was well worth one's while, even if he had no idea of buying or selling, to loiter through the bazaars and observe the various sorts of traffic that were going forward.

Some of the purchasers, I thought, made very foolish bargains. For instance, a young man having inherited a splendid fortune, laid out a considerable portion of it in the purchase of diseases, and finally spent all the rest for a heavy lot of repentance and a suit of rags. A very pretty girl bartered a heart as clear as crystal, and which seemed her most valuable possession, for another jewel of the same kind, but so worn and defaced as to be utterly worthless. In one shop there were a great many crowns of laurel and myrtle, which soldiers, authors, statesmen, and various other people pressed eagerly to buy; some purchased these paltry wreaths with their lives, others by a toilsome servitude of years, and many sacrificed whatever was most valuable, yet finally slunk away without the crown. There was a sort of stock or scrip, called Conscience, which seemed to be in great demand, and would purchase almost anything. Indeed, few rich commodities were to be obtained without paying a heavy sum in this particular stock, and a man's business was seldom very lucrative unless he knew precisely when and how to throw his hoard of conscience into the market. Yet as this stock was the only thing of permanent value, whoever parted with it was sure to find himself a loser in the long run. Several of the speculations were of a questionable character. Occasionally a member of Congress recruited his pocket by the sale of his constituents; and I was assured that public officers have often sold their country at very

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29 omnigenous, of all kinds

moderate prices. Thousands sold their happiness for a whim. Gilded chains were in great demand, and purchased with almost any sacrifice. In truth, those who desired, according to the old adage, to sell anything valuable for a song, might find customers all over the Fair; and there were innumerable messes of pottage, piping hot, for such as chose to buy them with their birthrights. A few articles, however, could not be found genuine at Vanity Fair. If a customer wished to renew his stock of youth the dealers offered him a set of false teeth and an auburn wig; if he demanded peace of mind, they recommended opium or a brandy bottle.

Tracts of land and golden mansions, situate in the Celestial City, were often exchanged, at very disadvantageous rates, for a few years' lease of small, dismal, inconvenient tenements in Vanity Fair. Prince Beelzebub himself took great interest in this sort of traffic, and sometimes condescended to meddle with smaller matters. I once had the pleasure to see him bargaining with a miser for his soul, which, after much ingenious skirmishing on both sides, his highness succeeded in obtaining at about the value of sixpence. The prince remarked with a smile, that he was a loser by the transaction.

Day after day, as I walked the streets of Vanity, my manners and deportment became more and more like those of the inhabitants. The place began to seem like home; the idea of pursuing my travels to the Celestial City was almost obliterated from my mind. I was reminded of it, however, by the sight of the same pair of simple pilgrims at whom we had laughed so heartily when Apollyon puffed smoke and steam into their faces at the commencement of our journey. There they stood amidst the densest bustle of Vanity; the dealers offering them their purple and fine linen and jewels, the men of wit and humor gibing at them, a pair of buxom ladies ogling them askance, while the benevolent Mr. Smooth-it-away whispered some of his wisdom at their elbows, and pointed to a newly-erected temple; but there were these worthy simpletons, making the scene look wild and monstrous, merely by their sturdy repudiation of all part in its business or pleasures.

One of them—his name was Stick-to-the-right—perceived in my face, I suppose, a species of sympathy and almost admiration, which, to my own great surprise, I could not help feeling for this pragmatic couple. It prompted him to address me.

"Sir," inquired he, with a sad, yet mild and kindly voice, "do you call yourself a pilgrim?"

"Yes," I replied, "my right to that appellation is indubitable. I am merely a sojourner here in Vanity Fair, being bound to the Celestial City by the new railroad."

"Alas, friend," rejoined Mr. Stick-to-the-right, "I do assure you, and beseech you to receive the truth of my words, that that whole concern is a bubble. You may travel on it all your lifetime, were you to live thousands of years, and yet never get beyond the limits of Vanity Fair. Yea, though you should deem yourself entering the gates of the blessed city, it will be nothing but a miserable delusion."

"The Lord of the Celestial City," began the other pilgrim, whose name was Mr. Foot-it-to-heaven, "has refused, and will ever refuse, to grant an act of incorporation for this railroad; and unless that be obtained, no passenger can ever hope to enter his dominions. Wherefore every man who buys a ticket must lay his account with losing the purchase money, which is the value of his own soul."

"Poh, nonsense!" said Mr. Smooth-it-away, taking my arm and leading me off, "these fellows ought to be indicted for a libel. If the law stood as it once did in Vanity Fair we should see them grinning through the iron bars of the prison window."

This incident made a considerable impression on my mind, and contributed with other circumstances to indispose me to a permanent residence in the city of Vanity; although, of course, I was not simple enough to give up my original plan of gliding along easily and commodiously by railroad. Still, I grew anxious to be gone. There was one strange thing that troubled me. Amid the occupations or amusements of the Fair, nothing was more common than for a person—whether at feast, theatre, or church, or trafficking for wealth and honors, or whatever he might be doing, and however unseasonable the interruption—suddenly to vanish like a soap bubble, and be never more seen of his fellows; and so accustomed were the latter to such little accidents that they went on with their business as quietly

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6 **messes . . . birthrights.** The allusion is to Esau, who sold his birthright to Jacob for a mess of pottage. See Genesis 25:29-34

as if nothing had happened. But it was otherwise with me.

Finally, after a pretty long residence at the Fair, I resumed my journey towards the Celestial City, still with Mr. Smooth-it-away at my side. At a short distance beyond the suburbs of Vanity we passed the ancient silver mine, of which Demas was the first discoverer, and which is now wrought to great advantage, supplying nearly all the coined currency of the world. A little further onward was the spot where Lot's wife had stood forever under the semblance of a pillar of salt. Curious travellers have long since carried it away piecemeal. Had all regrets been punished as rigorously as this poor dame's were, my yearning for the relinquished delights of Vanity Fair might have produced a similar change in my own corporeal substance, and left me a warning to future pilgrims.

The next remarkable object was a large edifice, constructed of moss-grown stone, but in a modern and airy style of architecture. The engine came to a pause in its vicinity, with the usual tremendous shriek.

"This was formerly the castle of the redoubted giant Despair," observed Mr. Smooth-it-away; "but since his death Mr. Flimsy-faith has repaired it, and keeps an excellent house of entertainment here. It is one of our stopping-places."

"It seems but slightly put together," remarked I, looking at the frail yet ponderous walls. "I do not envy Mr. Flimsy-faith his habitation. Some day it will thunder down upon the heads of the occupants."

"We shall escape at all events," said Mr. Smooth-it-away, "for Apollyon is putting on the steam again."

The road now plunged into a gorge of the Delectable Mountains, and traversed the field where in former ages the blind men wandered and stumbled among the tombs. One of these ancient tombstones had been thrust across the track by some malicious person, and gave the train of cars a terrible jolt. Far up the rugged side of a mountain I perceived a rusty iron door, half overgrown with bushes and creeping plants, but with smoke issuing from its crevices.

"Is that," inquired I, "the very door in the hill-side which the shepherds assured Christian was a by-way to hell?"

"That was a joke on the part of the shepherds," said Mr. Smooth-it-away, with a smile. "It is neither more nor less than the door of a cavern which they use as a smoke-house for the preparation of mutton hams."

My recollections of the journey are now, for a little space, dim and confused, inasmuch as a singular drowsiness here overcame me, owing to the fact that we were passing over the enchanted ground, the air of which encourages a disposition to sleep. I awoke, however, as soon as we crossed the borders of the pleasant land of Beulah. All the passengers were rubbing their eyes, comparing watches, and congratulating one another on the prospect of arriving so seasonably at the journey's end. The sweet breezes of this happy clime came refreshingly to our nostrils; we beheld the glimmering gush of silver fountains, overhung by trees of beautiful foliage and delicious fruit, which were propagated by grafts from the celestial gardens. Once, as we dashed onward like a hurricane, there was a flutter of wings and the bright appearance of an angel in the air, speeding forth on some heavenly mission. The engine now announced the close vicinity of the final station-house by one last and horrible scream, in which there seemed to be distinguishable every kind of wailing and woe, and bitter fierceness of wrath, all mixed up with the wild laughter of a devil or a madman. Throughout our journey, at every stopping-place, Apollyon had exercised his ingenuity in screwing the most abominable sounds out of the whistle of the steam-engine; but in this closing effort he outdid himself and created an infernal uproar, which, besides disturbing the peaceful inhabitants of Beulah, must have sent its discord even through the celestial gates.

While the horrid clamor was still ringing in our ears we heard an exulting strain, as if a thousand instruments of music, with height and depth and sweetness in their tones, at once tender and triumphant, were struck in unison, to greet the approach of some illustrious hero, who had fought the good fight and won a glorious victory, and was come to lay aside his battered arms forever. Looking to ascertain what might be the occasion of this glad harmony, I perceived, on alighting from the cars, that a multitude of shining ones had assembled on the other side of the river, to welcome two poor pilgrims,

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10 **Lot's wife**, looking back at Sodom, was turned into a pillar of salt. See Genesis 19:26 • 83 **fought . . . fight.** See II Timothy 4:7

who were just emerging from its depths. They were the same whom Apollyon and ourselves had persecuted with taunts, and gibes, and scalding steam, at the commencement of our journey—the same whose unworldly aspect and impressive words had stirred my conscience amid the wild revellers of Vanity Fair.

"How amazingly well those men have got on," cried I to Mr. Smooth-it-away. "I wish we were secure of as good a reception."

"Never fear, never fear!" answered my friend. "Come, make haste; the ferry boat will be off directly, and in three minutes you will be on the other side of the river. No doubt you will find coaches to carry you up to the city gates."

A steam ferry boat, the last improvement on this important route, lay at the river side, puffing, snorting, and emitting all those other disagreeable utterances which betoken the departure to be immediate. I hurried on board with the rest of the passengers, most of whom were in great perturbation: some bawling out for their baggage; some tearing their hair and exclaiming that the boat would explode or sink; some already pale with the heaving of the stream; some gazing affrighted at the ugly aspect of the steersman; and some still dizzy with the slumberous influences of the Enchanted Ground. Looking back to the shore, I was amazed to discern Mr. Smooth-it-away waving his hand in token of farewell.

"Don't you go over to the Celestial City?" exclaimed I.

"Oh, no!" answered he with a queer smile, and that same disagreeable contortion of visage which I had remarked in the inhabitants of the Dark Valley. "Oh, no! I have come thus far only for the sake of your pleasant company. Good-by! We shall meet again."

And then did my excellent friend Mr. Smooth-it-away laugh outright, in the midst of which cachinnation a smoke-wreath issued from his mouth and nostrils, while a twinkle of lurid flame darted out of either eye, proving indubitably that his heart was all of a red blaze. The impudent fiend! To deny the existence of Tophet, when he felt its fiery tortures raging within his breast. I rushed to the side of the boat, intending to fling myself on shore; but the wheels, as they began their revolutions, threw a dash of spray over me so cold—so deadly cold, with the chill that will never leave those waters until Death be drowned in his own river—that with a shiver and a heartquake I awoke. Thank Heaven it was a Dream!

1843

The Artist of the Beautiful

"The Artist of the Beautiful" was first published in the **Democratic Review** in 1844 and was reprinted in **Mosses from an Old Manse** in 1846. The story may be profitably studied as an allegory of all art, and particularly as an allegory of Hawthorne's art. The delicacy of the true artist's perceptions, his meticulous attention to detail, his devotion to an artistic ideal, his lack of appreciation by a materialistic world, his ultimate satisfaction and reward, not in popular acclaim but in artistic creation itself, are some of the points suggested by the allegory, and all of these points are applicable in Hawthorne's own case.

An elderly man, with his pretty daughter on his arm, was passing along the street, and emerged from the gloom of the cloudy evening into the light that fell across the pavement from the window of a small shop. It was a projecting window; and on the inside were suspended a variety of watches, pinchbeck, silver, and one or two of gold, all with their faces turned from the streets, as if churlishly disinclined to inform the wayfarers what o'clock it was. Seated within the shop, sidelong to the window, with his pale face bent earnestly over some

6 **pinchbeck**, an alloy of copper and zinc, used to imitate gold in cheap jewelry

delicate piece of mechanism on which was thrown the concentrated lustre of a shade lamp, appeared a young man.

"What can Owen Warland be about?" muttered old Peter Hovenden, himself a retired watchmaker, and the former master of this same young man whose occupation he was now wondering at. "What can the fellow be about? These six months past I have never come by his shop without seeing him just as steadily at work as now. It would be a flight beyond his usual foolery to seek for the perpetual motion; and yet I know enough of my old business to be certain that what he is now so busy with is no part of the machinery of a watch."

"Perhaps, father," said Annie, without showing much interest in the question, "Owen is inventing a new kind of timekeeper. I am sure he has ingenuity enough."

"Poh, child! He has not the sort of ingenuity to invent anything better than a Dutch toy," answered her father, who had formerly been put to much vexation by Owen Warland's irregular genius. "A plague on such ingenuity! All the effect that ever I knew of it was to spoil the accuracy of some of the best watches in my shop. He would turn the sun out of its orbit and derange the whole course of time, if, as I said before, his ingenuity could grasp anything bigger than a child's toy!"

"Hush, father! He hears you!" whispered Annie, pressing the old man's arm. "His ears are as delicate as his feelings; and you know how easily disturbed they are. Do let us move on."

So Peter Hovenden and his daughter Annie plodded on without further conversation, until in a by-street of the town they found themselves passing the open door of a blacksmith's shop. Within was seen the forge, now blazing up and illuminating the high and dusky roof, and now confining its lustre to a narrow precinct of the coal-strewn floor, according as the breath of the bellows was puffed forth or again inhaled into its vast leathern lungs. In the intervals of brightness it was easy to distinguish objects in remote corners of the shop and the horseshoes that hung upon the wall; in the momentary gloom the fire seemed to be glimmering amidst the vagueness of uninclosed space. Moving about in this red glare and alternate dusk was the figure of the blacksmith, well worthy to be viewed in so picturesque an aspect of light and shade, where the bright blaze struggled with the black night, as if each would have snatched his comely strength from the other. Anon he drew a white-hot bar of iron from the coals, laid it on the anvil, uplifted his arm of might, and was soon enveloped in the myriads of sparks which the strokes of his hammer scattered into the surrounding gloom.

"Now, that is a pleasant sight," said the old watchmaker. "I know what it is to work in gold; but give me the worker in iron after all is said and done. He spends his labor upon a reality. What say you, daughter Annie?"

"Pray don't speak so loud, father," whispered Annie, "Robert Danforth will hear you."

"And what if he should hear me?" said Peter Hovenden. "I say again, it is a good and a wholesome thing to depend upon main strength and reality, and to earn one's bread with the bare and brawny arm of a blacksmith. A watchmaker gets his brain puzzled by his wheels within a wheel, or loses his health or the nicety of his eyesight, as was my case, and finds himself at middle age, or a little after, past labor at his own trade and fit for nothing else, yet too poor to live at his ease. So I say once again, give me main strength for my money. And then, how it takes the nonsense out of a man! Did you ever hear of a blacksmith being such a fool as Owen Warland yonder?"

"Well said, uncle Hovenden!" shouted Robert Danforth from the forge, in a full, deep, merry voice, that made the roof re-echo. "And what says Miss Annie to that doctrine? She, I suppose, will think it a genteeler business to tinker up a lady's watch than to forge a horseshoe or make a gridiron."

Annie drew her father onward without giving him time for reply.

But we must return to Owen Warland's shop, and spend more meditation upon his history and character than either Peter Hovenden, or probably his daughter Annie, or Owen's old school-fellow, Robert Danforth, would have thought due to so slight a subject. From the time that his little fingers could grasp a penknife, Owen had been remarkable for a delicate ingenuity, which sometimes produced pretty shapes in wood, principally figures of flowers and birds, and sometimes seemed to aim at the hidden mysteries of mechanism. But it was always

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11 seek . . . motion, the attempt, often made in times past, to invent a machine perpetually supplying its own motive forces independently of any action from without

for purposes of grace, and never with any mockery of the useful. He did not, like the crowd of school-boy artisans, construct little windmills on the angle of a barn or watermills across the neighboring brook. Those who discovered such peculiarity in the boy as to think it worth their while to observe him closely, sometimes saw reason to suppose that he was attempting to imitate the beautiful movements of Nature as exemplified in the flight of birds or the activity of little animals. It seemed, in fact, a new development of the love of the beautiful, such as might have made him a poet, a painter, or a sculptor, and which was as completely refined from all utilitarian coarseness as it could have been in either of the fine arts. He looked with singular distaste at the stiff and regular processes of ordinary machinery. Being once carried to see a steam-engine, in the expectation that his intuitive comprehension of mechanical principles would be gratified, he turned pale and grew sick, as if something monstrous and unnatural had been presented to him. This horror was partly owing to the size and terrible energy of the iron laborer; for the character of Owen's mind was microscopic, and tended naturally to the minute, in accordance with his diminutive frame and the marvellous smallness and delicate power of his fingers. Not that his sense of beauty was thereby diminished into a sense of prettiness. The beautiful idea has no relation to size, and may be as perfectly developed in a space too minute for any but microscopic investigation as within the ample verge that is measured by the arc of the rainbow. But, at all events, this characteristic minuteness in his objects and accomplishments made the world even more incapable than it might otherwise have been of appreciating Owen Warland's genius. The boy's relatives saw nothing better to be done—as perhaps there was not—than to bind him apprentice to a watchmaker, hoping that his strange ingenuity might thus be regulated and put to utilitarian purposes.

Peter Hovenden's opinion of his apprentice has already been expressed. He could make nothing of the lad. Owen's apprehension of the professional mysteries, it is true, were inconceivably quick; but he altogether forgot or despised the grand object of a watchmaker's business, and cared no more for the measurement of time than if it had been merged into eternity. So long, however, as he remained under his old master's care, Owen's lack of sturdiness made it possible, by strict injunctions and sharp oversight, to restrain his creative eccentricity within bounds; but when his apprenticeship was served out, and he had taken the little shop which Peter Hovenden's failing eyesight compelled him to relinquish, then did people recognize how unfit a person was Owen Warland to lead old blind Father Time along his daily course. One of his most rational projects was to connect a musical operation with the machinery of his watches, so that all the harsh dissonances of life might be rendered tuneful, and each flitting moment fall into the abyss of the past in golden drops of harmony. If a family clock was intrusted to him for repair,—one of those tall, ancient clocks that have grown nearly allied to human nature by measuring out the lifetime of many generations,—he would take upon himself to arrange a dance or funeral procession of figures across its venerable face, representing twelve mirthful or melancholy hours. Several freaks of this kind quite destroyed the young watchmaker's credit with that steady and matter-of-fact class of people who hold the opinion that time is not to be trifled with, whether considered as the medium of advancement and prosperity in this world or preparation for the next. His custom rapidly diminished—a misfortune, however, that was probably reckoned among his better accidents by Owen Warland, who was becoming more and more absorbed in a secret occupation which drew all his science and manual dexterity into itself, and likewise gave full employment to the characteristic tendencies of his genius. This pursuit had already consumed many months.

After the old watchmaker and his pretty daughter had gazed at him out of the obscurity of the street, Owen Warland was seized with a fluttering of the nerves, which made his hand tremble too violently to proceed with such delicate labor as he was now engaged upon.

"It was Annie herself!" murmured he. "I should have known it, by this throbbing of my heart, before I heard her father's voice. Ah, how it throbs! I shall scarcely be able to work again on this exquisite mechanism to-night. Annie! dearest Annie! thou shouldst give firmness to my heart and hand, and not shake them thus; for if I strive to put the very spirit of beauty into form and give it

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26 **The beautiful . . . rainbow.** Hawthorne perhaps thought of his work in the short tale as exemplifying this principle. The sentence is reminiscent of Ben Jonson's "In small proportions we just beauties see" from "A Pindaric Ode"

motion, it is for thy sake alone. O throbbing heart, be quiet! If my labor be thus thwarted, there will come vague and unsatisfied dreams which will leave me spiritless to-morrow."

As he was endeavoring to settle himself again to his task, the shop door opened and gave admittance to no other than the stalwart figure which Peter Hovenden had paused to admire, as seen amid the light and shadow of the blacksmith's shop. Robert Danforth had brought a little anvil of his own manufacture, and peculiarly constructed, which the young artist had recently bespoken. Owen examined the article and pronounced it fashioned according to his wish.

"Why, yes," said Robert Danforth, his strong voice filling the shop as with the sound of a bass viol, "I consider myself equal to anything in the way of my own trade; though I should have made but a poor figure at yours with such a fist as this," added he, laughing, as he laid his vast hand beside the delicate one of Owen. "But what then? I put more main strength into one blow of my sledge hammer than all that you have expended since you were a 'prentice. Is not that the truth?"

"Very probably," answered the low and slender voice of Owen. "Strength is an earthly monster. I make no pretensions to it. My force, whatever there may be of it, is altogether spiritual."

"Well, but, Owen, what are you about?" asked his old school-fellow, still in such a hearty volume of tone that it made the artist shrink, especially as the question related to a subject so sacred as the absorbing dream of his imagination. "Folks do say that you are trying to discover the perpetual motion."

"The perpetual motion? Nonsense!" replied Owen Warland, with a movement of disgust; for he was full of little petulances. "It can never be discovered. It is a dream that may delude men whose brains are mystified with matter, but not me. Besides, if such a discovery were possible, it would not be worth my while to make it only to have the secret turned to such purposes as are now effected by steam and water power. I am not ambitious to be honored with the paternity of a new kind of cotton machine."

"That would be droll enough!" cried the blacksmith, breaking out into such an uproar of laughter that Owen himself and the bell glasses on his work-board quivered in unison. "No, no, Owen! No child of yours will have iron joints and sinews. Well, I won't hinder you any more. Good night, Owen, and success, and if you need any assistance, so far as a downright blow of hammer upon anvil will answer the purpose, I'm your man."

And with another laugh the man of main strength left the shop.

"How strange it is," whispered Owen Warland to himself, leaning his head upon his hand, "that all my musings, my purposes, my passion for the beautiful, my consciousness of power to create it,—a finer, more ethereal power, of which this earthly giant can have no conception,—all, all, look so vain and idle whenever my path is crossed by Robert Danforth! He would drive me mad were I to meet him often. His hard, brute force darkens and confuses the spiritual element within me; but I, too, will be strong in my own way. I will not yield to him."

He took from beneath a glass a piece of minute machinery, which he set in the condensed light of his lamp, and, looking intently at it through a magnifying glass, proceeded to operate with a delicate instrument of steel. In an instant, however, he fell back in his chair and clasped his hands, with a look of horror on his face that made its small features as impressive as those of a giant would have been.

"Heaven! What have I done?" exclaimed he. "The vapor, the influence of that brute force,—it has bewildered me and obscured my perception. I have made the very stroke—the fatal stroke—that I have dreaded from the first. It is all over—the toil of months, the object of my life. I am ruined!"

And there he sat, in strange despair, until his lamp flickered in the socket and left the Artist of the Beautiful in darkness.

Thus it is that ideas, which grow up within the imagination and appear so lovely to it and of a value beyond whatever men call valuable, are exposed to be shattered and annihilated by contact with the practical. It is requisite for the ideal artist to possess a force of character that seems hardly compatible with its delicacy; he must keep his faith in himself while the incredulous world assails him with its utter disbelief; he must stand up against mankind and be his own sole disciple, both as respects his genius and the objects to which it is directed.

For a time Owen Warland succumbed to this severe but inevitable test. He spent a few sluggish weeks with his head so continually resting in his hands that the

towns-people had scarcely an opportunity to see his countenance. When at last it was again uplifted to the light of day, a cold, dull, nameless change was perceptible upon it. In the opinion of Peter Hovenden, however, and that order of sagacious understandings who think that life should be regulated, like clockwork, with leaden weights, the alteration was entirely for the better. Owen now, indeed, applied himself to business with dogged industry. It was marvellous to witness the obtuse gravity with which he would inspect the wheels of a great old silver watch; thereby delighting the owner, in whose fob it had been worn till he deemed it a portion of his own life, and was accordingly jealous of its treatment. In consequence of the good report thus acquired, Owen Warland was invited by the proper authorities to regulate the clock in the church steeple. He succeeded so admirably in this matter of public interest that the merchants gruffly acknowledged his merits on 'Change; the nurse whispered his praises as she gave the potion in the sick-chamber; the lover blessed him at the hour of appointed interview; and the town in general thanked Owen for the punctuality of dinner time. In a word, the heavy weight upon his spirits kept everything in order, not merely within his own system, but wheresoever the iron accents of the church clock were audible. It was a circumstance, though minute, yet characteristic of his present state, that, when employed to engrave names or initials on silver spoons, he now wrote the requisite letters in the plainest possible style, omitting a variety of fanciful flourishes that had heretofore distinguished his work in this kind.

One day, during the era of this happy transformation, old Peter Hovenden came to visit his former apprentice.

"Well, Owen," said he, "I am glad to hear such good accounts of you from all quarters, and especially from the town clock yonder, which speaks in your commendation every hour of the twenty-four. Only get rid altogether of your nonsensical trash about the beautiful, which I nor nobody else, nor yourself to boot, could ever understand,—only free yourself of that, and your success in life is as sure as daylight. Why, if you go on in this way, I should even venture to let you doctor this precious old watch of mine, though, except my daughter Annie, I have nothing else so valuable in the world."

"I should hardly dare touch it, sir," replied Owen, in a depressed tone; for he was weighed down by his old master's presence.

"In time," said the latter,—"in time, you will be capable of it."

The old watchmaker, with the freedom naturally consequent on his former authority, went on inspecting the work which Owen had in hand at the moment, together with other matters that were in progress. The artist, meanwhile, could scarcely lift his head. There was nothing so antipodal to his nature as this man's cold, unimaginative sagacity, by contact with which everything was converted into a dream except the densest matter of the physical world. Owen groaned in spirit and prayed fervently to be delivered from him.

"But what is this?" cried Peter Hovenden abruptly, taking up a dusty bell glass, beneath which appeared a mechanical something, as delicate and minute as the system of a butterfly's anatomy. "What have we here? Owen! Owen! there is witchcraft in these little chains, and wheels, and paddles. See! with one pinch of my finger and thumb I am going to deliver you from all future peril."

"For Heaven's sake," screamed Owen Warland, springing up with wonderful energy, "as you would not drive me mad, do not touch it! The slightest pressure of your finger would ruin me forever."

"Aha, young man! And is it so?" said the old watchmaker, looking at him with just enough of penetration to torture Owen's soul with the bitterness of worldly criticism. "Well, take your own course; but I warn you again that in this small piece of mechanism lives your evil spirit. Shall I exorcise him?"

"You are my evil spirit," answered Owen, much excited,—"you and the hard, coarse world! The leaden thoughts and the despondency that you fling upon me are my clogs, else I should long ago have achieved the task that I was created for."

Peter Hovenden shook his head, with the mixture of contempt and indignation which mankind, of whom he was partly a representative, deem themselves entitled to feel towards all simpletons who seek other prizes than the dusty one along the highway. He then took his leave, with an uplifted finger and a sneer upon his face that haunted the artist's dreams for many a night afterwards. At the time of his old master's visit, Owen was probably on the point of taking up the relinquished task; but, by this sinister event, he was thrown back into the state whence he had been slowly emerging.

But the innate tendency of his soul had only been accumulating fresh vigor during its apparent sluggishness. As the summer advanced he almost totally relinquished his business, and permitted Father Time, so far as the old gentleman was represented by the clocks and watches under his control, to stray at random through human life, making infinite confusion among the train of bewildered hours. He wasted the sunshine, as people said, in wandering through the woods and fields and along the banks of streams. There, like a child, he found amusement in chasing butterflies or watching the motions of water insects. There was something truly mysterious in the intentness with which he contemplated these living playthings as they sported on the breeze or examined the structure of an imperial insect whom he had imprisoned. The chase of butterflies was an apt emblem of the ideal pursuit in which he had spent so many golden hours; but would the beautiful idea ever be yielded to his hand like the butterfly that symbolized it? Sweet, doubtless, were these days, and congenial to the artist's soul. They were full of bright conceptions, which gleamed through his intellectual world as the butterflies gleamed through the outward atmosphere, and were real to him, for the instant, without the toil, and perplexity, and many disappointments of attempting to make them visible to the sensual eye. Alas that the artist, whether in poetry, or whatever other material, may not content himself with the inward enjoyment of the beautiful, but must chase the flitting mystery beyond the verge of his ethereal domain, and crush its frail being in seizing it with material grasp. Owen Warland felt the impulse to give external reality to his ideas as irresistibly as any of the poets or painters who have arrayed the world in a dimmer and fainter beauty, imperfectly copied from the richness of their visions.

The night was now his time for the slow progress of re-creating the one idea to which all his intellectual activity referred itself. Always at the approach of dusk he stole into the town, locked himself within his shop, and wrought with patient delicacy of touch for many hours. Sometimes he was startled by the rap of the watchman, who, when all the world should be asleep, had caught the gleam of lamplight through the crevices of Owen Warland's shutters. Daylight, to the morbid sensibility of his mind, seemed to have an intrusiveness that interfered with his pursuits. On cloudy and inclement days, therefore, he sat with his head upon his hands, muffling, as it were, his sensitive brain in a mist of indefinite musings; for it was a relief to escape from the sharp distinctness with which he was compelled to shape out his thoughts during his nightly toil.

From one of these fits of torpor he was aroused by the entrance of Annie Hovenden, who came into the shop with the freedom of a customer, and also with something of the familiarity of a childish friend. She had worn a hole through her silver thimble, and wanted Owen to repair it.

"But I don't know whether you will condescend to such a task," said she, laughing, "now that you are so taken up with the notion of putting spirit into machinery."

"Where did you get that idea, Annie?" said Owen, starting in surprise.

"Oh, out of my own head," answered she, "and from something that I heard you say, long ago, when you were but a boy and I a little child. But come; will you mend this poor thimble of mine?"

"Anything for your sake, Annie," said Owen Warland, —"anything, even were it to work at Robert Danforth's forge."

"And that would be a pretty sight!" retorted Annie, glancing with imperceptible slightness at the artist's small and slender frame. "Well, here is the thimble."

"But that is a strange idea of yours," said Owen, "about the spiritualization of matter."

And then the thought stole into his mind that this young girl possessed the gift to comprehend him better than all the world besides. And what a help and strength would it be to him in his lonely toil if he could gain the sympathy of the only being whom he loved! To persons whose pursuits are insulated from the common business of life—who are either in advance of mankind or apart from it—there often comes a sensation of moral cold that makes the spirit shiver as if it had reached the frozen solitudes around the pole. What the prophet, the poet, the reformer, the criminal, or any other man with human yearnings, but separated from the multitude by a peculiar lot, might feel, poor Owen felt.

"Annie," cried he, growing pale as death at the thought, "how gladly would I tell you the secret of my pursuit! You, methinks, would estimate it rightly. You, I know, would hear it with a reverence that I must not expect from the harsh material world."

"Would I not? to be sure I would!" replied Annie Hovenden, lightly laughing. "Come; explain to me quickly what is the meaning of this little whirligig, so delicately wrought that it might be a plaything for Queen Mab. See! I will put it in motion."

"Hold!" exclaimed Owen, "hold!"

Annie had but given the slightest possible touch, with the point of a needle, to the same minute portion of complicated machinery which has been more than once mentioned, when the artist seized her by the wrist with a force that made her scream aloud. She was affrighted at the convulsion of intense rage and anguish that writhed across his features. The next instant he let his head sink upon his hands.

"Go, Annie," murmured he; "I have deceived myself, and must suffer for it. I yearned for sympathy and thought, and fancied, and dreamed that you might give it me; but you lack the talisman, Annie, that should admit you into my secrets. That touch has undone the toil of months and the thought of a lifetime! It was not your fault, Annie; but you have ruined me!"

Poor Owen Warland! He had indeed erred, yet pardonably; for if any human spirit could have sufficiently reverenced the processes so sacred in his eyes, it must have been a woman's. Even Annie Hovenden, possibly, might not have disappointed him had she been enlightened by the deep intelligence of love.

The artist spent the ensuing winter in a way that satisfied any persons who had hitherto retained a hopeful opinion of him that he was, in truth, irrevocably doomed to inutility as regarded the world, and to an evil destiny on his own part. The decease of a relative had put him in possession of a small inheritance. Thus freed from the necessity of toil, and having lost the steadfast influence of a great purpose,—great, at least, to him,—he abandoned himself to habits from which it might have been supposed the mere delicacy of his organization would have availed to secure him. But when the ethereal portion of a man of genius is obscured, the earthly part assumes an influence the more uncontrollable, because the character is now thrown off the balance to which Providence had so nicely adjusted it, and which, in coarser natures, is adjusted by some other method. Owen Warland made proof of whatever show of bliss may be found in riot. He looked at the world through the golden medium of wine, and contemplated the visions that bubble up so gayly around the brim of the glass, and that people the air with shapes of pleasant madness, which so soon grow ghostly and forlorn. Even when this dismal and inevitable change had taken place, the young man might still have continued to quaff the cup of enchantments, though its vapor did but shroud life in gloom and fill the gloom with spectres that mocked at him. There was a certain irksomeness of spirit, which, being real, and the deepest sensation of which the artist was now conscious, was more intolerable than any fantastic miseries and horrors that the abuse of wine could summon up. In the latter case he could remember, even out of the midst of his trouble, that all was but a delusion; in the former, the heavy anguish was his actual life.

From this perilous state he was redeemed by an incident which more than one person witnessed, but of which the shrewdest could not explain or conjecture the operation on Owen Warland's mind. It was very simple. On a warm afternoon of spring, as the artist sat among his riotous companions with a glass of wine before him, a splendid butterfly flew in at the open window and fluttered about his head.

"Ah," exclaimed Owen, who had drank freely, "are you alive again, child of the sun and playmate of the summer breeze, after your dismal winter's nap? Then it is time for me to be at work!"

And, leaving his unemptied glass upon the table, he departed and was never known to sip another drop of wine.

And now, again, he resumed his wanderings in the woods and fields. It might be fancied that the bright butterfly, which had come so spirit-like into the window as Owen sat with the rude revellers, was indeed a spirit commissioned to recall him to the pure, ideal life that had so etherealized him among men. It might be fancied that he went forth to seek this spirit in its sunny haunts; for still, as in the summer time gone by, he was seen to steal gently up wherever a butterfly had alighted, and lose himself in contemplation of it. When it took flight his eyes followed the winged vision, as if its airy track would show the path to heaven. But what could be the purpose

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5 Queen Mab, "the fairies' midwife," who delivers men of their dreams. See the famous description in Romeo and Juliet, Act I, Scene iv, ll. 53-94. Hawthorne's idea of a "spiritualized mechanism" as presented in this story may have owed something to Shakespeare's description of Queen Mab's chariot

of the unseasonable toil, which was again resumed, as the watchman knew by the lines of lamplight through the crevices of Owen Warland's shutters? The towns-people had one comprehensive explanation of all these singularities. Owen Warland had gone mad! How universally efficacious—how satisfactory, too, and soothing to the injured sensibility of narrowness and dulness—is this easy method of accounting for whatever lies beyond the world's most ordinary scope! From St. Paul's days down to our poor little Artist of the Beautiful, the same talisman had been applied to the elucidation of all mysteries in the words or deeds of men who spoke or acted too wisely or too well. In Owen Warland's case the judgment of his towns-people may have been correct. Perhaps he was mad. The lack of sympathy—that contrast between himself and his neighbors which took away the restraint of example—was enough to make him so. Or possibly he had caught just so much of the ethereal radiance as served to bewilder him, in an earthly sense, by its intermixture with the common daylight.

One evening, when the artist had returned from a customary ramble and had just thrown the lustre of his lamp on the delicate piece of work so often interrupted, but still taken up again, as if his fate were embodied in its mechanism, he was surprised by the entrance of old Peter Hovenden. Owen never met this man without a shrinking of the heart. Of all the world he was most terrible, by reason of a keen understanding which saw so distinctly what it did see, and disbelieved so uncompromisingly in what it could not see. On this occasion the old watchmaker had merely a gracious word or two to say.

"Owen, my lad," said he, "we must see you at my house to-morrow night."

The artist began to mutter some excuse.

"Oh, but it must be so," quoth Peter Hovenden, "for the sake of the days when you were one of the household. What, my boy! don't you know that my daughter Annie is engaged to Robert Danforth? We are making an entertainment, in our humble way, to celebrate the event."

"Ah!" said Owen.

That little monosyllable was all he uttered; its tone seemed cold and unconcerned to an ear like Peter Hovenden's; and yet there was in it the stifled outcry of the poor artist's heart, which he compressed within him like a man holding down an evil spirit. One slight outbreak, however, imperceptible to the old watchmaker, he allowed himself. Raising the instrument with which he was about to begin his work, he let it fall upon the little system of machinery that had, anew, cost him months of thought and toil. It was shattered by the stroke!

Owen Warland's story would have been no tolerable representation of the troubled life of those who strive to create the beautiful, if, amid all other thwarting influences, love had not interposed to steal the cunning from his hand. Outwardly he had been no ardent or enterprising lover; the career of his passion had confined its tumults and vicissitudes so entirely within the artist's imagination that Annie herself had scarcely more than a woman's intuitive perception of it; but, in Owen's view, it covered the whole field of his life. Forgetful of the time when she had shown herself incapable of any deep response, he had persisted in connecting all his dreams of artistical success with Annie's image; she was the visible shape in which the spiritual power that he worshipped, and on whose altar he hoped to lay a not unworthy offering, was made manifest to him. Of course he had deceived himself; there were no such attributes in Annie Hovenden as his imagination had endowed her with. She, in the aspect which she wore to his inward vision, was as much a creature of his own as the mysterious piece of mechanism would be were it ever realized. Had he become convinced of his mistake through the medium of successful love,—had he won Annie to his bosom, and there beheld her fade from angel into ordinary woman,—the disappointment might have driven him back, with concentrated energy, upon his sole remaining object. On the other hand, had he found Annie what he fancied, his lot would have been so rich in beauty that out of its mere redundancy he might have wrought the beautiful into many a worthier type than he had toiled for; but the guise in which his sorrow came to him, the sense that the angel of his life had been snatched away and given to a rude man of earth and iron, who could neither need nor appreciate her ministra-

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9 **St. Paul's.** The reference is to Acts 26:24: ". . . Festus said with a loud voice, Paul, thou art beside thyself; much learning doth make thee mad"

tions,—this was the very perversity of fate that makes human existence appear too absurd and contradictory to be the scene of one other hope or one other fear. There was nothing left for Owen Warland but to sit down like a man that had been stunned.

He went through a fit of illness. After his recovery his small slender frame assumed an obtuser garniture of flesh than it had ever before worn. His thin cheeks became round; his delicate little hand, so spiritually fashioned to achieve fairy task-work, grew plumper than the hand of a thriving infant. His aspect had a childishness such as might have induced a stranger to pat him on the head—pausing, however, in the act, to wonder what manner of child was here. It was as if the spirit had gone out of him, leaving the body to flourish in a sort of vegetable existence. Not that Owen Warland was idiotic. He could talk, and not irrationally. Somewhat of a babbler, indeed, did people begin to think him; for he was apt to discourse at wearisome length of marvels of mechanism that he had read about in books, but which he had learned to consider as absolutely fabulous. Among them he enumerated the Man of Brass, constructed by Albertus Magnus, and the Brazen Head of Friar Bacon; and, coming down to later times, the automata of a little coach and horses, which it was pretended had been manufactured for the Dauphin of France; together with an insect that buzzed about the ear like a living fly, and yet was but a contrivance of minute steel springs. There was a story, too, of a duck that waddled, and quacked, and ate; though, had any honest citizen purchased it for dinner, he would have found himself cheated with the mere mechanical apparition of a duck.

"But all these accounts," said Owen Warland, "I am now satisfied are mere impositions."

Then, in a mysterious way, he would confess that he once thought differently. In his idle and dreamy days he had considered it possible, in a certain sense, to spiritualize machinery, and to combine with the new species of life and motion thus produced a beauty that should attain to the ideal which Nature has proposed to herself in all her creatures, but has never taken pains to realize. He seemed, however, to retain no very distinct perception either of the process of achieving this object or of the design itself.

"I have thrown it all aside now," he would say. "It was a dream such as young men are always mystifying themselves with. Now that I have acquired a little common sense, it makes me laugh to think of it."

Poor, poor and fallen Owen Warland! These were the symptoms that he had ceased to be an inhabitant of the better sphere that lies unseen around us. He had lost his faith in the invisible, and now prided himself, as such unfortunates invariably do, in the wisdom which rejected much that even his eye could see, and trusted confidently in nothing but what his hand could touch. This is the calamity of men whose spiritual part dies out of them and leaves the grosser understanding to assimilate them more and more to the things of which alone it can take cognizance; but in Owen Warland the spirit was not dead nor passed away; it only slept.

How it awoke again is not recorded. Perhaps the torpid slumber was broken by a convulsive pain. Perhaps, as in a former instance, the butterfly came and hovered about his head and reinspired him,—as indeed this creature of the sunshine had always a mysterious mission for the artist,—reinspired him with the former purpose of his life. Whether it were pain or happiness that thrilled through his veins, his first impulse was to thank Heaven for rendering him again the being of thought, imagination, and keenest sensibility that he had long ceased to be.

"Now for my task," said he. "Never did I feel such strength for it as now."

Yet, strong as he felt himself, he was incited to toil the more diligently by an anxiety lest death should surprise him in the midst of his labors. This anxiety, perhaps, is common to all men who set their hearts upon anything so high, in their own view of it, that life becomes of importance only as conditional to its accomplishment. So long as we love life for itself, we seldom dread the losing it. When we desire life for the attainment of an object, we recognize the frailty of its texture. But, side by side with this sense of insecurity, there is a vital faith in our invulnerability to the shaft of death while engaged in any task that seems assigned by Provi-

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23 **Albertus Magnus** (1193-1280), Bavarian philosopher and schoolman • 23 **Brazen . . . Bacon.** Friar Bacon (1214-1294) was an English philosopher who, according to legend, made a head of brass • 26 **Dauphin,** from 1349 to 1830, the title of the eldest son of the king of France; here the reference is specifically to the son of Louis XVI

dence as our proper thing to do, and which the world would have cause to mourn for should we leave it unaccomplished. Can the philosopher, big with the inspiration of an idea that is to reform mankind, believe that he is to be beckoned from this sensible existence at the very instant when he is mustering his breath to speak the word of light? Should he perish so, the weary ages may pass away—the world's, whose life sand may fall, drop by drop—before another intellect is prepared to develop the truth that might have been uttered then. But history affords many an example where the most precious spirit, at any particular epoch manifested in human shape, has gone hence untimely, without space allowed him, so far as mortal judgment could discern, to perform his mission on the earth. The prophet dies, and the man of torpid heart and sluggish brain lives on. The poet leaves his song half sung, or finishes it, beyond the scope of mortal ears, in a celestial choir. The painter—as Allston did—leaves half his conception on the canvas to sadden us with its imperfect beauty, and goes to picture forth the whole, if it be no irreverence to say so, in the hues of heaven. But rather such incomplete designs of this life will be perfected nowhere. This so frequent abortion of man's dearest projects must be taken as a proof that the deeds of earth, however etherealized by piety or genius, are without value, except as exercises and manifestations of the spirit. In heaven, all ordinary thought is higher and more melodious than Milton's song. Then, would he add another verse to any strain that he had left unfinished here?

But to return to Owen Warland. It was his fortune, good or ill, to achieve the purpose of his life. Pass we over a long space of intense thought, yearning effort, minute toil, and wasting anxiety, succeeded by an instant of solitary triumph: let all this be imagined; and then behold the artist, on a winter evening, seeking admittance to Robert Danforth's fireside circle. There he found the man of iron, with his massive substance thoroughly warmed and attempered by domestic influences. And there was Annie, too, now transformed into a matron, with much of her husband's plain and sturdy nature, but imbued, as Owen Warland still believed, with a finer grace, that might enable her to be the interpreter between strength and beauty. It happened, likewise, that old Peter Hovenden was a guest this evening at his daughter's fireside, and it was his well-remembered expression of keen, cold criticism that first encountered the artist's glance.

"My old friend Owen!" cried Robert Danforth, starting up, and compressing the artist's delicate fingers within a hand that was accustomed to gripe bars of iron. "This is kind and neighborly to come to us at last. I was afraid your perpetual motion had bewitched you out of the remembrance of old times."

"We are glad to see you," said Annie, while a blush reddened her matronly cheek. "It was not like a friend to stay from us so long."

"Well, Owen," inquired the old watchmaker, as his first greeting, "how comes on the beautiful? Have you created it at last?"

The artist did not immediately reply, being startled by the apparition of a young child of strength that was tumbling about on the carpet,—a little personage who had come mysteriously out of the infinite, but with something so sturdy and real in his composition that he seemed moulded out of the densest substance which earth could supply. This hopeful infant crawled towards the new-comer, and setting himself on end, as Robert Danforth expressed the posture, stared at Owen with a look of such sagacious observation that the mother could not help exchanging a proud glance with her husband. But the artist was disturbed by the child's look, as imagining a resemblance between it and Peter Hovenden's habitual expression. He could have fancied that the old watchmaker was compressed into this baby shape, and looking out of those baby eyes, and repeating, as he now did, the malicious question:—

"The beautiful, Owen! How comes on the beautiful? Have you succeeded in creating the beautiful?"

"I have succeeded," replied the artist, with a momentary light of triumph in his eyes and a smile of sunshine, yet steeped in such depth of thought that it was almost sadness. "Yes, my friends, it is the truth. I have succeeded."

"Indeed!" cried Annie, a look of maiden mirthfulness peeping out of her face again. "And is it lawful now, to inquire what the secret is?"

"Surely; it is to disclose it that I have come," answered

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3 big, pregnant • 8 sand, of the hourglass • 19 Allston. Washington Allston (1779-1843) left his picture "Belshazzar's Feast" unfinished at his death

Owen Warland. "You shall know, and see, and touch, and possess the secret! For, Annie,—if by that name I may still address the friend of my boyish years,—Annie, it is for your bridal gift that I have wrought this spiritualized mechanism, this harmony of motion, this mystery of beauty. It comes late, indeed; but it is as we go onward in life, when objects begin to lose their freshness of hue and our souls their delicacy of perception, that the spirit of beauty is most needed. If,—forgive me, Annie,—if you know how to value this gift, it can never come too late."

He produced, as he spoke, what seemed a jewel box. It was carved richly out of ebony by his own hand, and inlaid with a fanciful tracery of pearl, representing a boy in pursuit of a butterfly, which, elsewhere, had become a winged spirit, and was flying heavenward; while the boy, or youth, had found such efficacy in his strong desire that he ascended from earth to cloud, and from cloud to celestial atmosphere, to win the beautiful. This case of ebony the artist opened, and bade Annie place her finger on its edge. She did so, but almost screamed as a butterfly fluttered forth, and, alighting on her finger's tip, sat waving the ample magnificence of its purple and gold-speckled wings, as if in prelude to a flight. It is impossible to express by words the glory, the splendor, the delicate gorgeousness which were softened into the beauty of this object. Nature's ideal butterfly was here realized in all its perfection; not in the pattern of such faded insects as flit among earthly flowers, but of those which hover across the meads of paradise for child-angels and the spirits of departed infants to disport themselves with. The rich down was visible upon its wings; the lustre of its eyes seemed instinct with spirit. The firelight glimmered around this wonder—the candles gleamed upon it; but it glistened apparently by its own radiance, and illuminated the finger and outstretched hand on which it rested with a white gleam like that of precious stones. In its perfect beauty, the consideration of size was entirely lost. Had its wings overreached the firmament, the mind could not have been more filled or satisfied.

"Beautiful! beautiful!" exclaimed Annie. "Is it alive? Is it alive?"

"Alive? To be sure it is," answered her husband. "Do you suppose any mortal has skill enough to make a butterfly, or would put himself to the trouble of making one, when any child may catch a score of them in a summer's afternoon? Alive? Certainly! But this pretty box is undoubtedly of our friend Owen's manufacture; and really it does him credit."

At this moment the butterfly waved its wings anew, with a motion so absolutely lifelike that Annie was startled, and even awestricken; for, in spite of her husband's opinion, she could not satisfy herself whether it was indeed a living creature or a piece of wondrous mechanism.

"Is it alive?" she repeated, more earnestly than before.

"Judge for yourself," said Owen Warland, who stood gazing in her face with fixed attention.

The butterfly now flung itself upon the air, fluttered round Annie's head, and soared into a distant region of the parlor, still making itself perceptible to sight by the starry gleam in which the motion of its wings enveloped it. The infant on the floor followed its course with his sagacious little eyes. After flying about the room, it returned in a spiral curve and settled again on Annie's finger.

"But is it alive?" exclaimed she again; and the finger on which the gorgeous mystery had alighted was so tremulous that the butterfly was forced to balance himself with his wings. "Tell me if it be alive, or whether you created it."

"Wherefore ask who created it, so it be beautiful?" replied Owen Warland. "Alive? Yes, Annie; it may well be said to possess life, for it has absorbed my own being into itself; and in the secret of that butterfly, and in its beauty,—which is not merely outward, but deep as its whole system,—is represented the intellect, the imagination, the sensibility, the soul of an Artist of the Beautiful! Yes; I created it. But"—and here his countenance somewhat changed—"this butterfly is not now to me what it was when I beheld it afar off in the day-dreams of my youth."

"Be it what it may, it is a pretty plaything," said the blacksmith, grinning with childlike delight. "I wonder whether it would condescend to alight on such a great clumsy finger as mine? Hold it hither, Annie."

By the artist's direction, Annie touched her finger's tip to that of her husband; and, after a momentary delay, the butterfly fluttered from one to the other. It preluded a second flight by a similar, yet not precisely the same, waving of wings as in the first experiment; then, ascend-

ing from the blacksmith's stalwart finger, it rose in a gradually enlarging curve to the ceiling, made one wide sweep around the room, and returned with an undulating movement to the point whence it had started.

"Well, that does beat all nature!" cried Robert Danforth, bestowing the heartiest praise that he could find expression for; and, indeed, had he paused there, a man of finer words and nicer perception could not easily have said more. "That goes beyond me, I confess. But what then? There is more real use in one downright blow of my sledge hammer than in the whole five years' labor that our friend Owen has wasted on this butterfly."

Here the child clapped his hands and made a great babble of indistinct utterance, apparently demanding that the butterfly should be given him for a plaything.

Owen Warland, meanwhile, glanced sidelong at Annie, to discover whether she sympathized in her husband's estimate of the comparative value of the beautiful and the practical. There was, amid all her kindness towards himself, amid all the wonder and admiration with which she contemplated the marvelous work of his hands and incarnation of his idea, a secret scorn—too secret, perhaps, for her own consciousness, and perceptible only to such intuitive discernment as that of the artist. But Owen, in the latter stages of his pursuit, had risen out of the region in which such a discovery might have been torture. He knew that the world, and Annie as the representative of the world, whatever praise might be bestowed, could never say the fitting word nor feel the fitting sentiment which should be the perfect recompense of an artist who, symbolizing a lofty moral by a material trifle,—converting what was earthly to spiritual gold,—had won the beautiful into his handiwork. Not at this latest moment was he to learn that the reward of all high performance must be sought within itself, or sought in vain. There was, however, a view of the matter which Annie and her husband, and even Peter Hovenden, might fully have understood, and which would have satisfied them that the toil of years had here been worthily bestowed. Owen Warland might have told them that this butterfly, this plaything, this bridal gift of a poor watchmaker to a blacksmith's wife, was, in truth, a gem of art that a monarch would have purchased with honors and abundant wealth, and have treasured it among the jewels of his kingdom as the most unique and wondrous of them all. But the artist smiled and kept the secret to himself.

"Father," said Annie, thinking that a word of praise from the old watchmaker might gratify his former apprentice, "do come and admire this pretty butterfly."

"Let us see," said Peter Hovenden, rising from his chair, with a sneer upon his face that always made people doubt, as he himself did, in everything but a material existence. "Here is my finger for it to alight upon. I shall understand it better when once I have touched it."

But, to the increased astonishment of Annie, when the tip of her father's finger was pressed against that of her husband, on which the butterfly still rested, the insect drooped its wings and seemed on the point of falling to the floor. Even the bright spots of gold upon its wings and body, unless her eyes deceived her, grew dim, and the glowing purple took a dusky hue, and the starry lustre that gleamed around the blacksmith's hand became faint and vanished.

"It is dying! it is dying!" cried Annie, in alarm.

"It has been delicately wrought," said the artist, calmly. "As I told you, it has imbibed a spirtual essence—call it magnetism, or what you will. In an atmosphere of doubt and mockery its exquisite susceptibility suffers torture, as does the soul of him who instilled his own life into it. It has already lost its beauty; in a few moments more its mechanism would be irreparably injured."

"Take away your hand, father!" entreated Annie, turning pale. "Here is my child; let it rest on his innocent hand. There, perhaps, its life will revive and its colors grow brighter than ever."

Her father, with an acrid smile, withdrew his finger. The butterfly then appeared to recover the power of voluntary motion, while its hues assumed much of their original lustre, and the gleam of starlight, which was its most ethereal attribute, again formed a halo round about it. At first, when transferred from Robert Danforth's hand to the small finger of the child, this radiance grew so powerful that it positively threw the little fellow's shadow back against the wall. He, meanwhile, extended his plump hand as he had seen his father and mother do, and watched the waving of the insect's wings with infantine delight. Nevertheless, there was a certain odd expression of sagacity that made Owen Warland feel

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34 the reward . . . itself. Hawthorne here speaks in the tone of Milton's "Lycidas": " 'But not the praise,' Phoebus replied, and touched my trembling ears . . ."

as if here were old Peter Hovenden, partially, and but partially, redeemed from his hard scepticism into childish faith.

"How wise the little monkey looks!" whispered Robert Danforth to his wife.

"I never saw such a look on a child's face," answered Annie, admiring her own infant, and with good reason, far more than the artistic butterfly. "The darling knows more of the mystery than we do."

As if the butterfly, like the artist, were conscious of something not entirely congenial in the child's nature, it alternately sparkled and grew dim. At length it arose from the small hand of the infant with an airy motion that seemed to bear it upward without an effort, as if the ethereal instincts with which its master's spirit had endowed it impelled this fair vision involuntarily to a higher sphere. Had there been no obstruction, it might have soared into the sky and grown immortal. But its lustre gleamed upon the ceiling; the exquisite texture of its wings brushed against that earthly medium; and a sparkle or two, as of stardust, floated downward and lay glimmering on the carpet. Then the butterfly came fluttering down, and, instead of returning to the infant, was apparently attracted towards the artist's hand.

"Not so! not so!" murmured Owen Warland, as if his handiwork could have understood him. "Thou has gone forth out of thy master's heart. There is no return for thee."

With a wavering movement, and emitting a tremulous radiance, the butterfly struggled, as it were, towards the infant, and was about to alight upon his finger; but while it still hovered in the air, the little child of strength, with his grandsire's sharp and shrewd expression in his face, made a snatch at the marvellous insect and compressed it in his hand. Annie screamed. Old Peter Hovenden burst into a cold and scornful laugh. The blacksmith, by main force, unclosed the infant's hand, and found within the palm a small heap of glittering fragments, whence the mystery of beauty had fled forever. And as for Owen Warland, he looked placidly at what seemed the ruin of his life's labor, and which was yet no ruin. He had caught a far other butterfly than this. When the artist rose high enough to achieve the beautiful, the symbol by which he made it perceptible to mortal senses became of little value in his eyes while his spirit possessed itself in the enjoyment of the reality.

1844

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18 **soared . . . immortal**, reminiscent of Belinda's lock, in Pope's **Rape of the Lock**, Canto V, ll. 113-150

Rappaccini's Daughter

"Rappaccini's Daughter" is perhaps Hawthorne's most vivid and forceful study of the tragic isolation of an abnormal personality. The poison in Beatrice's physical nature symbolizes this abnormality, which has been produced by her solitary life. The flowers possibly symbolize her thoughts, solitary thoughts which other people cannot share. The story seems to mean that it is tragic to be so unlike other people that one is cut off from normal relations with them. "There was an awful doom," Hawthorne has Beatrice say, "the effect of my father's fatal love of science, which estranged me from all society of my kind. . . . I would fain have been loved, not feared." The story's interest is enhanced by the latitude of interpretation allowed the reader.

A secondary theme is Hawthorne's distrust of science, which he shared with other writers of the romantic generation, notably with Wordsworth ("A Poet's Epitaph"), Keats ("Lamia"), and Poe ("Sonnet to Science").

"Rappaccini's Daughter" was first published in the **Democratic Review** in 1844 and was reprinted in **Mosses from an Old Manse** in 1846.

A young man, named Giovanni Guasconti, came, very long ago, from the more southern region of Italy, to pursue his studies at the University of Padua. Giovanni, who had but a scanty supply of gold ducats in his pocket,

took lodgings in a high and gloomy chamber of an old edifice which looked not unworthy to have been the palace of a Paduan noble, and which, in fact, exhibited over its entrance the armorial bearings of a family long since extinct. The young stranger, who was not unstudied in the great poem of his country, recollected that one of the ancestors of this family, and perhaps an occupant of this very mansion, had been pictured by Dante as a partaker of the immortal agonies of his Inferno. These reminiscences and associations, together with the tendency to heartbreak natural to a young man for the first time out of his native sphere, caused Giovanni to sigh heavily as he looked around the desolate and ill-furnished apartment.

"Holy Virgin, signor!" cried old Dame Lisabetta, who, won by the youth's remarkable beauty of person, was kindly endeavoring to give the chamber a habitable air, "what a sigh was that to come out of a young man's heart! Do you find this old mansion gloomy? For the love of Heaven, then, put your head out of the window, and you will see as bright sunshine as you have left in Naples."

Guasconti mechanically did as the old woman advised, but could not quite agree with her that the Paduan sunshine was as cheerful as that of southern Italy. Such as it was, however, it fell upon a garden beneath the window and expended its fostering influences on a variety of plants, which seemed to have been cultivated with exceeding care.

"Does this garden belong to the house?" asked Giovanni.

"Heaven, forbid, signor, unless it were fruitful of better pot herbs than any that grow there now," answered old Lisabetta. "No; that garden is cultivated by the own hands of Signor Giacomo Rappaccini, the famous doctor, who, I warrant him, has been heard of as far as Naples. It is said that he distils these plants into medicines that are as potent as a charm. Oftentimes you may see the signor doctor at work, and perchance the signora, his daughter, too, gathering the strange flowers that grow in the garden."

The old woman had now done what she could for the aspect of the chamber; and, commending the young man to the protection of the saints, took her departure.

Giovanni still found no better occupation than to look down into the garden beneath his window. From its appearance, he judged it to be one of those botanic gardens which were of earlier date in Padua than elsewhere in Italy or in the world. Or, not improbably, it might once have been the pleasure-place of an opulent family; for there was the ruin of a marble fountain in the centre, sculptured with rare art but so wofully shattered that it was impossible to trace the original design from the chaos of remaining fragments. The water, however, continued to gush and sparkle into the sunbeams as cheerfully as ever. A little gurgling sound ascended to the young man's window, and made him feel as if the fountain were an immortal spirit that sung its song unceasingly and without heeding the vicissitudes around it, while one century imbodied it in marble and another scattered the perishable garniture on the soil. All about the pool into which the water subsided grew various plants, that seemed to require a plentiful supply of moisture for the nourishment of gigantic leaves, and, in some instances, flowers gorgeously magnificent. There was one shrub in particular, set in a marble vase in the midst of the pool, that bore a profusion of purple blossoms, each of which had the lustre and richness of a gem; and the whole together made a show so resplendent that it seemed enough to illuminate the garden, even had there been no sunshine. Every portion of the soil was peopled with plants and herbs, which, if less beautiful, still bore tokens of assiduous care, as if all had their individual virtues, known to the scientific mind that fostered them. Some were placed in urns, rich with old carving, and others in common garden pots; some crept serpent-like along the ground or climbed on high, using whatever means of ascent was offered them. One plant had wreathed itself round a statue of Vertumnus, which was thus quite veiled and shrouded in a drapery of hanging foliage, so happily arranged that it might have served a sculptor for a study.

While Giovanni stood at the window he heard a rustling behind a screen of leaves, and became aware that a person was at work in the garden. His figure soon emerged into view, and showed itself to be that of no common laborer, but a tall, emaciated, sallow, and sickly-looking man, dressed in a scholar's garb of black. He was beyond the middle term of life, with grey hair, a thin, grey beard, and a face singularly marked with in-

79 Vertumnus, Roman god of the changing year, or the seasons and their products

tellect and cultivation, but which could never, even in his more youthful days, have expressed much warmth of heart.

Nothing could exceed the intentness with which this scientific gardener examined every shrub which grew in his path: it seemed as if he was looking into their inmost nature, making observations in regard to their creative essence, and discovering why one leaf grew in this shape and another in that, and wherefore such and such flowers differed among themselves in hue and perfume. Nevertheless, in spite of this deep intelligence on his part, there was no approach to intimacy between himself and these vegetable existences. On the contrary, he avoided their actual touch or the direct inhaling of their odors with a caution that impressed Giovanni most disagreeably; for the man's demeanor was that of one walking among malignant influences, such as savage beasts, or deadly snakes, or evil spirits, which, should he allow them one moment of license, would wreak upon him some terrible fatality. It was strangely frightful to the young man's imagination to see this air of insecurity in a person cultivating a garden, that most simple and innocent of human toils, and which had been alike the joy and labor of the unfallen parents of the race. Was this garden, then, the Eden of the present world? And this man, with such a perception of harm in what his own hands caused to grow,—was he the Adam?

The distrustful gardener, while plucking away the dead leaves or pruning the too luxuriant growth of the shrubs, defended his hands with a pair of thick gloves. Nor were these his only armor. When, in his walk through the garden, he came to the magnificent plant that hung its purple gems beside the marble fountain, he placed a kind of mask over his mouth and nostrils, as if all this beauty did but conceal a deadlier malice; but, finding his task still too dangerous, he drew back, removed the mask, and called loudly, but in the infirm voice of a person affected with inward disease,—

"Beatrice! Beatrice!"

"Here am I, my father. What would you?" cried a rich and youthful voice from the window of the opposite house—a voice as rich as a tropical sunset, and which made Giovanni, though he knew not why, think of deep hues of purple or crimson and of perfumes heavily delectable. "Are you in the garden?"

"Yes, Beatrice," answered the gardener, "and I need your help."

Soon there emerged from under a sculptured portal the figure of a young girl, arrayed with as much richness of taste as the most splendid of the flowers, beautiful as the day, and with a bloom so deep and vivid that one shade more would have been too much. She looked redundant with life, health, and energy; all of which attributes were bound down and compressed, as it were, and girdled tensely, in their luxuriance, by her virgin zone. Yet Giovanni's fancy must have grown morbid while he looked down into the garden; for the impression which the fair stranger made upon him was as if here were another flower, the human sister of those vegetable ones, as beautiful as they, more beautiful than the richest of them, but still to be touched only with a glove, nor to be approached without a mask. As Beatrice came down the garden path, it was observable that she handled and inhaled the odor of several of the plants which her father had most sedulously avoided.

"Here, Beatrice," said the latter, "see how many needful offices require to be done to our chief treasure. Yet, shattered as I am, my life might pay the penalty of approaching it so closely as circumstances demand. Henceforth, I fear, this plant must be consigned to your sole charge."

"And gladly will I undertake it," cried again the rich tones of the young lady, as she bent towards the magnificent plant and opened her arms as if to embrace it. "Yes, my sister, my splendor, it shall be Beatrice's task to nurse and serve thee; and thou shalt reward her with thy kisses and perfumed breath, which to her is as the breath of life."

Then, with all the tenderness in her manner that was so strikingly expressed in her words, she busied herself with such attentions as the plant seemed to require; and Giovanni, at his lofty window, rubbed his eyes and almost doubted whether it were a girl tending her favorite flower, or one sister performing the duties of affection to another. The scene soon terminated. Whether Dr. Rappaccini had finished his labors in the garden, or that his watchful eye had caught the stranger's face, he now took his daughter's arm and retired. Night was already closing in; oppressive exhalations seemed to proceed from the plants and steal upward past the open window; and Giovanni, closing the lattice, went to his couch and dreamed of a rich flower and beautiful girl. Flower and maiden were different, and yet the same, and fraught with some strange peril in either shape.

But there is an influence in the light of morning that tends to rectify whatever errors of fancy, or even of judgment, we may have incurred during the sun's decline, or among the shadows of the night, or in the less wholesome glow of moonshine. Giovanni's first movement, on starting from sleep, was to throw open the window and gaze down into the garden which his dreams had made so fertile of mysteries. He was surprised and a little ashamed to find how real and matter-of-fact an affair it proved to be, in the first rays of the sun which gilded the dew-drops that hung upon leaf and blossom, and, while giving a brighter beauty to each rare flower, brought everything within the limits of ordinary experience. The young man rejoiced that, in the heart of the barren city, he had the privilege of overlooking this spot of lovely and luxuriant vegetation. It would serve, he said to himself, as a symbolic language to keep him in communion with Nature. Neither the sickly and thought-worn Dr. Giacomo Rappaccini, it is true, nor his brilliant daughter, were now visible; so that Giovanni could not determine how much of the singularity which he attributed to both was due to their own qualities and how much to his wonder-working fancy; but he was inclined to take a most rational view of the whole matter.

In the course of the day he paid his respects to Signor Pietro Baglioni, professor of medicine in the university, a physician of eminent repute, to whom Giovanni had brought a letter of introduction. The professor was an elderly personage, apparently of genial nature, and habits that might almost be called jovial. He kept the young man to dinner, and made himself very agreeable by the freedom and liveliness of his conversation, especially when warmed by a flask or two of Tuscan wine. Giovanni, conceiving that men of science, inhabitants of the same city, must needs be on familiar terms with one another, took an opportunity to mention the name of Dr. Rappaccini. But the professor did not respond with so much cordiality as he had anticipated.

"Ill would it become a teacher of the divine art of medicine," said Professor Pietro Baglioni, in answer to a question of Giovanni, "to withhold due and well-considered praise of a physician so eminently skilled as Rappaccini; but, on the other hand, I should answer it but scantily to my conscience were I to permit a worthy youth like yourself, Signor Giovanni, the son of an ancient friend, to imbibe erroneous ideas respecting a man who might hereafter chance to hold your life and death in his hands. The truth is, our worshipful Dr. Rappaccini has as much science as any member of the faculty—with perhaps one single exception—in Padua, or all Italy; but there are certain grave objections to his professional character."

"And what are they?" asked the young man.

"Has my friend Giovanni any disease of body or heart, that he is so inquisitive about physicians?" said the professor, with a smile. "But as for Rappaccini, it is said of him—and I, who know the man well, can answer for its truth—that he cares infinitely more for science than for mankind. His patients are interesting to him only as subjects for some new experiment. He would sacrifice human life, his own among the rest, or whatever else was dearest to him, for the sake of adding so much as a grain of mustard seed to the great heap of his accumulated knowledge."

"Methinks he is an awful man indeed," remarked Guasconti, mentally recalling the cold and purely intellectual aspect of Rappaccini. "And yet, worshipful professor, is it not a noble spirit? Are there many men capable of so spiritual a love of science?"

"God forbid," answered the professor, somewhat testily; "at least, unless they take sounder views of the healing art than those adopted by Rappaccini. It is his theory that all medicinal virtues are comprised within those substances which we term vegetable poisons. These he cultivates with his own hands, and is said even to have produced new varieties of poison, more horribly deleterious than Nature, without the assistance of this learned person, would ever have plagued the world withal. That the signor doctor does less mischief than might be expected with such dangerous substances is undeniable. Now and then, it must be owned, he has effected, or seemed to effect, a marvellous cure; but, to tell you my private mind, Signor Giovanni, he should receive little credit for such instances of success,—they being probably the work of chance,—but should be held strictly accountable for his failures, which may justly be considered his own work."

The youth might have taken Baglioni's opinions with many grains of allowance had he known that there was a professional warfare of long continuance between him and Dr. Rappaccini, in which the latter was generally thought to have gained the advantage. If the reader be

inclined to judge for himself, we refer him to certain black-letter tracts on both sides, preserved in the medical department of the University of Padua.

"I know not, most learned professor," returned Giovanni, after musing on what had been said of Rappaccini's exclusive zeal for science,—"I know not how dearly this physician may love his art; but surely there is one object more dear to him. He has a daughter."

"Aha!" cried the professor, with a laugh. "So now our friend Giovanni's secret is out. You have heard of this daughter, whom all the young men in Padua are wild about, though not half a dozen have ever had the good hap to see her face. I know little of the Signora Beatrice save that Rappaccini is said to have instructed her deeply in his science, and that, young and beautiful as fame reports her, she is already qualified to fill a professor's chair. Perchance her father destines her for mine! Other absurd rumors there be, not worth talking about or listening to. So now, Signor Giovanni, drink off your glass of lachryma."

Guasconti returned to his lodgings somewhat heated with the wine he had quaffed, and which caused his brain to swim with strange fantasies in reference to Dr. Rappaccini and the beautiful Beatrice. On his way, happening to pass by a florist's, he bought a fresh bouquet of flowers.

Ascending to his chamber, he seated himself near the window, but within the shadow thrown by the depth of the wall, so that he could look down into the garden with little risk of being discovered. All beneath his eye was a solitude. The strange plants were basking in the sunshine, and now and then nodding gently to one another, as if in acknowledgment of sympathy and kindred. In the midst, by the shattered fountain, grew the magnificent shrub, with its purple gems clustering all over it; they glowed in the air, and gleamed back again out of the depths of the pool, which thus seemed to overflow with colored radiance from the rich reflection that was steeped in it. At first, as we have said, the garden was a solitude. Soon, however,—as Giovanni had half hoped, half feared, would be the case,—a figure appeared beneath the antique sculptured portal, and came down between the rows of plants, inhaling their various perfumes as if she were one of those beings of old classic fable that lived upon sweet odors. On again beholding Beatrice, the young man was even startled to perceive how much her beauty exceeded his recollection of it; so brilliant, so vivid, was its character, that she glowed amid the sunlight, and, as Giovanni whispered to himself, positively illuminated the more shadowy intervals of the garden path. Her face being now more revealed than on the former occasion, he was struck by its expression of simplicity and sweetness,—qualities that had not entered into his idea of her character, and which made him ask anew what manner of mortal she might be. Nor did he fail again to observe, or imagine, an analogy between the beautiful girl and the gorgeous shrub that hung its gem-like flowers over the fountain,—a resemblance which Beatrice seemed to have indulged a fantastic humor in heightening, both by the arrangement of her dress and the selection of its hues.

Approaching the shrub, she threw open her arms, as with a passionate ardor, and drew its branches into an intimate embrace—so intimate that her features were hidden in its leafy bosom and her glistening ringlets all intermingled with the flowers.

"Give me thy breath, my sister," exclaimed Beatrice; "for I am faint with common air. And give me this flower of thine, which I separate with gentlest fingers from the stem and place it close beside my heart."

With these words the beautiful daughter of Rappaccini plucked one of the richest blossoms of the shrub, and was about to fasten it in her bosom. But now, unless Giovanni's draughts of wine had bewildered his senses, a singular incident occurred. A small orange-colored reptile, of the lizard or chameleon species, chanced to be creeping along the path, just at the feet of Beatrice. It appeared to Giovanni,—but, at the distance from which he gazed, he could scarcely have seen anything so minute, —it appeared to him, however, that a drop or two of moisture from the broken stem of the flower descended upon the lizard's head. For an instant the reptile contorted itself violently, and then lay motionless in the sunshine. Beatrice observed this remarkable phenomenon, and crossed herself, sadly, but without surprise; nor did she therefore hesitate to arrange the fatal flower in her bosom. There it blushed, and almost glimmered with the dazzling effect of a precious stone, adding to her dress and aspect the one appropriate charm which nothing else

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20 **lachryma**, a rich, sweet Neapolitan wine

in the world could have supplied. But Giovanni, out of the shadow of his window, bent forward and shrank back, and murmured and trembled.

"Am I awake? Have I my senses?" said he to himself. "What is this being? Beautiful shall I call her, or inexpressibly terrible?"

Beatrice now strayed carelessly through the garden, approaching closer beneath Giovanni's window, so that he was compelled to thrust his head quite out of its concealment in order to gratify the intense and painful curiosity which she excited. At this moment there came a beautiful insect over the garden wall; it had, perhaps, wandered through the city, and found no flowers or verdure among those antique haunts of men until the heavy perfumes of Dr. Rappaccini's shrubs had lured it from afar. Without alighting on the flowers, this winged brightness seemed to be attracted by Beatrice, and lingered in the air and fluttered about her head. Now, here it could not be but that Giovanni Guasconti's eyes deceived him. Be that as it might, he fancied that, while Beatrice was gazing at the insect with childish delight, it grew faint and fell at her feet; its bright wings shivered; it was dead—from no cause that he could discern, unless it were the atmosphere of her breath. Again Beatrice crossed herself and sighed heavily as she bent over the dead insect.

An impulsive movement of Giovanni drew her eyes to the window. There she beheld the beautiful head of the young man—rather a Grecian than an Italian head, with fair, regular features, and a glistening of gold among his ringlets—gazing down upon her like a being that hovered in mid air. Scarcely knowing what he did, Giovanni threw down the bouquet which he had hitherto held in his hand.

"Signora," said he," there are pure and healthful flowers. Wear them for the sake of Giovanni Guasconti."

"Thanks, signor," replied Beatrice, with her rich voice, that came forth as it were like a gush of music, and with a mirthful expression half childish and half woman-like. "I accept your gift, and would fain recompense it with this precious purple flower; but if I toss it into the air it will not reach you. So Signor Guasconti must even content himself with my thanks."

She lifted the bouquet from the ground, and then, as if inwardly ashamed at having stepped aside from her maidenly reserve to respond to a stranger's greeting, passed swiftly homeward through the garden. But few as the moments were, it seemed to Giovanni, when she was on the point of vanishing beneath the sculptured portal, that his beautiful bouquet was already beginning to wither in her grasp. It was an idle thought; there could be no possibility of distinguishing a faded flower from a fresh one at so great a distance.

For many days after this incident the young man avoided the window that looked into Dr. Rappaccini's garden, as if something ugly and monstrous would have blasted his eyesight had he been betrayed into a glance. He felt conscious of having put himself, to a certain extent, within the influence of an unintelligible power by the communication which he had opened with Beatrice. The wisest course would have been, if his heart were in any real danger, to quit his lodgings and Padua itself at once; the next wiser, to have accustomed himself, as far as possible, to the familiar and daylight view of Beatrice—thus bringing her rigidly and systematically within the limits of ordinary experience. Least of all, while avoiding her sight, ought Giovanni to have remained so near this extraordinary being that the proximity and possibility even of intercourse should give a kind of substance and reality to the wild vagaries which his imagination ran riot continually in producing. Guasconti had not a deep heart—or, at all events, its depths were not sounded now; but he had a quick fancy and an ardent southern temperament, which rose every instant to a higher fever pitch. Whether or no Beatrice possessed those terrible attributes, that fatal breath, the affinity with those so beautiful and deadly flowers which were indicated by what Giovanni had witnessed, she had at least instilled a fierce and subtle poison into his system. It was not love, although her rich beauty was a madness to him; nor horror, even while he fancied her spirit to be imbued with the same baneful essence that seemed to pervade her physical frame; but a wild offspring of both love and horror that had each parent in it, and burned like one and shivered like the other. Giovanni knew not what to dread; still less did he know what to hope; yet hope and dread kept a continual warfare in his breast, alternately vanquishing one another and starting up afresh to renew the contest. Blessed are all simple emotions, be they dark or bright! It is the lurid intermixture of the two that produces the illuminating blaze of the infernal regions.

Sometimes he endeavored to assuage the fever of his

spirit by a rapid walk through the streets of Padua or beyond its gates: his footsteps kept time with the throbbings of his brain, so that the walk was apt to accelerate itself to a race. One day he found himself arrested; his arm was seized by a portly personage, who had turned back on recognizing the young man and expended much breath in overtaking him.

"Signor Giovanni! Stay, my young friend!" cried he. "Have you forgotten me? That might well be the case if I were as much altered as yourself."

It was Baglioni, whom Giovanni had avoided ever since their first meeting, from a doubt that the professor's sagacity would look too deeply into his secrets. Endeavoring to recover himself, he stared forth wildly from his inner world into the outer one and spoke like a man in a dream.

"Yes; I am Giovanni Guasconti. You are Professor Pietro Baglioni. Now let me pass!"

"Not yet, not yet, Signor Giovanni Guasconti," said the professor, smiling, but at the same time scrutinizing the youth with an earnest glance. "What! did I grow up side by side with your father? and shall his son pass me like a stranger in these old streets of Padua? Stand still, Signor Giovanni; for we must have a word or two before we part."

"Speedily, then, most worshipful professor, speedily," said Giovanni, with feverish impatience. "Does not your worship see that I am in haste?"

Now, while he was speaking there came a man in black along the street, stooping and moving feebly like a person in inferior health. His face was all overspread with a most sickly and sallow hue, but yet so pervaded with an expression of piercing and active intellect that an observer might easily have overlooked the merely physical attributes and have seen only this wonderful energy. As he passed, this person exchanged a cold and distant salutation with Baglioni, but fixed his eyes upon Giovanni with an intentness that seemed to bring out whatever was within him worthy of notice. Nevertheless, there was a peculiar quietness in the look, as if taking merely a speculative, not a human, interest in the young man.

"It is Dr. Rappaccini!" whispered the professor when the stranger had passed. "Has he ever seen your face before?"

"Not that I know," answered Giovanni, starting at the name.

"He *has* seen you! he must have seen you!" said Baglioni, hastily. "For some purpose or other, this man of science is making a study of you. I know that look of his! It is the same that coldly illuminates his face as he bends over a bird, a mouse, or a butterfly, which, in pursuance of some experiment, he has killed by the perfume of a flower; a look as deep as Nature itself, but without Nature's warmth of love. Signor Giovanni, I will stake my life upon it, you are the subject of one of Rappaccini's experiments!"

"Will you make a fool of me?" cried Giovanni, passionately. "*That,* signor professor, were an untoward experiment."

"Patience! patience!" replied the imperturbable professor. "I tell thee, my poor Giovanni, that Rappaccini has a scientific interest in thee. Thou hast fallen into fearful hands! And the Signora Beatrice,—what part does she act in this mystery?"

But Guasconti, finding Baglioni's pertinacity intolerable, here broke away, and was gone before the professor could again seize his arm. He looked after the young man intently and shook his head.

"This must not be," said Baglioni to himself. "The youth is the son of my old friend, and shall not come to any harm from which the arcana of medical science can preserve him. Besides, it is too insufferable an impertinence in Rappaccini, thus to snatch the lad out of my own hands, as I may say, and make use of him for his infernal experiments. This daughter of his! It shall be looked to. Perchance, most learned Rappaccini, I may foil you where you little dream of it!"

Meanwhile Giovanni had pursued a circuitous route, and at length found himself at the door of his lodgings. As he crossed the threshold he was met by old Lisabetta, who smirked and smiled, and was evidently desirous to attract his attention; vainly, however, as the ebullition of his feelings had momentarily subsided into a cold and dull vacuity. He turned his eyes full upon the withered face that was puckering itself into a smile, but seemed to behold it not. The old dame, therefore, laid her grasp upon his cloak.

"Signor! signor!" whispered she, still with a smile over the whole breadth of her visage, so that it looked not unlike a grotesque carving in wood, darkened by centuries. "Listen, signor! There is a private entrance into the garden!"

"What do you say?" exclaimed Giovanni, turning quickly about, as if an inanimate thing should start into feverish life. "A private entrance into Dr. Rappaccini's garden?"

"Hush! hush! not so loud!" whispered Lisabetta, putting her hand over his mouth. "Yes; into the worshipful doctor's garden, where you may see all his fine shrubbery. Many a young man in Padua would give gold to be admitted among those flowers."

Giovanni put a piece of gold into her hand.

"Show me the way," said he.

A surmise, probably excited by his conversation with Baglioni, crossed his mind, that this interposition of old Lisabetta might perchance be connected with the intrigue, whatever were its nature, in which the professor seemed to suppose that Dr. Rappaccini was involving him. But such a suspicion, though it disturbed Giovanni, was inadequate to restrain him. The instant that he was aware of the possibility of approaching Beatrice, it seemed an absolute necessity of his existence to do so. It mattered not whether she were angel or demon; he was irrevocably within her sphere, and must obey the law that whirled him onward, in ever-lessening circles, towards a result which he did not attempt to foreshadow; and yet, strange to say, there came across him a sudden doubt whether this intense interest on his part were not delusory; whether it were really of so deep and positive a nature as to justify him in now thrusting himself into an incalculable position; whether it were not merely the fantasy of a young man's brain, only slightly or not at all connected with his heart.

He paused, hesitated, turned half about, but again went on. His withered guide led him along several obscure passages, and finally undid a door, through which, as it was opened, there came the sight and sound of rustling leaves, with the broken sunshine glimmering among them. Giovanni stepped forth, and, forcing himself through the entanglement of a shrub that wreathed its tendrils over the hidden entrance, stood beneath his own window in the open area of Dr. Rappaccini's garden.

How often is it the case that, when impossibilities have come to pass and dreams have condensed their misty substance into tangible realities, we find ourselves calm, and even coldly self-possessed, amid circumstances which it would have been a delirium of joy or agony to anticipate! Fate delights to thwart us thus. Passion will choose his own time to rush upon the scene, and lingers sluggishly behind when an appropriate adjustment of events would seem to summon his appearance. So was it now with Giovanni. Day after day his pulses had throbbed with feverish blood at the improbable idea of an interview with Beatrice, and of standing with her, face to face, in this very garden, basking in the Oriental sunshine of her beauty, and snatching from her full gaze the mystery which he deemed the riddle of his own existence. But now there was a singular and untimely equanimity within his breast. He threw a glance around the garden to discover if Beatrice or her father were present, and, perceiving that he was alone, began a critical observation of the plants.

The aspect of one and all of them dissatisfied him; their gorgeousness seemed fierce, passionate, and even unnatural. There was hardly an individual shrub which a wanderer, straying by himself through a forest, would not have been startled to find growing wild, as if an unearthly face had glared at him out of the thicket. Several also would have shocked a delicate instinct by an appearance of artificialness indicating that there had been such commixture, and, as it were, adultery, of various vegetable species, that the production was no longer of God's making, but the monstrous offspring of man's depraved fancy, glowing with only an evil mockery of beauty. They were probably the result of experiment, which in one or two cases had succeeded in mingling plants individually lovely into a compound possessing the questionable and ominous character that distinguished the whole growth of the garden. In fine, Giovanni recognized but two or three plants in the collection, and those of a kind that he well knew to be poisonous. While busy with these contemplations he heard the rustling of a silken garment, and, turning, beheld Beatrice emerging from beneath the sculptured portal.

Giovanni had not considered with himself what should be his deportment; whether he should apologize for his intrusion into the garden, or assume that he was there with the privity at least, if not by the desire, of Dr. Rappaccini or his daughter; but Beatrice's manner placed him at his ease, though leaving him still in doubt by what agency he had gained admittance. She came lightly along the path and met him near the broken fountain. There was surprise in her face, but brightened by a simple and kind expression of pleasure.

"You are a connoisseur in flowers, signor," said Beatrice, with a smile, alluding to the bouquet which he had flung her from the window. "It is no marvel, therefore, if the sight of my father's rare collection has tempted you to take a nearer view. If he were here, he could tell you many strange and interesting facts as to the nature and habits of these shrubs; for he has spent a lifetime in such studies, and this garden is his world."

"And yourself, lady," observed Giovanni, "if fame says true,—you likewise are deeply skilled in the virtues indicated by these rich blossoms and these spicy perfumes. Would you deign to be my instructress, I should prove an apter scholar than if taught by Signor Rappaccini himself."

"Are there such idle rumors?" asked Beatrice, with the music of a pleasant laugh. "Do people say that I am skilled in my father's science of plants? What a jest is there! No; though I have grown up among these flowers, I know no more of them than their hues and perfume; and sometimes methinks I would fain rid myself of even that small knowledge. There are many flowers here, and those not the least brilliant, that shock and offend me when they meet my eye. But pray, signor, do not believe these stories about my science. Believe nothing of me save what you see with your own eyes."

"And must I believe all that I have seen with my own eyes?" asked Giovanni, pointedly, while the recollection of former scenes made him shrink. "No, signora; you demand too little of me. Bid me believe nothing save what comes from your own lips."

It would appear that Beatrice understood him. There came a deep flush to her cheek; but she looked full into Giovanni's eyes, and responded to his gaze of uneasy suspicion with a queenlike haughtiness.

"I do so bid you, signor," she replied. "Forget whatever you may have fancied in regard to me. If true to the outward senses, still it may be false in its essence; but the words of Beatrice Rappaccini's lips are true from the depths of the heart outward. Those you may believe."

A fervor glowed in her whole aspect and beamed upon Giovanni's consciousness like the light of truth itself; but while she spoke there was a fragrance in the atmosphere around her, rich and delightful, though evanescent, yet which the young man, from an indefinable reluctance, scarcely dared to draw into his lungs. It might be the odor of the flowers. Could it be Beatrice's breath which thus embalmed her words with a strange richness, as if by steeping them in her heart? A faintness passed like a shadow over Giovanni and flitted away; he seemed to gaze through the beautiful girl's eyes into her transparent soul, and felt no more doubt or fear.

The tinge of passion that had colored Beatrice's manner vanished; she became gay, and appeared to derive a pure delight from her communion with the youth not unlike what the maiden of a lonely island might have felt conversing with a voyager from the civilized world. Evidently her experience of life had been confined within the limits of that garden. She talked now about matters as simple as the daylight or summer clouds, and now asked questions in reference to the city, or Giovanni's distant home, his friends, his mother, and his sisters—questions indicating such seclusion, and such lack of familiarity with modes and forms, that Giovanni responded as if to an infant. Her spirit gushed out before him like a fresh rill that was just catching its first glimpse of the sunlight and wondering at the reflections of earth and sky which were flung into its bosom. There came thoughts, too, from a deep source, and fantasies of a gemlike brilliancy, as if diamonds and rubies sparkled upward among the bubbles of the fountain. Ever and anon there gleamed across the young man's mind a sense of wonder that he should be walking side by side with the being who had so wrought upon his imagination, whom he had idealized in such hues of terror, in whom he had positively witnessed such manifestations of dreadful attributes,—that he should be conversing with Beatrice like a brother, and should find her so human and so maidenlike. But such reflections were only momentary; the effect of her character was too real not to make itself familiar at once.

In this free intercourse they had strayed through the garden, and now, after many turns among its avenues, were come to the shattered fountain, beside which grew the magnificent shrub, with its treasury of glowing blossoms. A fragrance was diffused from it which Giovanni recognized as identical with that which he had attributed to Beatrice's breath, but incomparably more powerful. As her eyes fell upon it, Giovanni beheld her press her hand to her bosom as if her heart were throbbing suddenly and painfully.

"For the first time in my life," murmured she, addressing the shrub, "I had forgotten thee."

"I remember, signora," said Giovanni, "that you once promised to reward me with one of these living gems for the bouquet which I had the happy boldness to fling to your feet. Permit me now to pluck it as a memorial of this interview."

He made a step towards the shrub with extended hand; but Beatrice darted forward, uttering a shriek that went through his heart like a dagger. She caught his hand and drew it back with the whole force of her slender figure. Giovanni felt her touch thrilling through his fibres.

"Touch it not!" exclaimed she, in a voice of agony. "Not for thy life! It is fatal!"

Then, hiding her face, she fled from him and vanished beneath the sculptured portal. As Giovanni followed her with his eyes, he beheld the emaciated figure and pale intelligence of Dr. Rappaccini, who had been watching the scene, he knew not how long, within the shadow of the entrance.

No sooner was Guasconti alone in his chamber than the image of Beatrice came back to his passionate musings, invested with all the witchery that had been gathering around it ever since his first glimpse of her, and now likewise imbued with a tender warmth of girlish womanhood. She was human; her nature was endowed with all gentle and feminine qualities; she was worthiest to be worshipped; she was capable, surely, on her part, of the height and heroism of love. Those tokens which he had hitherto considered as proofs of a frightful peculiarity in her physical and moral system were now either forgotten, or, by the subtle sophistry of passion transmitted into a golden crown of enchantment, rendering Beatrice the more admirable by so much as she was the more unique. Whatever had looked ugly was now beautiful; or, if incapable of such a change, it stole away and hid itself among those shapeless half ideas which throng the dim region beyond the daylight of our perfect consciousness. Thus did he spend the night, nor fell asleep until the dawn had begun to awake the slumbering flowers in Dr. Rappaccini's garden, whither Giovanni's dreams doubtless led him. Up rose the sun in his due season, and, flinging his beams upon the young man's eyelids, awoke him to a sense of pain. When thoroughly aroused, he became sensible of a burning and tingling agony in his hand—in his right hand—the very hand which Beatrice had grasped in her own when he was on the point of plucking one of the gemlike flowers. On the back of that hand there was now a purple print like that of four small fingers, and the likeness of a slender thumb upon his wrist.

Oh, how stubbornly does love,—or even that cunning semblance of love which flourishes in the imagination, but strikes no depth of root into the heart,—how stubbornly does it hold its faith until the moment comes when it is doomed to vanish into thin mist! Giovanni wrapped a handkerchief about his hand and wondered what evil thing had stung him, and soon forgot his pain in a reverie of Beatrice.

After the first interview, a second was in the inevitable course of what we call fate. A third; a fourth; and a meeting with Beatrice in the garden was no longer an incident in Giovanni's daily life, but the whole space in which he might be said to live; for the anticipation and memory of that ecstatic hour made up the remainder. Nor was it otherwise with the daughter of Rappaccini. She watched for the youth's apearance, and flew to his side with confidence as unreserved as if they had been playmates from early infancy—as if they were such playmates still. If, by any unwonted chance, he failed to come at the appointed moment, she stood beneath the window and sent up the rich sweetness of her tones to float around him in his chamber and echo and reverberate throughout his heart: "Giovanni! Giovanni! Why tarriest thou? Come down!" And down he hastened into that Eden of poisonous flowers.

But, with all this intimate familiarity, there was still a reserve in Beatrice's demeanor, so rigidly and invariably sustained that the idea of infringing it scarcely occurred to his imagination. By all appreciable signs, they loved; they had looked love with eyes that conveyed the holy secret from the depths of one soul into the depths of the other, as if it were too sacred to be whispered by the way; they had even spoken love in those gushes of passion when their spirits darted forth in articulated breath like tongues of long-hidden flame; and yet there had been no seal of lips, no clasp of hands, nor any slightest caress such as love claims and hallows. He had never touched one of the gleaming ringlets of her hair; her garment—so marked was the physical barrier between them—had never been waved against him by a breeze. On the few occasions when Giovanni had seemed tempted to overstep the limit, Beatrice grew so sad, so stern, and withal wore such a look of desolate separation,

shuddering at itself, that not a spoken word was requisite to repel him. At such times he was startled at the horrible suspicions that rose, monster-like, out of the caverns of his heart and stared him in the face; his love grew thin and faint as the morning mist, his doubts alone had substance. But, when Beatrice's face brightened again after the momentary shadow, she was transformed at once from the mysterious, questionable being whom he had watched with so much awe and horror; she was now the beautiful and unsophisticated girl whom he felt that his spirit knew with a certainty beyond all other knowledge.

A considerable time had now passed since Giovanni's last meeting with Baglioni. One morning, however, he was disagreeably surprised by a visit from the professor, whom he had scarcely thought of for whole weeks, and would willingly have forgotten still longer. Given up as he had long been to a pervading excitement, he could tolerate no companions except upon condition of their perfect sympathy with his present state of feeling. Such sympathy was not to be expected from Professor Baglioni.

The visitor chatted carelessly for a few minutes about the gossip of the city and the university, and then took up another topic.

"I have been reading an old classic author lately," said he, "and met with a story that strangely interested me. Possibly you may remember it. It is of an Indian prince, who sent a beautiful woman as a present to Alexander the Great. She was as lovely as the dawn and gorgeous as the sunset; but what especially distinguished her was a certain rich perfume in her breath—richer than a garden of Persian roses. Alexander, as was natural to a youthful conqueror, fell in love at first sight with this magnificent stranger; but a certain sage physician, happening to be present, discovered a terrible secret in regard to her."

"And what was that?" asked Giovanni, turning his eyes downward to avoid those of the professor.

"That this lovely woman," continued Baglioni, with emphasis, "had been nourished with poisons from her birth upward, until her whole nature was so imbued with them that she herself had become the deadliest poison in existence. Poison was her element of life. With that rich perfume of her breath she blasted the very air. Her love would have been poison—her embrace death. Is not this a marvellous tale?"

"A childish fable," answered Giovanni, nervously starting from his chair. "I marvel how your worship finds time to read such nonsense among your graver studies."

"By the by," said the professor, looking uneasily about him, "what singular fragrance is this in your apartment? Is it the perfume of your gloves? It is faint, but delicious; and yet, after all, by no means agreeable. Were I to breathe it long, methinks it would make me ill. It is like the breath of a flower; but I see no flowers in the chamber."

"Nor are there any," replied Giovanni, who had turned pale as the professor spoke; "nor, I think, is there any fragrance except in your worship's imagination. Odors, being a sort of element combined of the sensual and the spiritual, are apt to deceive us in this manner. The recollection of a perfume, the bare idea of it, may easily be mistaken for a present reality."

"Ay; but my sober imagination does not often play such tricks," said Baglioni; "and, were I to fancy any kind of odor, it would be that of some vile apothecary drug, wherewith my fingers are likely enough to be imbued. Our worshipful friend Rappaccini, as I have heard, tinctures his medicaments with odors richer than those of Araby. Doubtless, likewise, the fair and learned Signora Beatrice would minister to her patients with draughts as sweet as a maiden's breath; but woe to him that sips them!"

Giovanni's face evinced many contending emotions. The tone in which the professor alluded to the pure and lovely daughter of Rappaccini was a torture to his soul; and yet the intimation of a view of her character, opposite to his own, gave instantaneous distinctness to a thousand dim suspicions, which now grinned at him like so many demons. But he strove hard to quell them and to respond to Baglioni with a true lover's perfect faith.

"Signor professor," said he, "you were my father's friend; perchance, too, it is your purpose to act a friendly part towards his son. I would fain feel nothing towards you save respect and deference; but I pray you to observe, signor, that there is one subject on which we must

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24 **author.** The reference is to Sir Thomas Browne's *Pseudodoxia Epidemica*, Bk. VII, Chap. 17. Hawthorne had copied in his notebooks: "A story there passeth of an Indian King, that sent unto Alexander a fair woman fed with Aconites and other poysons, with this intent, either by converse or copulation complexionally to destroy him" • 68 **odors . . . Araby,** reminiscent of Shakespeare's "perfumes of Arabia," *Macbeth*, Act V, Scene i, l. 57

not speak. You know not the Signora Beatrice. You cannot, therefore, estimate the wrong—the blasphemy, I may even say—that is offered to her character by a light or injurious word."

"Giovanni! my poor Giovanni!" answered the professor, with a calm expression of pity, "I know this wretched girl far better than yourself. You shall hear the truth in respect to the poisoner Rappaccini and his poisonous daughter; yes, poisonous as she is beautiful. Listen; for, even should you do violence to my gray hairs, it shall not silence me. That old fable of the Indian woman has become a truth by the deep and deadly science of Rappaccini and in the person of the lovely Beatrice."

Giovanni groaned and hid his face.

"Her father," continued Baglioni, "was not restrained by natural affection from offering up his child in this horrible manner as the victim of his insane zeal for science; for, let us do him justice, he is as true a man of science as ever distilled his own heart in an alembic. What, then, will be your fate? Beyond a doubt you are selected as the material of some new experiment. Perhaps the result is to be death; perhaps a fate more awful still. Rappaccini, with what he calls the interest of science before his eyes, will hesitate at nothing."

"It is a dream," muttered Giovanni to himself; "surely it is a dream."

"But," resumed the professor, "be of good cheer, son of my friend. It is not yet too late for the rescue. Possibly we may even succeed in bringing back this miserable child within the limits of ordinary nature, from which her father's madness has estranged her. Behold this little silver vase! It was wrought by the hands of the renowned Benvenuto Cellini, and is well worthy to be a love gift to the fairest dame in Italy. But its contents are invaluable. One little sip of this antidote would have rendered the most virulent poisons of the Borgias innocuous. Doubt not that it will be as efficacious against those of Rappaccini. Bestow the vase, and the precious liquid within it, on your Beatrice, and hopefully await the result."

Baglioni laid a small, exquisitely wrought silver vial on the table and withdrew, leaving what he had said to produce its effect upon the young man's mind.

"We will thwart Rappaccini yet," thought he, chuckling to himself, as he descended the stairs; "but, let us confess the truth of him, he is a wonderful man—a wonderful man indeed; a vile empiric, however, in his practice, and therefore not to be tolerated by those who respect the good old rules of the medical profession."

Throughout Giovanni's whole acquaintance with Beatrice, he had occasionally, as we have said, been haunted by dark surmises as to her character; yet so thoroughly had she made herself felt by him as a simple, natural, most affectionate, and guileless creature, that the image now held up by Professor Baglioni looked as strange and incredible as if it were not in accordance with his own original conception. True, there were ugly recollections connected with his first glimpses of the beautiful girl; he could not quite forget the bouquet that withered in her grasp, and the insect that perished amid the sunny air, by no ostensible agency save the fragrance of her breath. These incidents, however, dissolving in the pure light of her character, had no longer the efficacy of facts, but were acknowledged as mistaken fantasies, by whatever testimony of the senses they might appear to be substantiated. There is something truer and more real than what we can see with the eyes and touch with the finger. On such better evidence had Giovanni founded his confidence in Beatrice, though rather by the necessary force of her high attributes than by any deep and generous faith on his part. But now his spirit was incapable of sustaining itself at the height to which the early enthusiasm of passion had exalted it; he fell down, grovelling among earthly doubts, and defiled therewith the pure whiteness of Beatrice's image. Not that he gave her up; he did but distrust. He resolved to institute some decisive test that should satisfy him, once for all, whether there were those dreadful peculiarities in her physical nature which could not be supposed to exist without some corresponding monstrosity of soul. His eyes, gazing down afar, might have deceived him as to the lizard, the insect, and the flowers; but if he could witness, at the distance of a few paces, the sudden blight of one fresh and healthful flower in Beatrice's hand, there would be room for no further question. With this idea he hastened to the florist's and purchased a bouquet that was still gemmed with the morning dew-drops.

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34 **Benvenuto Cellini** (1500-1571), Italian author and artist in metal • 37 **Borgias**, Cesare Borgia (1476-1507), Italian cardinal and military leader, and his sister, Lucrezia Borgia (1480-1519); both were wicked and unscrupulous.

It was now the customary hour of his daily interview with Beatrice. Before descending into the garden, Giovanni failed not to look at his figure in the mirror,—a vanity to be expected in a beautiful young man, yet, as displaying itself at that troubled and feverish moment, the token of a certain shallowness of feeling and insincerity of character. He did gaze, however, and said to himself that his features had never before possessed so rich a grace, nor his eyes such vivacity, nor his cheeks so warm a hue of superabundant life.

"At least," thought he, "her poison has not yet insinuated itself into my system. I am no flower to perish in her grasp."

With that thought he turned his eyes on the bouquet, which he had never once laid aside from his hand. A thrill of indefinable horror shot through his frame on perceiving that those dewy flowers were already beginning to droop; they wore the aspect of things that had been fresh and lovely yesterday. Giovanni grew white as marble, and stood motionless before the mirror, staring at his own reflection there as at the likeness of something frightful. He remembered Baglioni's remark about the fragrance that seemed to pervade the chamber. It must have been the poison in his breath! Then he shuddered—shuddered at himself. Recovering from his stupor, he began to watch with curious eye a spider that was busily at work hanging its web from the antique cornice of the apartment, crossing and recrossing the artful system of interwoven lines—as vigorous and active a spider as ever dangled from an old ceiling. Giovanni bent towards the insect, and emitted a deep, long breath. The spider suddenly ceased its toil; the web vibrated with a tremor originating in the body of the small artisan. Again Giovanni sent forth a breath, deeper, longer, and imbued with a venomous feeling out of his heart: he knew not whether he were wicked, or only desperate. The spider made a convulsive gripe with his limbs and hung dead across the window.

"Accursed! accursed!" muttered Giovanni, addressing himself. "Hast thou grown so poisonous that this deadly insect perished by thy breath?"

At that moment a rich, sweet voice come floating up from the garden.

"Giovanni! Giovanni! It is past the hour! Why tarriest thou? Come down!"

"Yes," muttered Giovanni again."She is the only being whom my breath may not slay! Would that it might!"

He rushed down, and in an instant was standing before the bright and loving eyes of Beatrice. A moment ago his wrath and despair had been so fierce that he could have desired nothing so much as to wither her by a glance; but with her actual presence there came influences which had too real an existence to be at once shaken off: recollections of the delicate and benign power of her feminine nature, which had so often enveloped him in a religious calm; recollections of many a holy and passionate outgush of her heart, when the pure fountain had been unsealed from its depths and made visible in its transparency to his mental eye; recollections which, had Giovanni known how to estimate them, would have assured him that all this ugly mystery was but an earthly illusion, and that, whatever mist of evil might seem to have gathered over her, the real Beatrice was a heavenly angel. Incapable as he was of such high faith, still her presence had not utterly lost its magic. Giovanni's rage was quelled into an aspect of sullen insensibility. Beatrice, with a quick spiritual sense, immediately felt that there was a gulf of blackness between them which neither he nor she could pass. They walked on together, sad and silent, and came thus to the marble fountain and to its pool of water on the ground, in the midst of which grew the shrub that bore gem-like blossoms. Giovanni was affrighted at the eager enjoyment—the appetite, as it were—with which he found himself inhaling the fragrance of the flowers.

"Beatrice," asked he, abruptly, "whence came this shrub?"

"My father created it," answered she, with simplicity.

"Created it! created it!" repeated Giovanni. "What mean you, Beatrice?"

"He is a man fearfully acquainted with the secrets of Nature," replied Beatrice; "and, at the hour when I first drew breath, this plant sprang from the soil, the offspring of his science, of his intellect, while I was but his earthly child. Approach it not!" continued she, observing with terror that Giovanni was drawing nearer to the shrub. "It has qualities that you little dream of. But I, dearest Giovanni,—I grew up and blossomed with the plant and was nourished with its breath. It was my sister, and I loved it with a human affection; for, alas!—hast thou not suspected it?—there was an awful doom."

Here Giovanni frowned so darkly upon her that

Beatrice paused and trembled. But her faith in his tenderness reassured her, and made her blush that she had doubted for an instant.

"There was an awful doom," she continued, "the effect of my father's fatal love of science, which estranged me from all society of my kind. Until Heaven sent thee, dearest Giovanni, oh, how lonely was thy poor Beatrice!"

"Was it a hard doom?" asked Giovanni, fixing his eyes upon her.

"Only of late have I known how hard it was," answered she, tenderly. "Oh, yes; but my heart was torpid, and therefore quiet."

Giovanni's rage broke forth from his sullen gloom like a lightning flash out of a dark cloud.

"Accursed one!" cried he, with venomous scorn and anger. "And, finding thy solitude wearisome, thou hast severed me likewise from all the warmth of life and enticed me into thy region of unspeakable horror!"

"Giovanni!" exclaimed Beatrice, turning her large bright eyes upon his face. The force of his words had not found its way into her mind; she was merely thunderstruck.

"Yes, poisonous thing!" repeated Giovanni, beside himself with passion. "Thou hast done it! Thou hast blasted me! Thou hast filled my veins with poison! Thou hast made me as hateful, as ugly, as loathsome and deadly a creature as thyself—a world's wonder of hideous monstrosity! Now, if our breath be happily as fatal to ourselves as to all others, let us join our lips in one kiss of unutterable hatred, and so die!"

"What has befallen me?" murmured Beatrice, with a low moan out of her heart. "Holy Virgin, pity me, a poor heart-broken child!"

"Thou,—dost thou pray?" cried Giovanni, still with the same fiendish scorn. "Thy very prayers, as they come from thy lips, taint the atmosphere with death. Yes, yes; let us pray! Let us to church and dip our fingers in the holy water at the portal! They that come after us will perish as by a pestilence! Let us sign crosses in the air! It will be scattering curses abroad in the likeness of holy symbols!"

"Giovanni," said Beatrice, calmly, for her grief was beyond passion, "why dost thou join thyself with me thus in those terrible words? I, it is true, am the horrible thing thou namest me. But thou,—what hast thou to do, save with one other shudder at my hideous misery to go forth out of the garden and mingle with thy race, and forget that there ever crawled on earth such a monster as poor Beatrice?"

"Dost thou pretend ignorance?" asked Giovanni, scowling upon her. "Behold! this power have I gained from the pure daughter of Rappaccini."

There was a swarm of summer insects flitting through the air in search of the food promised by the flower odors of the fatal garden. They circled round Giovanni's head, and were evidently attracted towards him by the same influence which had drawn them for an instant within the sphere of several of the shrubs. He sent forth a breath among them, and smiled bitterly at Beatrice as at least a score of the insects fell dead upon the ground.

"I see it! I see it!" shrieked Beatrice. "It is my father's fatal science! No, no, Giovanni; it was not I! Never! never! I dreamed only to love thee and be with thee a little time, and so to let thee pass away, leaving but thine image in mine heart; for, Giovanni, believe it, though my body be nourished with poison, my spirit is God's creature, and craves love as its daily food. But my father,—he has united us in this fearful sympathy. Yes; spurn me, tread upon me, kill me! Oh, what is death after such words as thine? But it was not I. Not for a world of bliss would I have done it."

Giovanni's passion had exhausted itself in its outburst from his lips. There now came across him a sense, mournful, and not without tenderness, of the intimate and peculiar relationship between Beatrice and himself. They stood, as it were, in an utter solitude, which would be made none the less solitary by the densest throng of human life. Ought not, then, the desert of humanity around them to press this insulated pair closer together? If they should be cruel to one another, who was there to be kind to them? Besides, thought Giovanni, might there not still be a hope of his returning within the limits of ordinary nature, and leading Beatrice, the redeemed Beatrice, by the hand? O, weak, and selfish, and unworthy spirit, that could dream of an earthly union and earthly happiness as possible, after such deep love had been so bitterly wronged as was Beatrice's love by Giovanni's blighting words! No, no; there could be no such hope. She must pass heavily, with that broken heart, across the borders of Time—she must bathe her hurts in some fount of paradise, and forget her grief in the light of immortality, and *there* be well.

But Giovanni did not know it.

"Dear Beatrice," said he, approaching her, while she shrank away as always at his approach, but now with a different impulse, "dearest Beatrice, our fate is not yet so desperate. Behold! there is a medicine, potent, as a wise physician has assured me, and almost divine in its efficacy. It is composed of ingredients the most opposite to those by which thy awful father has brought this calamity upon thee and me. It is distilled of blessed herbs. Shall we not quaff it together, and thus be purified from evil?"

"Give it me!" said Beatrice, extending her hand to receive the little silver vial which Giovanni took from his bosom. She added, with a peculiar emphasis, "I will drink; but do thou await the result."

She put Baglioni's antidote to her lips; and, at the same moment, the figure of Rappaccini emerged from the portal and came slowly towards the marble fountain. As he drew near, the pale man of science seemed to gaze with a triumphant expression at the beautiful youth and maiden, as might an artist who should spend his life in achieving a picture or a group of statuary and finally be satisfied with his success. He paused; his bent form grew erect with conscious power; he spread out his hands over them in the attitude of a father imploring a blessing upon his children; but those were the same hands that had thrown poison into the stream of their lives. Giovanni trembled. Beatrice shuddered nervously, and pressed her hand upon her heart.

"My daughter," said Rappaccini, "thou art no longer lonely in the world. Pluck one of those precious gems from thy sister shrub and bid thy bridegroom wear it in his bosom. It will not harm him now. My science and the sympathy between thee and him have so wrought within his system, that he now stands apart from common men, as thou dost, daughter of my pride and triumph, from ordinary women. Pass on, then, through the world, most dear to one another and dreadful to all besides!"

"My father," said Beatrice, feebly,—and still as she spoke she kept her hand upon her heart,—"wherefore didst thou inflict this miserable doom upon thy child?"

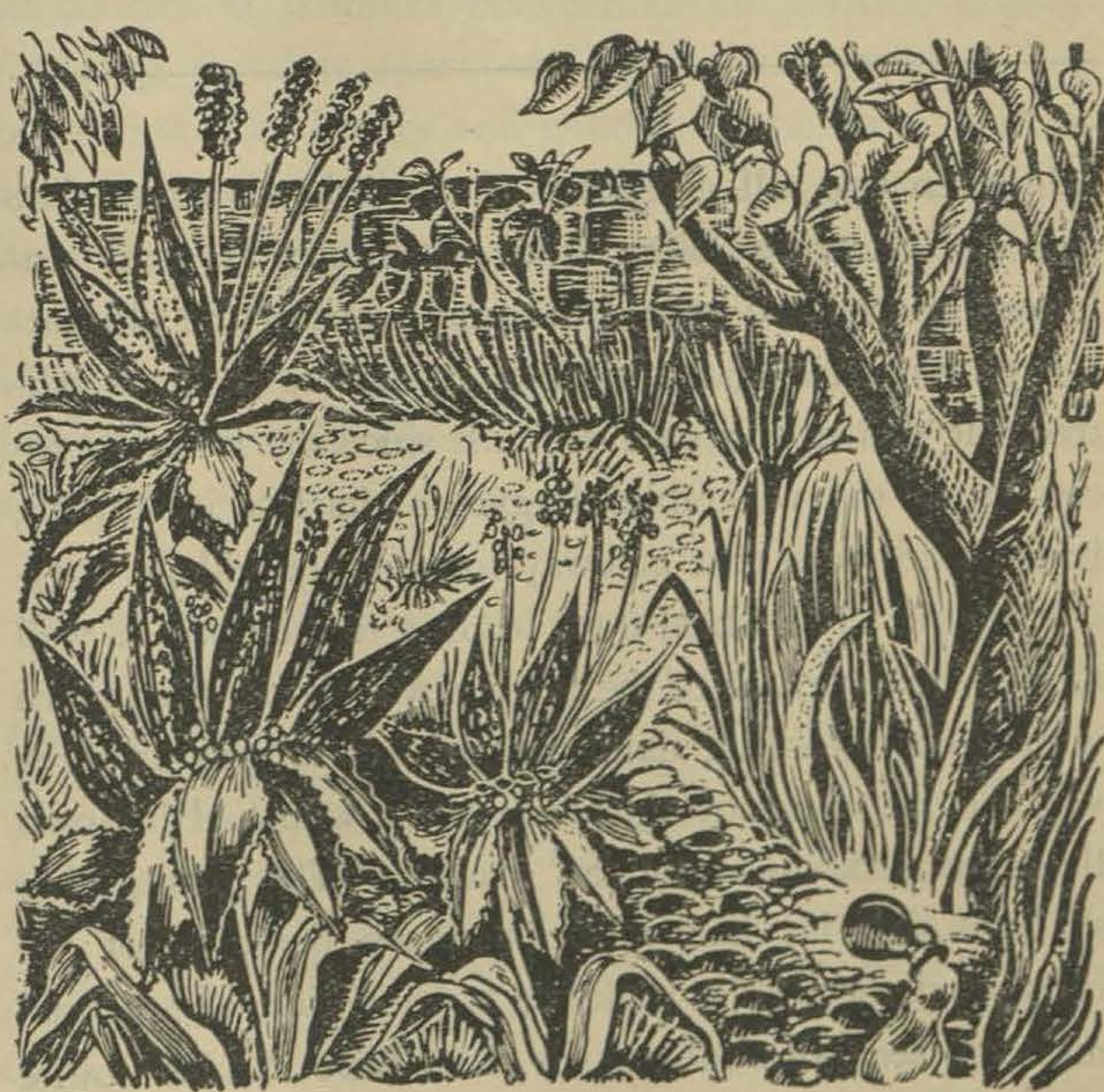
"Miserable!" exclaimed Rappaccini. "What mean you, foolish girl? Dost thou deem it misery to be endowed with marvellous gifts against which no power nor strength could avail an enemy—misery, to be able to quell the mightiest with a breath—misery, to be as terrible as thou art beautiful? Wouldst thou, then, have preferred the condition of a weak woman, exposed to all evil and capable of none?"

"I would fain have been loved, not feared," murmured Beatrice, sinking down upon the ground. "But now it matters not. I am going, father, where the evil which thou hast striven to mingle with my being will pass away like a dream—like the fragrance of these poisonous flowers, which will no longer taint my breath among the flowers of Eden. Farewell, Giovanni! Thy words of hatred are like lead within my heart; but they, too, will fall away as I ascend. Oh, was there not, from the first, more poison in thy nature than in mine?"

To Beatrice,—so radically had her earthly part been wrought upon by Rappaccini's skill,—as poison had been life, so the powerful antidote was death; and thus the poor victim of man's ingenuity and of thwarted nature, and of the fatality that attends all such efforts of perverted wisdom, perished there, at the feet of her father and Giovanni. Just at that moment Professor Pietro Baglioni looked forth from the window, and called loudly, in a tone of triumph mixed with horror, to the thunderstricken man of science,—

"Rappaccini! Rappaccini! and is *this* the upshot of your experiment!"

1844



The Old Manse

The Author Makes the Reader Acquainted with His Abode

The following essay is a pleasant account of Hawthorne's life at the Old Manse in Concord, where he took his bride, Sophia Peabody, upon their marriage in July 1842, and where they lived until the autumn of 1845. Drawn largely from the fuller and more intimate record preserved in **The American Notebooks**, it was written after the author had moved back to Salem, and serves as an introduction to the collection of tales and sketches entitled **Mosses from an Old Manse**, published in 1846. Like many other examples in his writings—notably "The Custom House," which is prefatory to **The Scarlet Letter**, and the sketches in **Our Old Home**—"The Old Manse" shows Hawthorne's mastery of the informal essay: the delicate humor, the ripe wisdom, and the ease and naturalness of style make for excellence in this kind of writing.

Between two tall gateposts of rough-hewn stone (the gate itself having fallen from its hinges at some unknown epoch) we beheld the gray front of the old parsonage terminating the vista of an avenue of black ash-trees. It was now a twelvemonth since the funeral procession of the venerable clergyman, its last inhabitant, had turned from that gateway towards the village burying-ground. The wheel-track leading to the door, as well as the whole breadth of the avenue, was almost overgrown with grass, affording dainty mouthfuls to two or three vagrant cows and an old white horse who had his own living to pick up along the roadside. The glimmering shadows that lay half asleep between the door of the house and the public highway were a kind of spiritual medium, seen through which the edifice had not quite the aspect of belonging to the material world. Certainly it had little in common with those ordinary abodes which stand so imminent upon the road that every passer-by can thrust his head, as it were, into the domestic circle. From these quiet windows the figures of passing travellers looked too remote and dim to disturb the sense of privacy. In its near retirement and accessible seclusion it was the very spot for the residence of a clergyman,—a man not estranged from human life, yet enveloped in the midst of it with a veil woven of intermingled gloom and brightness. It was worthy to have been one of the time-honored parsonages of England in which, through many generations, a succession of holy occupants pass from youth to age, and bequeath each an inheritance of sanctity to pervade the house and hover over it as with an atmosphere.

Nor, in truth, had the Old Manse ever been profaned by a lay occupant until that memorable summer afternoon when I entered it as my home. A priest had built it; a priest had succeeded to it; other priestly men from time to time had dwelt in it; and children born in its chambers had grown up to assume the priestly character. It was awful to reflect how many sermons must have been written there. The latest inhabitant alone—he by whose translation to paradise the dwelling was left vacant—had penned nearly three thousand discourses, besides the better, if not the greater, number that gushed living from his lips. How often, no doubt, had he paced to and fro along the avenue, attuning his meditations to the sighs and gentle murmurs, and deep and solemn peals of the wind among the lofty tops of the trees! In that variety of natural utterances he could find something accordant with every passage of his sermon, were it of tenderness or reverential fear. The boughs over my head seemed shadowy with solemn thoughts as well as with rustling leaves. I took shame to myself for having been so long a writer of idle stories, and ventured to hope that wisdom would descend upon me with the falling leaves of the avenue, and that I should light upon an intellectual treasure in the Old Manse well worth those hoards of long-hidden gold which people seek for in moss-grown houses. Profound treatises of morality; a lay-

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6 **venerable clergyman**, the Rev. Ezra Ripley, who died in 1841 at the age of ninety • 34 **A priest.** The Rev. William Emerson, grandfather of Ralph Waldo Emerson, built the house in 1765

man's unprofessional and therefore unprejudiced views of religion; histories (such as Bancroft might have written had he taken up his abode here as he once purposed) bright with picture, gleaming over a depth of philosophic thought,—these were the works that might fitly have flowed from such a retirement. In the humblest event I resolved at least to achieve a novel that should evolve some deep lesson and should possess physical substance enough to stand alone.

In furtherance of my design, and as if to leave me no pretext for not fulfilling it, there was in the rear of the house the most delightful little nook of a study that ever afforded its snug seclusion to a scholar. It was here that Emerson wrote Nature; for he was then an inhabitant of the Manse, and used to watch the Assyrian dawn and Paphian sunset and moonrise from the summit of our eastern hill. When I first saw the room its walls were blackened with the smoke of unnumbered years, and made still blacker by the grim prints of Puritan ministers that hung around. These worthies looked strangely like bad angels, or at least like men who had wrestled so continually and so sternly with the devil that somewhat of his sooty fierceness had been imparted to their own visages. They had all vanished now; a cheerful coat of paint and golden-tinted paper-hangings lighted up the small apartment; while the shadow of a willow-tree that swept against the overhanging eaves attempered the cheery western sunshine. In place of the grim prints there was the sweet and lovely head of one of Raphael's Madonnas and two pleasant little pictures of the Lake of Como. The only other decorations were a purple vase of flowers, always fresh, and a bronze one containing graceful ferns. My books (few, and by no means choice; for they were chiefly such waifs as chance had thrown in my way) stood in order about the room, seldom to be disturbed.

The study had three windows, set with little, old-fashioned panes of glass, each with a crack across it. The two on the western side looked, or rather peeped, between the willow branches down into the orchard, with glimpses of the river through the trees. The third, facing northward, commanded a broader view of the river at a spot where its hitherto obscure waters gleam forth into the light of history. It was at this window that the clergyman who then dwelt in the Manse stood watching the outbreak of a long and deadly struggle between two nations; he saw the irregular array of his parishioners on the farther side of the river and the glittering line of the British on the hither bank. He awaited in an agony of suspense the rattle of the musketry. It came, and there needed but a gentle wind to sweep the battle smoke around this quiet house.

Perhaps the reader, whom I cannot help considering as my guest in the Old Manse and entitled to all courtesy in the way of sight-showing,—perhaps he will choose to take a nearer view of the memorable spot. We stand now on the river's brink. It may well be called the Concord, the river of peace and quietness; for it is certainly the most unexcitable and sluggish stream that ever loitered imperceptibly towards its eternity—the sea. Positively, I had lived three weeks beside it before it grew quite clear to my perception which way the current flowed. It never has a vivacious aspect except when a northwestern breeze is vexing its surface on a sunshiny day. From the incurable indolence of its nature, the stream is happily incapable of becoming the slave of human ingenuity, as is the fate of so many a wild, free mountain torrent. While all things else are compelled to subserve some useful purpose, it idles its sluggish life away in lazy liberty, without turning a solitary spindle or affording even water-power enough to grind the corn that grows upon its banks. The torpor of its movement allows it nowhere a bright, pebbly shore, nor so much as a narrow strip of glistening sand, in any part of its course. It slumbers between broad prairies, kissing the long meadow grass, and bathes the overhanging boughs of elder bushes and willows or the roots of elms and ash-trees and clumps of maples. Flags and rushes grow along its plashy shore; the yellow water-lily spreads its broad, flat leaves on the margin; and the fragrant white pond-lily abounds, generally selecting a position just so far from the river's brink that it cannot be grasped save at the hazard of plunging in.

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2 **Bancroft,** George Bancroft (1800-1891), author of the **History of the United States** • 14 **Nature.** Emerson's first book, **Nature,** appeared in 1836 • 15 **Assyrian . . . sunset,** a graceful allusion to the passage in **Nature** in which Emerson said, "The dawn is my Assyria; the sunset and moonrise my Paphos." Assyria was an ancient civilization in Asia Minor, flourishing at the "dawn" of history. Paphos, an ancient city in Cyprus, had a temple to Aphrodite, goddess of love • 30 **Lake of Como,** in Italy • 46 **outbreak . . . struggle,** the Revolutionary War

It is a marvel whence this perfect flower derives its loveliness and perfume, springing as it does from the black mud over which the river sleeps, and where lurk the slimy eel and speckled frog and the mud turtle, whom continual washing cannot cleanse. It is the very same black mud out of which the yellow lily sucks its obscene life and noisome odor. Thus we see, too, in the world that some persons assimilate only what is ugly and evil from the same moral circumstances which supply good and beautiful results—the fragrance of celestial flowers—to the daily life of others.

The reader must not, from any testimony of mine, contract a dislike towards our slumberous stream. In the light of a calm and golden sunset it becomes lovely beyond expression; the more lovely for the quietude that so well accords with the hour, when even the wind, after blustering all day long, usually hushes itself to rest. Each tree and rock, and every blade of grass, is distinctly imaged, and, however unsightly in reality, assumes ideal beauty in the reflection. The minutest things of earth and the broad aspect of the firmament are pictured equally without effort and with the same felicity of success. All the sky glows downward at our feet; the rich clouds float through the unruffled bosom of the stream like heavenly thoughts through a peaceful heart. We will not, then, malign our river as gross and impure while it can glorify itself with so adequate a picture of the heaven that broods above it; or, if we remember its tawny hue and the muddiness of its bed, let it be a symbol that the earthliest human soul has an infinite spiritual capacity and may contain the better world within its depths. But, indeed, the same lesson might be drawn out of any mud puddle in the streets of a city; and, being taught us everywhere, it must be true.

Come, we have pursued a somewhat devious track in our walk to the battleground. Here we are, at the point where the river was crossed by the old bridge, the possession of which was the immediate object of the contest. On the hither side grow two or three elms, throwing a wide circumference of shade, but which must have been planted at some period within the threescore years and ten that have passed since the battle day. On the farther shore, overhung by a clump of elder bushes, we discern the stone abutment of the bridge. Looking down into the river, I once discovered some heavy fragments of the timbers, all green with half a century's growth of water moss; for during that length of time the tramp of horses and human footsteps has ceased along this ancient highway. The stream has here about the breadth of twenty strokes of a swimmer's arm,—a space not too wide when the bullets were whistling across. Old people who dwell hereabouts will point out the very spots on the western bank where our countrymen fell down and died; and on this side of the river an obelisk of granite has grown up from the soil that was fertilized with British blood. The monument, not more than twenty feet in height, is such as it befitted the inhabitants of a village to erect in illustration of a matter of local interest rather than what was suitable to commemorate an epoch of national history. Still, by the fathers of the village this famous deed was done; and their descendants might rightfully claim the privilege of building a memorial.

A humbler token of the fight, yet a more interesting one than the granite obelisk, may be seen close under the stone-wall which separates the battleground from the precincts of the parsonage. It is the grave—marked by a small, mossgrown fragment of stone at the head and another at the foot—the grave of two British soldiers who were slain in the skirmish, and have ever since slept peacefully where Zechariah Brown and Thomas Davis buried them. Soon was their warfare ended; a weary night march from Boston, a rattling volley of musketry across the river, and then these many years of rest. In the long procession of slain invaders who passed into eternity from the battlefields of the revolution, these two nameless soldiers led the way.

Lowell, the poet, as we were once standing over this grave, told me a tradition in reference to one of the inhabitants below. The story has something deeply impressive, though its circumstances cannot altogether be reconciled with probability. A youth in the service of the clergyman happened to be chopping wood, that April morning, at the back door of the Manse, and when the noise of battle rang from side to side of the bridge he hastened across the intervening field to see what might be going forward. It is rather strange, by the way, that this lad should have been so diligently at work when the whole population of town and country were startled out of their customary business by the advance of the British troops. Be that as it might, the tradition says

that the lad now left his task and hurried to the battle-field with the axe still in his hand. The British had by this time retreated, the Americans were in pursuit; and the late scene of strife was thus deserted by both parties. Two soldiers lay on the ground—one was a corpse; but, as the young New Englander drew nigh, the other Briton raised himself painfully upon his hands and knees and gave a ghastly stare into his face. The boy,—it must have been a nervous impulse, without purpose, without thought, and betokening a sensitive and impressible nature rather than a hardened one,—the boy uplifted his axe and dealt the wounded soldier a fierce and fatal blow upon the head.

I could wish that the grave might be opened; for I would fain know whether either of the skeleton soldiers has the mark of an axe in his skull. The story comes home to me like truth. Oftentimes, as an intellectual and moral exercise, I have sought to follow that poor youth through his subsequent career, and observe how his soul was tortured by the blood stain, contracted as it had been before the long custom of war had robbed human life of its sanctity, and while it still seemed murderous to slay a brother man. This one circumstance has borne more fruit for me than all that history tells us of the fight.

Many strangers come in the summer time to view the battle-ground. For my own part, I have never found my imagination much excited by this or any other scene of historic celebrity; nor would the placid margin of the river have lost any of its charm for me had men never fought and died there. There is a wilder interest in the tract of land—perhaps a hundred yards in breadth—which extends between the battle-field and the northern face of our Old Manse, with its contiguous avenue and orchard. Here, in some unknown age, before the white man came, stood an Indian village, convenient to the river, whence its inhabitants must have drawn so large a part of their subsistence. The site is identified by the spear and arrowheads, the chisels, and other implements of war, labor, and the chase, which the plough turns up from the soil. You see a splinter of stone, half hidden beneath a sod; it looks like nothing worthy of note; but, if you have faith enough to pick it up, behold a relic! Thoreau, who has a strange faculty of finding what the Indians have left behind them, first set me on the search; and I afterwards enriched myself with some very perfect specimens, so rudely wrought that it seemed almost as if chance had fashioned them. Their great charm consists in this rudeness and in the individuality of each article, so different from the productions of civilized machinery, which shapes everything on one pattern. There is exquisite delight, too, in picking up for one's self an arrowhead that was dropped centuries ago and has never been handled since, and which we thus receive directly from the hand of the red hunter, who purposed to shoot it at his game or at an enemy. Such an incident builds up again the Indian village and its encircling forest, and recalls to life the painted chiefs and warriors, the squaws at their household toil, and the children sporting among the wigwams, while the little wind-rocked pappoose swings from the branch of the tree. It can hardly be told whether it is a joy or a pain, after such a momentary vision, to gaze around in the broad daylight of reality and see stone fences, white houses, potato fields, and men doggedly hoeing in their shirt-sleeves and homespun pantaloons. But this is nonsense. The Old Manse is better than a thousand wigwams.

The Old Manse! We had almost forgotten it, but will return thither through the orchard. This was set out by the last clergyman, in the decline of his life, when the neighbors laughed at the hoary-headed man for planting trees from which he could have no prospect of gathering fruit. Even had that been the case, there was only so much the better motive for planting them, in the pure and unselfish hope of benefiting his successors,—an end so seldom achieved by more ambitious efforts. But the old minister, before reaching his patriarchal age of ninety, ate the apples from this orchard during many years, and added silver and gold to his annual stipend by disposing of the superfluity. It is pleasant to think of him walking among the trees in the quiet afternoons of early autumn and picking up here and there a windfall, while he observes how heavily the branches are weighed down, and computes the number of empty flour barrels that will be filled by their burden. He loved each tree, doubtless, as if it had been his own child. An orchard has a relation to mankind, and readily connects itself with matters of the heart. The trees possess a domestic character; they have lost the wild nature of their forest kindred, and have grown humanized by receiving the care of man as well as by contributing to his wants. There is so much individuality of character, too, among apple-trees that it gives them an additional claim to be the objects of human

interest. One is harsh and crabbed in its manifestations; another gives us fruit as mild as charity. One is churlish and illiberal, evidently grudging the few apples that it bears; another exhausts itself in free-hearted benevolence. The variety of grotesque shapes into which apple-trees contort themselves has its effect on those who get acquainted with them: they stretch out their crooked branches, and take such hold of the imagination that we remember them as humorists and odd-fellows. And what is more melancholy than the old apple-trees that linger about the spot where once stood a homestead, but where there is now only a ruined chimney rising out of a grassy and weed-grown cellar? They offer their fruit to every wayfarer,—apples that are bitter sweet with the moral of Time's vicissitude.

I have met with no other such pleasant trouble in the world as that of finding myself, with only the two or three mouths which it was my privilege to feed, the sole inheritor of the old clergyman's wealth of fruits. Throughout the summer there were cherries and currants; and then came autumn, with his immense burden of apples, dropping them continually from his overladen shoulders as he trudged along. In the stillest afternoon, if I listened, the thump of a great apple was audible, falling without a breath of wind, from the mere necessity of perfect ripeness. And, besides, there were pear-trees, that flung down bushels upon bushels of heavy pears; and peach-trees, which, in a good year, tormented me with peaches, neither to be eaten nor kept, nor, without labor and perplexity, to be given away. The idea of an infinite generosity and exhaustless bounty on the part of our Mother Nature was well worth obtaining through such cares as these. That feeling can be enjoyed in perfection only by the natives of summer islands, where the bread-fruit, the cocoa, the palm, and the orange grow spontaneously and hold forth the ever-ready meal; but likewise almost as well by a man long habituated to city life, who plunges into such a solitude as that of the Old Manse, where he plucks the fruit of trees that he did not plant, and which therefore, to my heterodox taste, bear the closest resemblance to those that grew in Eden. It has been an apothegm these five thousand years, that toil sweetens the bread it earns. For my part (speaking from hard experience, acquired while belaboring the rugged furrows of Brook Farm), I relish best the free gifts of Providence.

Not that it can be disputed that the light toil requisite to cultivate a moderately-sized garden imparts such zest to kitchen vegetables as is never found in those of the market gardener. Childless men, if they would know something of the bliss of paternity, should plant a seed,—be it squash, bean, Indian corn, or perhaps a mere flower or worthless weed,—should plant it with their own hands, and nurse it from infancy to maturity altogether by their own care. If there be not too many of them, each individual plant becomes an object of separate interest. My garden, that skirted the avenue of the Manse, was of precisely the right extent. An hour or two of morning labor was all that it required. But I used to visit and revisit it a dozen times a day, and stand in deep contemplation over my vegetable progeny with a love that nobody could share or conceive of who had never taken part in the process of creation. It was one of the most bewitching sights in the world to observe a hill of beans thrusting aside the soil, or a row of early peas just peeping forth sufficiently to trace a line of delicate green. Later in the season the humming-birds were attracted by the blossoms of a peculiar variety of bean; and they were a joy to me, those little spiritual visitants, for deigning to sip airy food out of my nectar cups. Multitudes of bees used to bury themselves in the yellow blossoms of the summer squashes. This, too, was a deep satisfaction; although when they had laden themselves with sweets they flew away to some unknown hive, which would give back nothing in requital of what my garden had contributed. But I was glad thus to fling a benefaction upon the passing breeze with the certainty that somebody must profit by it, and that there would be a little more honey in the world to allay the sourness and bitterness which mankind is always complaining of. Yes, indeed; my life was the sweeter for that honey.

Speaking of summer squashes, I must say a word of their beautiful and varied forms. They presented an endless diversity of urns and vases, shallow or deep, scalloped or plain, moulded in patterns which a sculptor would do well to copy, since Art has never invented anything more graceful. A hundred squashes in the garden were worthy, in my eyes at least, of being rendered indestructible in marble. If ever Providence (but I know it never will) should assign me a superfluity of gold, part of

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44 Brook Farm. Hawthorne spent most of 1841 in this socialist and utopian community

it shall be expended for a service of plate, or most delicate porcelain, to be wrought into the shapes of summer squashes gathered from vines which I will plant with my own hands. As dishes for containing vegetables they would be peculiarly appropriate.

But not merely the squeamish love of the beautiful was gratified by my toil in the kitchen garden. There was a hearty enjoyment, likewise, in observing the growth of the crook-necked winter squashes, from the first little bulb, with the withered blossom adhering to it, until they lay strewn upon the soil, big, round fellows, hiding their heads beneath the leaves, but turning up their great yellow rotundities to the noontide sun. Gazing at them, I felt that by my agency something worth living for had been done. A new substance was born into the world. They were real and tangible existences, which the mind could seize hold of and rejoice in. A cabbage, too,—especially the early Dutch cabbage, which swells to a monstrous circumference, until its ambitious heart often bursts asunder,—is a matter to be proud of when we can claim a share with the earth and sky in producing it. But, after all, the hugest pleasure is reserved until these vegetable children of ours are smoking on the table, and we, like Saturn, make a meal of them.

What with the river, the battle-field, the orchard and the garden, the reader begins to despair of finding his way back into the Old Manse. But in agreeable weather it is the truest hospitality to keep him out-of-doors. I never grew quite acquainted with my habitation till a long spell of sulky rain had confined me beneath its roof. There could not be a more sombre aspect of external Nature than as then seen from the windows of my study. The great willow-tree had caught and retained among its leaves a whole cataract of water, to be shaken down at intervals by the frequent gusts of wind. All day long, and for a week together, the rain was drip-drip-dripping and splash-splash-splashing from the eaves, and bubbling and foaming into the tubs beneath the spouts. The old, unpainted shingles of the house and out-buildings were black with moisture; and the mosses of ancient growth upon the walls looked green and fresh, as if they were the newest things and afterthought of Time. The usually mirrored surface of the river was blurred by an infinity of raindrops; the whole landscape had a completely water-soaked appearance, conveying the impression that the earth was wet through like a sponge; while the summit of a wooded hill, about a mile distant, was enveloped in a dense mist, where the demon of the tempest seemed to have his abiding-place and to be plotting still direr inclemencies.

Nature has no kindness, no hospitality, during a rain. In the fiercest heat of sunny days she retains a secret mercy, and welcomes the wayfarer to shady nooks of the woods whither the sun cannot penetrate; but she provides no shelter against her storms. It makes us shiver to think of those deep, umbrageous recesses, those overshadowing banks, where we found such enjoyment during the sultry afternoons. Not a twig of foliage there but would dash a little shower into our faces. Looking reproachfully towards the impenetrable sky,—if sky there be above that dismal uniformity of cloud,—we are apt to murmur against the whole system of the universe, since it involves the extinction of so many summer days in so short a life by the hissing and spluttering rain. In such spells of weather—and it is to be supposed such weather came—Eve's bower in paradise must have been but a cheerless and aguish kind of shelter, nowise comparable to the old parsonage, which had resources of its own to beguile the week's imprisonment. The idea of sleeping on a couch of wet roses!

Happy the man who in a rainy day can betake himself to a huge garret, stored, like that of the Manse, with lumber that each generation has left behind it from a period before the revolution. Our garret was an arched hall, dimly illuminated through small and dusty windows, it was but a twilight at the best; and there were nooks, or rather caverns, of deep obscurity, the secrets of which I never learned, being too reverent of their dust and cobwebs. The beams and rafters, roughly hewn and with strips of bark still on them, and the rude masonry of the chimneys, made the garret look wild and uncivilized,—an aspect unlike what was seen elsewhere in the quiet and decorous old house. But on one side there was a little whitewashed apartment which bore the traditionary title of the Saint's Chamber, because holy men in their youth had slept and studied and prayed there. With its elevated retirement, its one window, its small fireplace, and its closet, convenient for an oratory, it was the very spot where a young man might inspire himself with solemn

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73 lumber, miscellaneous articles which had been discarded

enthusiasm and cherish saintly dreams. The occupants, at various epochs, had left brief records and ejaculations inscribed upon the walls. There, too, hung a tattered and shrivelled roll of canvas, which on inspection proved to be the forcibly wrought picture of a clergyman, in wig, band, and gown, holding a Bible in his hand. As I turned his face towards the light he eyed me with an air of authority such as men of his profession seldom assume in our days. The original had been pastor of the parish more than a century ago, a friend of Whitefield, and almost his equal in fervid eloquence. I bowed before the effigy of the dignified divine, and felt as if I had now met face to face with the ghost by whom, as there was reason to apprehend, the Manse was haunted.

Houses of any antiquity in New England are so invariably possessed with spirits that the matter seems hardly worth alluding to. Our ghost used to heave deep sighs in a particular corner of the parlor, and sometimes rustled paper, as if he were turning over a sermon in the long upper entry,—where nevertheless he was invisible in spite of the bright moonshine that fell through the eastern window. Not improbably he wished me to edit and publish a selection from a chest full of manuscript discourses that stood in the garret. Once, while Hillard and other friends sat talking with us in the twilight, there came a rustling noise as of a minister's silk gown, sweeping through the very midst of the company so closely as almost to brush against the chairs. Still there was nothing visible. A yet stranger business was that of a ghostly servant maid, who used to be heard in the kitchen at deepest midnight, grinding coffee, cooking, ironing,—performing, in short, all kinds of domestic labor,—although no traces of anything accomplished could be detected the next morning. Some neglected duty of her servitude—some ill-starched ministerial band—disturbed the poor damsel in her grave and kept her at work without any wages.

But to return from this digression. A part of my predecessor's library was stored in the garret,—no unfit receptacle indeed for such dreary trash as comprised the greater number of volumes. The old books would have been worth nothing at an auction. In this venerable garret, however, they possessed an interest, quite apart from their literary value, as heirlooms, many of which had been transmitted down through a series of consecrated hands from the days of the mighty Puritan divines. Autographs of famous names were to be seen in faded ink on some of their flyleaves; and there were marginal observations or interpolated pages closely covered with manuscript in illegible shorthand, perhaps concealing matter of profound truth and wisdom. The world will never be the better for it. A few of the books were Latin folios, written by Catholic authors; others demolished Papistry, as with a sledge-hammer, in plain English. A dissertation on the book of Job—which only Job himself could have had patience to read—filled at least a score of small, thickset quartos, at the rate of two or three volumes to a chapter. Then there was a vast folio body of divinity—too corpulent a body, it might be feared, to comprehend the spiritual element of religion. Volumes of this form dated back two hundred years or more, and were generally bound in black leather, exhibiting precisely such an appearance as we should attribute to books of enchantment. Others equally antique were of a size proper to be carried in the large waistcoat pockets of old times,—diminutive, but as black as their bulkier brethren, and abundantly interfused with Greek and Latin quotations. These little old volumes impressed me as if they had been intended for very large ones, but had been unfortunately blighted at an early stage of their growth.

The rain pattered upon the roof and the sky gloomed through the dusty garret windows, while I burrowed among these venerable books in search of any living thought which should burn like a coal of fire, or glow like an inextinguishable gem, beneath the dead trumpery that had long hidden it. But I found no such treasure; all was dead alike; and I could not but muse deeply and wonderingly upon the humiliating fact that the works of man's intellect decay like those of his hands. Thought grows mouldy. What was good and nourishing food for the spirits of one generation affords no sustenance for the next. Books of religion, however, cannot be considered a fair test of the enduring and vivacious properties of human thought, because such books so seldom really touch upon their ostensible subject, and have, therefore, so little business to be written at all. So long as an unlettered soul can attain to saving grace, there would seem

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9 original . . . Whitefield. George Whitefield, the English revivalist (see p. 19), had preached in Concord at the invitation of the Rev. Daniel Bliss, the "original" referred to • 24 Hillard, George Stillman Hillard (1808-1879), a Boston lawyer and the author of travel sketches

to be no deadly error in holding theological libraries to be accumulations of, for the most part, stupendous impertinence.

Many of the books had accrued in the latter years of the last clergyman's lifetime. These threatened to be of even less interest than the elder works, a century hence, to any curious inquirer who should then rummage them as I was doing now. Volumes of the "Liberal Preacher" and "Christian Examiner," occasional sermons, controversial pamphlets, tracts, and other productions of a like fugitive nature took the place of the thick and heavy volumes of past time. In a physical point of view there was much the same difference as between a feather and a lump of lead; but, intellectually regarded, the specific gravity of old and new was about upon a par. Both also were alike frigid. The elder books, nevertheless, seemed to have been earnestly written, and might be conceived to have possessed warmth at some former period; although, with the lapse of time, the heated masses had cooled down even to the freezing point. The frigidity of the modern productions, on the other hand, was characteristic and inherent, and evidently had little to do with the writer's qualities of mind and heart. In fine, of this whole dusty heap of literature I tossed aside all the sacred part, and felt myself none the less a Christian for eschewing it. There appeared no hope of either mounting to the better world on a Gothic staircase of ancient folios or of flying thither on the wings of a modern tract.

Nothing, strange to say, retained any sap except what had been written for the passing day and year without the remotest pretension or idea of permanence. There were a few old newspapers, and still older almanacs, which reproduced to my mental eye the epochs when they had issued from the press with a distinctness that was altogether unaccountable. It was as if I had found bits of magic looking-glass among the books, with the images of a vanished century in them. I turned my eyes towards the tattered picture above mentioned, and asked of the austere divine wherefore it was that he and his brethren, after the most painful rummaging and groping into their minds, had been able to produce nothing half so real as these newspaper scribblers and almanac makers had thrown off in the effervescence of a moment. The portrait responded not; so I sought an answer for myself. It is the age itself that writes newspapers and almanacs, which, therefore, have a distinct purpose and meaning at the time, and a kind of intelligible truth for all times; whereas most other works—being written by men who, in the very act, set themselves apart from their age—are likely to possess little significance when new, and none at all when old. Genius, indeed, melts many ages into one, and thus effects something permanent, yet still with a similarity of office to that of the more ephemeral writer. A work of genius is but the newspaper of a century, or perchance of a hundred centuries.

Lightly as I have spoken of these old books, there yet lingers with me a superstitious reverence for literature of all kinds. A bound volume has a charm in my eyes similar to what scraps of manuscript possess for the good Mussulman. He imagines that those wind-wafted records are perhaps hallowed by some sacred verse; and I, that every new book or antique one may contain the "open sesame,"—the spell to disclose treasures hidden in some unsuspected cave of Truth. Thus it was not without sadness that I turned away from the library of the Old Manse.

Blessed was the sunshine when it came again at the close of another stormy day, beaming from the edge of the western horizon; while the massive firmament of clouds threw down all the gloom it could, but served only to kindle the golden light into a more brilliant glow by the strongly contrasted shadows. Heaven smiled at the earth, so long unseen, from beneath its heavy eyelid. Tomorrow for the hill-tops and the wood paths.

Or it might be that Ellery Channing came up the avenue to join me in a fishing excursion on the river. Strange and happy times were those when we cast aside all irksome forms and strait-laced habitudes, and delivered ourselves up to the free air, to live like the Indians or any less conventional race during one bright semicircle of the sun. Rowing our boat against the current, between wide meadows, we turned aside into the Assabeth. A more lovely stream than this, for a mile above its junction with the Concord, has never flowed on earth,—nowhere, indeed, except to lave the interior regions of a poet's imagination. It is sheltered from the breeze by woods and a hill-side; so that elsewhere there

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8 Liberal Preacher, Christian Examiner, theological magazines • 60 Mussulman, a Mohammedan • 75 Ellery Channing. William Ellery Channing (1818-1901), nephew of the famous Unitarian clergyman of the same name, was a poet of the Transcendental school

might be a hurricane, and here scarcely a ripple across the shaded water. The current lingers along so gently that the mere force of the boatman's will seems sufficient to propel his craft against it. It comes flowing softly through the mid-most privacy and deepest heart of a wood which whispers it to be quiet; while the stream whispers back again from its sedgy borders, as if river and wood were hushing one another to sleep. Yes; the river sleeps along its course and dreams of the sky and of the clustering foliage, amid which fall showers of broken sunlight, imparting specks of vivid cheerfulness, in contrast with the quiet depth of the prevailing tint. Of all this scene, the slumbering river has a dream picture in its bosom. Which, after all, was the most real—the picture, or the original?—the objects palpable to our grosser senses, or their apotheosis in the stream beneath? Surely the disembodied images stand in closer relation to the soul. But both the original and the reflection had here an ideal charm; and, had it been a thought more wild, I could have fancied that this river had strayed forth out of the rich scenery of my companion's inner world; only the vegetation along its banks should then have had an Oriental character.

Gentle and unobtrusive as the river is, yet the tranquil woods seem hardly satisfied to allow it passage. The trees are rooted on the very verge of the water, and dip their pendent branches into it. At one spot there is a lofty bank, on the slope of which grow some hemlocks, declining across the stream with outstretched arms, as if resolute to take the plunge. In other places the banks are almost on a level with the water; so that the quiet congregation of trees set their feet in the flood, and are fringed with foliage down to the surface. Cardinal flowers kindle their spiral flames and illuminate the dark nooks among the shrubbery. The pond-lily grows abundantly along the margin—that delicious flower, which, as Thoreau tells me, opens its virgin bosom to the first sunlight and perfects its being through the magic of that genial kiss. He has beheld beds of them unfolding in due succession as the sunrise stole gradually from flower to flower—a sight not to be hoped for unless when a poet adjusts his inward eye to a proper focus with the outward organ. Grape-vines here and there twine themselves around shrub and tree and hang their clusters over the water within reach of the boatman's hand. Oftentimes they unite two trees of alien race in an inextricable twine, marrying the hemlock and the maple against their will, and enriching them with a purple offspring of which neither is the parent. One of these ambitious parasites has climbed into the upper branches of a tall, white pine, and is still ascending from bough to bough, unsatisfied till it shall crown the tree's airy summit with a wreath of its broad foliage and a cluster of its grapes.

The winding course of the stream continually shut out the scene behind us, and revealed as calm and lovely a one before. We glided from depth to depth, and breathed new seclusion at every turn. The shy kingfisher flew from the withered branch close at hand to another at a distance, uttering a shrill cry of anger or alarm. Ducks that had been floating there since the preceding eve were startled at our approach, and skimmed along the glassy river, breaking its dark surface with a bright streak. The pickerel leaped from among the lilypads. The turtle, sunning itself upon a rock or at the root of a tree, slid suddenly into the water with a plunge. The painted Indian who paddled his canoe along the Assabeth three hundred years ago could hardly have seen a wilder gentleness displayed upon its banks and reflected in its bosom than we did. Nor could the same Indian have prepared his noontide meal with more simplicity. We drew up our skiff at some point where the overarching shade formed a natural bower, and there kindled a fire with the pine cones and decayed branches that lay strewn plentifully around. Soon the smoke ascended among the trees, impregnated with a savory incense, not heavy, dull, and surfeiting, like the steam of cookery within doors, but sprightly and piquant. The smell of our feast was akin to the woodland odors with which it mingled: there was no sacrilege committed by our intrusion there: the sacred solitude was hospitable, and granted us free leave to cook and eat in the recess that was at once our kitchen and banqueting hall. It is strange what humble offices may be performed in a beautiful scene without destroying its poetry. Our fire, red gleaming among the trees, and we beside it, busied with culinary rites and spreading out our meal on a moss-grown log, all seemed in unison with the river gliding by and the foliage rustling over us. And, what was strangest, neither did our mirth seem to disturb the pro-

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23 **Oriental character.** The reference is to the interest of the New England Transcendentalists in Oriental philosophy • 66 **Assabeth.** The Assabeth River flows into the Concord River at Concord

priety of the solemn woods; although the hobgoblins of the old wilderness and the will-of-the-wisps that glimmered in the marshy places might have come trooping to share our table talk, and have added their shrill laughter to our merriment. It was the very spot in which to utter the extremest nonsense or the profoundest wisdom, or that ethereal product of the mind which partakes of both, and may become one or the other, in correspondence with the faith and insight of the auditor.

So amid sunshine and shadow, rustling leaves and sighing waters, up gushed our talk like the babble of a fountain. The evanescent spray was Ellery's; and his, too, the lumps of golden thought that lay glimmering in the fountain's bed and brightened both our faces by the reflection. Could he have drawn out that virgin gold and stamped it with the mint mark that alone gives currency, the world might have had the profit, and he the fame. My mind was the richer merely by the knowledge that it was there. But the chief profit of those wild days to him and me lay, not in any definite idea, not in any angular or rounded truth, which we dug out of the shapeless mass of problematical stuff, but in the freedom which we thereby won from all custom and conventionalism and fettering influences of man on man. We were so free to-day that it was impossible to be slaves again to-morrow. When we crossed the threshold of the house or trod the thronged pavements of a city, still the leaves of the trees that overhang the Assabeth were whispering to us, "Be free! be free!" Therefore along that shady river-bank there are spots, marked with a heap of ashes and half-consumed brands, only less sacred in my remembrance than the hearth of a household fire.

And yet how sweet, as we floated homeward adown the golden river at sunset,—how sweet was it to return within the system of human society, not as to a dungeon and a chain, but as to a stately edifice, whence we could go forth at will into statelier simplicity! How gently, too, did the sight of the Old Manse, best seen from the river, overshadowed with its willow and all environed about with the foliage of its orchard and avenue,—how gently did its gray, homely aspect rebuke the speculative extravagances of the day! It had grown sacred in connection with the artificial life against which we inveighed; it had been a home for many years in spite of all; it was my home too; and, with these thoughts, it seemed to me that all the artifice and conventionalism of life was but an impalpable thinness upon its surface, and that the depth below was none the worse for it. Once, as we turned our boat to the bank, there was a cloud, in the shape of an immensely gigantic figure of a hound, couched above the house, as if keeping guard over it. Gazing at this symbol, I prayed that the upper influences might long protect the institutions that had grown out of the heart of mankind.

If ever my readers should decide to give up civilized life, cities, houses, and whatever moral or material enormities in addition to these the perverted ingenuity of our race has contrived, let it be in the early autumn. Then Nature will love him better than at any other season, and will take him to her bosom with a more motherly tenderness. I could scarcely endure the roof of the old house above me in those first autumnal days. How early in the summer, too, the prophecy of autumn comes! Earlier in some years than in others; sometimes even in the first weeks of July. There is no other feeling like what is caused by this faint, doubtful, yet real perception—if it be not rather a foreboding—of the year's decay, so blessedly sweet and sad in the same breath.

Did I say that there was no feeling like it? Ah, but there is a half-acknowledged melancholy like to this when we stand in the perfected vigor of our life and feel that Time has now given us all his flowers, and that the next work of his never idle fingers must be to steal them one by one away.

I have forgotten whether the song of the cricket be not as early a token of autumn's approach as any other,—that song which may be called an audible stillness; for though very loud and heard afar, yet the mind does not take note of it as a sound, so completely is its individual existence merged among the accompanying characteristics of the season. Alas for the pleasant summer time! In August the grass is still verdant on the hills and in the valleys; the foliage of the trees is as dense as ever, and as green; the flowers gleam forth in richer abundance along the margin of the river, and by the stone walls, and deep among the woods; the days, too, are as fervid now as they were a month ago; and yet in every breath of wind and in every beam of sunshine we hear the whispered farewell and behold the parting smile of a dear friend. There is a coolness amid all the heat, a mildness in the blazing noon. Not a breeze can stir but it thrills us with the breath of autumn. A pensive glory is seen in the far

golden gleams; among the shadows of the trees. The flowers—even the brightest of them, and they are the most gorgeous of the year—have this gentle sadness wedded to their pomp, and typify the character of the delicious time each within itself. The brilliant cardinal flower has never seemed gay to me.

Still later in the season Nature's tenderness waxes stronger. It is impossible not to be fond of our mother now; for she is so fond of us! At other periods she does not make this impression on me, or only at rare intervals; but in those genial days of autumn, when she has perfected her harvests and accomplished every needful thing that was given her to do, then she overflows with a blessed superfluity of love. She has leisure to caress her children now. It is good to be alive at such times. Thank Heaven for breath—yes, for mere breath—when it is made up of a heavenly breeze like this! It comes with a real kiss upon our cheeks; it would linger fondly around us if it might; but, since it must be gone, it embraces us with its whole kindly heart and passes onward to embrace likewise the next thing that it meets. A blessing is flung abroad and scattered far and wide over the earth, to be gathered up by all who choose. I recline upon the still unwithered grass and whisper to myself, "O perfect day! O beautiful world! O beneficent God!" And it is the promise of a blessed eternity; for our Creator would never have made such lovely days and have given us the deep hearts to enjoy them, above and beyond all thought, unless we were meant to be immortal. This sunshine is the golden pledge thereof. It beams through the gates of paradise and shows us glimpses far inward.

By and by, in a little time, the outward world puts on a drear austerity. On some October morning there is a heavy hoar-frost on the grass and along the tops of the fences; and at sunrise the leaves fall from the trees of our avenue without a breath of wind, quietly descending by their own weight. All summer long they have murmured like the noise of waters; they have roared loudly while the branches were wrestling with the thunder gust; they have made music both glad and solemn; they have attuned my thoughts by their quiet sound as I paced to and fro beneath the arch of intermingling boughs. Now they can only rustle under my feet. Henceforth the gray parsonage begins to assume a larger importance, and draws to its fireside,—for the abomination of the air-tight stove is reserved till wintry weather,—draws closer and closer to its fireside the vagrant impulses that had gone wandering about through the summer.

When summer was dead and buried the Old Manse became as lonely as a hermitage. Not that ever—in my time at least—it had been thronged with company; but, at no rare intervals, we welcomed some friend out of the dusty glare and tumult of the world, and rejoiced to share with him the transparent obscurity that was floating over us. In one respect our precincts were like the Enchanted Ground through which the pilgrim travelled on his way to the Celestial City! The guests, each and all, felt a slumberous influence upon them; they fell asleep in chairs, or took a more deliberate siesta on the sofa, or were seen stretched among the shadows of the orchard, looking up dreamily through the boughs. They could not have paid a more acceptable compliment to my abode, nor to my own qualities as a host. I held it as a proof that they left their cares behind them as they passed between the stone gate-posts at the entrance of our avenue, and that the so powerful opiate was the abundance of peace and quiet within and all around us. Others could give them pleasure and amusement or instruction—these could be picked up anywhere; but it was for me to give them rest—in a life of trouble. What better could be done for those weary and world-worn spirits?—for him whose career of perpetual action was impeded and harassed by the rarest of his powers and the richest of his acquirements?—for another who had thrown his ardent heart from earliest youth into the strife of politics, and now, perchance, began to suspect that one lifetime is too brief for the accomplishment of any lofty aim?—for her on whose feminine nature had been imposed the heavy gift of intellectual power, such as a strong man might have staggered under, and with it the necessity

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55 **Enchanted . . . City.** See p. 1012 for another allusion to the passage in **Pilgrim's Progress** where the shepherds on the Delectable Mountains warn the pilgrims to "take heed that they sleep not upon the enchanted ground," for "the air naturally tended to make one drowsy" • 71 **him,** Horatio Bridge, Bowdoin classmate and lifelong friend, whose **Journal of an African Cruiser,** edited by Hawthorne, had just been published. Bridge was an officer in the United States Navy, and Hawthorne perhaps intended to suggest that Bridge's literary talent was at odds with his professional career • 74 **another,** Franklin Pierce (1804-1869), another associate at Bowdoin and friend of a lifetime. Pierce rose through the state legislature of New Hampshire and the national Congress to the Presidency of the United States (1853-1857) • 78 **her,** Margaret Fuller, a frequent visitor in Concord. See note, p. 857

to act upon the world?—in a word, not to multiply instances, what better could be done for anybody who came within our magic circle than to throw the spell of a tranquil spirit over him? And when it had wrought its full effect, then we dismissed him, with but misty reminiscences, as if he had been dreaming of us.

Were I to adopt a pet idea, as so many people do, and fondle it in my embraces to the exclusion of all others, it would be, that the great want which mankind labors under at this present period is sleep. The world should recline its vast head on the first convenient pillow and take an age-long nap. It has gone distracted through a morbid activity, and, while preternaturally wide awake, is nevertheless tormented by visions that seem real to it now, but would assume their true aspect and character were all things once set right by an interval of sound repose. This is the only method of getting rid of old delusions and avoiding new ones; of regenerating our race, so that it might in due time awake as an infant out of dewy slumber; of restoring to us the simple perception of what is right, and the single-hearted desire to achieve it, both of which have long been lost in consequence of this weary activity of brain and torpor or passion of the heart that now afflict the universe. Stimulants, the only mode of treatment hitherto attempted, cannot quell the disease; they do but heighten the delirium.

Let not the above paragraph ever be quoted against the author; for, though tinctured with its modicum of truth, it is the result and expression of what he knew, while he was writing, to be but a distorted survey of the state and prospects of mankind. There were circumstances around me which made it difficult to view the world precisely as it exists; for, severe and sober as was the Old Manse, it was necessary to go but a little way beyond its threshold before meeting with stranger moral shapes of men than might have been encountered elsewhere in a circuit of a thousand miles.

These hobgoblins of flesh and blood were attracted thither by the widespreading influence of a great original thinker, who had his earthly abode at the opposite extremity of our village. His mind acted upon other minds of a certain constitution with wonderful magnetism, and drew many men upon long pilgrimages to speak with him face to face. Young visionaries—to whom just so much of insight had been imparted as to make life all a labyrinth around them—came to seek the clew that should guide them out of their self-involved bewilderment. Grayheaded theorists—whose systems, at first air, had finally imprisoned them in an iron frame-work—travelled painfully to his door, not to ask deliverance, but to invite the free spirit into their own thraldom. People that had lighted on a new thought, or a thought that they fancied new, came to Emerson, as the finder of a glittering gem hastens to a lapidary, to ascertain its quality and value. Uncertain, troubled, earnest wanderers through the midnight of the moral world beheld his intellectual fire as a beacon burning on a hill-top, and, climbing the difficult ascent, looked forth into the surrounding obscurity more hopefully than hitherto. The light revealed objects unseen before,—mountains, gleaming lakes, glimpses of a creation among the chaos; but, also, as was unavoidable, it attracted bats and owls and the whole host of night birds, which flapped their dusky wings against the gazer's eyes, and sometimes were mistaken for fowls of angelic feather. Such delusions always hover nigh whenever a beacon fire of truth is kindled.

For myself there had been epochs of my life when I, too, might have asked of this prophet the master word that should solve me the riddle of the universe; but now, being happy, I felt as if there were no question to be put, and therefore admired Emerson as a poet of deep beauty and austere tenderness, but sought nothing from him as a philosopher. It was good, nevertheless, to meet him in the woodpaths, or sometimes in our avenue, with that pure intellectual gleam diffused about his presence like the garment of a shining one; and he so quiet, so simple, so without pretension, encountering each man alive as if expecting to receive more than he could impart. And, in truth, the heart of many an ordinary man had, perchance, inscriptions which he could not read. But it was impossible to dwell in his vicinity without inhaling more or less the mountain atmosphere of his lofty thought, which, in the brains of some people, wrought a singular giddiness,—new truth being as heady as new wine. Never was a poor little country village infested with such a variety of queer, strangely-dressed, oddly-behaved mortals, most of whom took upon themselves to be important agents of the world's destiny, yet were simply bores of a very intense water. Such, I imagine, is the invariable character of persons who crowd so closely about an original thinker as to draw in his unuttered breath and thus become imbued with a false originality. This triteness of novelty

is enough to make any man of common sense blaspheme at all ideas of less than a century's standing, and pray that the world may be petrified and rendered immovable in precisely the worst moral and physical state that it ever yet arrived at, rather than be benefited by such schemes of such philosophers.

And now I begin to feel—and perhaps should have sooner felt—that we have talked enough of the Old Manse. Mine honored reader, it may be, will vilify the poor author as an egotist for babbling through so many pages about a moss-grown country parsonage, and his life within its walls and on the river and in the woods, and the influences that wrought upon him from all these sources. My conscience, however, does not reproach me with betraying anything too sacredly individual to be revealed by a human spirit to its brother or sister spirit. How narrow—how shallow and scanty too—is the stream of thought that has been flowing from my pen, compared with the broad tide of dim emotions, ideas, and associations which swell around me from that portion of my existence! How little have I told! and of that little, how almost nothing is even tinctured with any quality that makes it exclusively my own! Has the reader gone wandering, hand in hand with me, through the inner passages of my being? and have we groped together into all its chambers and examined their treasures or their rubbish? Not so. We have been standing on the greensward, but just within the cavern's mouth, where the common sunshine is free to penetrate, and where every footstep is therefore free to come. I have appealed to no sentiment or sensibilities save such as are diffused among us all. So far as I am a man of really individual attributes I veil my face; nor am I, nor have I ever been, one of those supremely hospitable people who serve up their own hearts, delicately fried, with brain sauce, as a tidbit for their beloved public.

Glancing back over what I have written, it seems but the scattered reminiscences of a single summer. In fairyland there is no measurement of time; and, in a spot so sheltered from the turmoil of life's ocean, three years hastened away with a noiseless flight, as the breezy sunshine chases the cloud shadows across the depths of a still valley. Now came hints, growing more and more distinct, that the owner of the old house was pining for his native air. Carpenters next appeared, making a tremendous racket among the out-buildings, strewing the green grass with pine shavings and chips of chestnut joists, and vexing the whole antiquity of the place with their discordant renovations. Soon, moreover, they divested our abode of the veil of woodbine which had crept over a large portion of its southern face. All the aged mosses were cleared unsparingly away; and there were horrible whispers about brushing up the external walls with a coat of paint—a purpose as little to my taste as might be that of rouging the venerable cheeks of one's grandmother. But the hand that renovates is always more sacrilegious than that which destroys. In fine, we gathered up our household goods, drank a farewell cup of tea in our pleasant little breakfast room,—delicately fragrant tea, an unpurchasable luxury, one of the many angel gifts that had fallen like dew upon us,—and passed forth between the tall stone gateposts as uncertain as the wandering Arabs where our tent might next be pitched. Providence took me by the hand, and—an oddity of dispensation which, I trust, there is no irreverence in smiling at—has led me, as the newspapers announce while I am writing, from the Old Manse into a custom house. As a story teller, I have often contrived strange vicissitudes for my imaginary personages, but none like this.

The treasure of intellectual good which I hoped to find in our secluded dwelling had never come to light. No profound treatise of ethics, no philosophic history, no novel even, that could stand unsupported on its edges. All that I had to show, as a man of letters, were these few tales and essays, which had blossomed out like flowers in the calm summer of my heart and mind. Save editing (an easy task) the journal of my friend of many years, the African Cruiser, I had done nothing else. With these idle weeds and withering blossoms I have intermixed some that were produced long ago,—old, faded things, reminding me of flowers pressed between the leaves of a book,—and now offer the bouquet, such as it is, to any whom it may please. These fitful sketches, with so little of external life about them, yet claiming no profundity of purpose,—so reserved, even while they sometimes seem so frank,—often but half in earnest, and never, even when most so, expressing satisfactorily the thoughts which they profess to image,—such trifles, I truly feel, afford no solid basis for a literary reputation. Nevertheless, the public—if my limited number of readers, whom I venture to regard rather as a circle of friends, may be termed

a public—will receive them the more kindly, as the last offering, the last collection, of this nature which it is my purpose ever to put forth. Unless I could do better, I have done enough in this kind. For myself the book will always retain one charm—as reminding me of the river, with its delightful solitudes, and of the avenue, the garden, and the orchard, and especially the dear old Manse, with the little study on its western side, and the sunshine glimmering through the willow branches while I wrote.

Let the reader, if he will do me so much honor, imagine himself my guest, and that, having seen whatever may be worthy of notice within and about the Old Manse, he has finally been ushered into my study. There, after seating him in an antique elbow chair, an heirloom of the house, I take forth a roll of manuscript and entreat his attention to the following tales—an act of personal inhospitality, however, which I never was guilty of, nor ever will be, even to my worst enemy.

1846

Preface to "The House of the Seven Gables"

The following Preface is the best example of Hawthorne's criticism of his own writings. The critical points are generally applicable not only to **The House of the Seven Gables** but to his works as a whole. Of particular interest is his distinction between the "Novel" and the "Romance." As examples of the Novel, Hawthorne had in mind no doubt the works of such writers as Thackeray and Trollope. His own works he preferred to call "Romances."

When a writer calls his work a Romance, it need hardly be observed that he wishes to claim a certain latitude, both as to its fashion and material, which he would not have felt himself entitled to assume, had he professed to be writing a Novel. The latter form of composition is presumed to aim at a very minute fidelity, not merely to the possible, but to the probable and ordinary course of man's experience. The former—while, as a work of art, it must rigidly subject itself to laws, and while it sins unpardonably so far as it may swerve aside from the truth of the human heart—has fairly a right to present that truth under circumstances, to a great extent, of the writer's own choosing or creation. If he thinks fit, also, he may so manage his atmospherical medium as to bring out or mellow the lights, and deepen and enrich the shadows, of the picture. He will be wise, no doubt, to make a very moderate use of the privileges here stated, and, especially, to mingle the Marvelous rather as a slight, delicate, and evanescent flavor, than as any portion of the actual substance of the dish offered to the public. He can hardly be said, however, to commit a literary crime, even if he disregard this caution.

In the present work the author has proposed to himself—but with what success, fortunately, it is not for him to judge—to keep undeviatingly within his immunities. The point of view in which this tale comes under the Romantic definition lies in the attempt to connect a bygone time with the very present that is flitting away from us. It is a legend, prolonging itself, from an epoch now gray in the distance down into our own broad daylight, and bringing along with it some of its legendary mist, which the reader, according to his pleasure, may either disregard or allow it to float almost imperceptibly about the characters and events for the sake of a picturesque effect. The narrative, it may be, is woven of so humble a texture as to require this advantage, and, at the same time, to render it the more difficult of attainment.

Many writers lay very great stress upon some definite moral purpose, at which they profess to aim their works. Not to be deficient in this particular, the author has provided himself with a moral;—the truth, namely, that the wrongdoing of one generation lives into the successive ones, and, divesting itself of every temporary advantage,

becomes a pure and uncontrollable mischief;—and he would feel it a singular gratification, if this romance might effectually convince mankind—or, indeed, any one man—of the folly of tumbling down an avalanche of ill-gotten gold, or real estate, on the heads of an unfortunate posterity, thereby to maim and crush them, until the accumulated mass shall be scattered abroad in its original atoms. In good faith, however, he is not sufficiently imaginative to flatter himself with the slightest hope of this kind. When romances do really teach anything, or produce any effective operation, it is usually through a far more subtle process than the ostensible one. The author has considered it hardly worth his while, therefore, relentlessly to impale the story with its moral, as with an iron rod,—or, rather, as by sticking a pin through a butterfly,—thus at once depriving it of life, and causing it to stiffen in an ungainly and unnatural attitude. A high truth, indeed, fairly, finely, and skilfully wrought out, brightening at every step, and crowning the final development of a work of fiction, may add an artistic glory, but is never any truer, and seldom any more evident, at the last page than at the first.

The reader may perhaps choose to assign an actual locality to the imaginary events of this narrative. If permitted by the historical connection,—which, though slight, was essential to his plan,—the author would very willingly have avoided anything of this nature. Not to speak of other objections, it exposes the romance to an inflexible and exceedingly dangerous species of criticism, by bringing his fancy-pictures almost into positive contact with the realities of the moment. It has been no part of his object, however, to describe local manners, nor in any way to meddle with the characteristics of a community for whom he cherishes a proper respect and a natural regard. He trusts not to be considered as unpardonably offending, by laying out a street that infringes upon nobody's private rights, and appropriating a lot of land which had no visible owner, and building a house, of materials long in use for constructing castles in the air. The personages of the tale—though they give themselves out to be of ancient stability and considerable prominence—are really of the author's own making, or, at all events, of his own mixing; their virtues can shed no luster, nor their defects redound, in the remotest degree, to the discredit of the venerable town of which they profess to be inhabitants. He would be glad, therefore, if—especially in the quarter to which he alludes—the book may be read strictly as a romance, having a great deal more to do with the clouds overhead than with any portion of the actual soil of the County of Essex.

1851

45 venerable town, Salem, Massachusetts

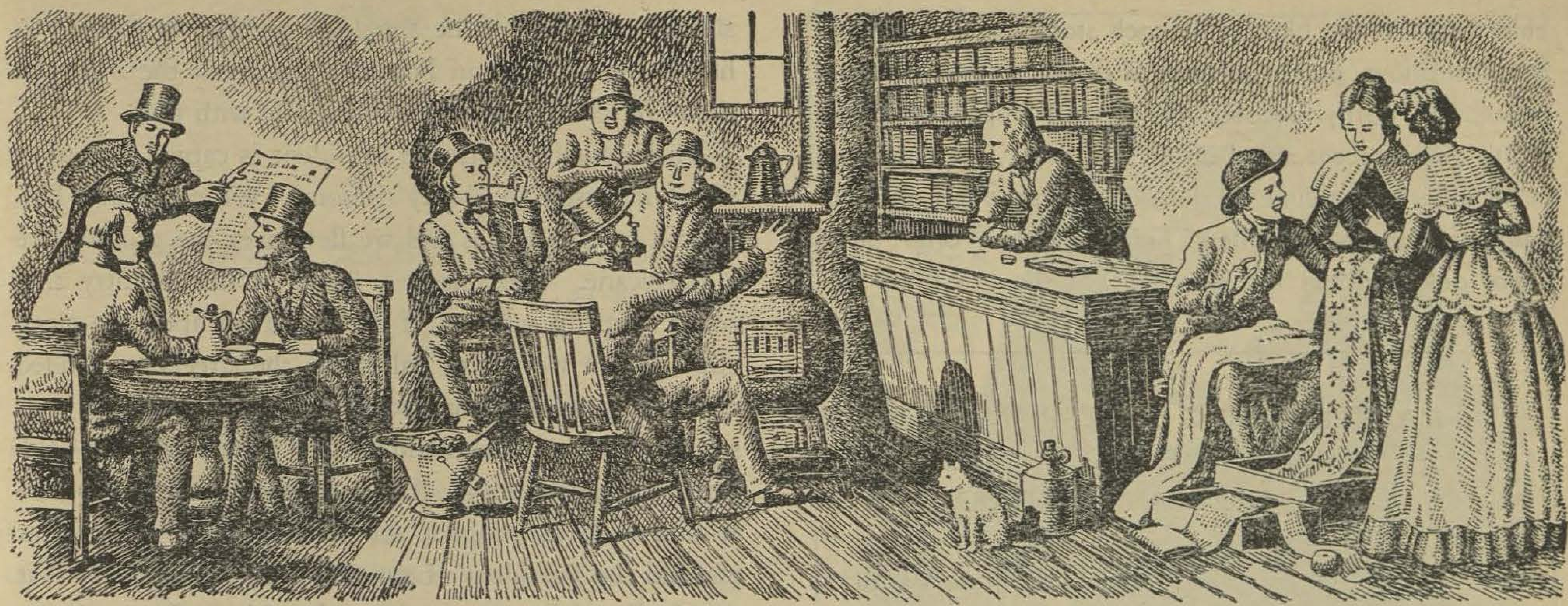
DOWN EAST HUMORISTS: Smith, Davis

Seba Smith

1792 · 1868

When, in January 1830, Editor Seba Smith of the *Portland* (Maine) *Courier* decided he should do something to stimulate interest in his languishing newspaper, he invented the humorous character Jack Downing to say his say about contemporary politics. The homespun commentator was such a success that from 1830 down to the eve of the Civil War Smith turned out the "Downing Letters," important in the development of American humor and of a type of political argument destined to prove very significant in our national history.

Jack and the members of the Downing family who exchanged letters with him were both believable and



amusing. Smith's background had equipped him well for writing about Yankees, both authentically and humorously. Born in a Buckfield, Maine, log cabin, reared in Buckfield or other Down East towns until he was twenty-three, he was well acquainted with Yankee ways of thinking, talking, and living. The vividness with which he portrayed Downingville, the lifelikeness of the speech of the Downings, and the verisimilitude of their actions all made his rustics believable. (Emerson notes that his old Concord neighbor, Ezra Ripley, never could be persuaded that Jack was not a living man.) Smith's study at Bowdoin (1815-1818) and his travel in the South probably helped him acquire the objectivity often valuable for humor.

In addition to the appeals of the characterization and the humor, there was the appeal of the political satire. At first Smith had his hero wander into the Maine legislature and write naïvely about state politics. Later he had Jack go to Washington, D. C., and comment on national issues and personalities. Writing of his adventures in the Kitchen Cabinet (unofficial advisers) of Jackson and of his friendships with public men, Downing wittingly or unwittingly said laughable things about the partisan struggles of the day—the fight against the national bank, the nullification struggle, and others. This illiterate but shrewd common man discoursing on national affairs appealed to readers not only in the Jacksonian period which produced him but also in later periods, as he continued his letters during succeeding administrations. Frequently, newspaper wits nominated him for the governorship or the Presidency, and early cartoonists of the day who wanted a symbol for the United States often pictured Jack. Even today, Uncle Sam is simply Jack Downing with whiskers. Jack was the ancestor of a whole series of horse sense humorists, such as Hosea Biglow, Bill Arp, Kin Hubbard, and Will Rogers, who have delighted great masses of Americans and influenced their political thinking.

My Thirty Years Out of the Senate, New York, 1859 • Mary Alice Wyman, **Two American Pioneers: Seba Smith and Elizabeth Oakes Smith**, New York, 1927 • Walter Blair, **Horse Sense in American Humor**, Chicago, 1942

From

My Thirty Years Out of the Senate

Accompanied by a number of his official and unofficial advisers, President Jackson spent part of the summer of 1833 taking a trip which carried him to several of the

Panel (l. to r.): News of the day • Storytelling session in a New England country store • The Yankee peddler

chief cities of the North. At each stop there were large demonstrations, partly because of the President's personal popularity, partly because of general approval in the North of his recent stand on nullification. Jack Downing, in his letter dated June 10, tells of the reception at Philadelphia. Subsequent letters, here reprinted, offer additional details about the journey.

MAJOR DOWNING SHAKES HANDS FOR THE PRESIDENT AT PHILADELPHIA, WHILE ON THE GRAND TOUR DOWN EAST

Philadelphia, June 10, 1833

To Uncle Joshua Downing, Postmaster, up in Downingville, in the State of Maine, with care and speed

Dear Uncle Joshua:—We are coming on, full chisel. I've been trying, ever since we started, to get a chance to write a little to you; but when we've been on the road I couldn't catch my breath hardly long enough to write my name, we kept flying so fast; and when we made any stop, there was such a jam around us there wasn't elbow room enough for a miskeeter to turn round without knocking his wings off.

I'm most afraid now we shall get to Downingville before this letter does, so that we shall be likely to catch you all in the suds before you think of it. But I understand there is a *fast mail* goes on that way, and I mean to send it by that, so I'm in hopes you'll get it time enough to have the children's faces washed and their heads combed, and the gals get on their clean gowns. And if Sargent Joel *could* have time enough to call out my old Downingville company and get their uniforms brushed up a little, and come down the road as fur as your new barn to meet us, there's nothing that would please the President better. As for victuals, most anything won't come amiss; we are as hungry as bears after traveling a hundred miles a day. A little fried pork and eggs, or a pot of baked beans and an Indian pudding would suit us much better than the soft stuff they give here in these great cities.

The President wouldn't miss of seeing you for anything in the world, and he will go to Downingville if he has legs and arms enough left when he goes to Portland to carry him there. But, for fear that anything should happen that he shouldn't be able to come, you had better meet us in Portland, say about the 22d; and then you can go up to Downingville with us.

This traveling with the President is capital fun, after all, if it wasn't so plaguy tiresome. We come into Baltimore on a railroad, and we flew over the ground like a harrycane. There isn't a horse in this country that could keep up with us, if he should go upon the clean clip. When we got to Baltimore, the streets were filled with folks as thick as the spruce trees down in your swamp. There we found Black Hawk, a little, old, dried up Indian king. And I thought the folks looked at him and the prophet about as much as they did at me and the President. I gave the President a wink that this Indian fellow was taking the shine off us a little; so we concluded we wouldn't have him with us any more, but go on without him.

I can't stop to tell you, in this letter, how we got along to Philadelphy, though we had a pretty easy time some of the way in the steamboats. And I can't stop to tell you of half of the fine things I have seen here. They took us up into a great hall this morning, as big as a meeting-house, and then the folks begun to pour in by thousands to shake hands with the President—Federalists and all, it made no difference. There was such a stream of 'em coming in that the hall was full in a few minutes, and it was so jammed up around the door that they couldn't get out again if they were to die. So they had to knock out some of the windows, and go out t'other way.

The President shook hands with all his might an hour or two, 'till he got so tired he couldn't hardly stand it. I took hold and shook for him once in a while to help him along, but at last he got so tired he had to lay down on a soft bench, covered with cloth, and shake as well as he could; and when he couldn't shake, he'd nod to 'em as they come along. And at last he got so beat out, he couldn't only wrinkle his forehead and wink. Then I kind of stood behind him, and reached my arm round under his, and shook for him for about half an hour as tight as I could spring. Then we concluded it was best to adjourn for to-day.

And I've made out to get away up into the garret in the tavern long enough to write this letter. We shall be off tomorrow or next day for York; and if I can possibly get breathing time enough there, I shall write to you again.

Give my love to all the folks in Downingville, and believe me your loving neffu,

MAJOR JACK DOWNING
1833

MAJOR DOWNING DESCRIBES THE VISIT OF THE PRESIDENT AT BOSTON

Boston, Tuesday, June 25, 1833

To the Editor of the Portland Courier

My Dear Old Friend:—I'm keeping house with the President to-day, and bein' he's getting considerable better, I thought I'd catch a chance when he was taking a knap, and write a little to let you know how we get along. This ere sickness of the President has been a bad pull-back to us. He hasn't been able to go out since Sunday afternoon, and I've been watchin' with him this two nights, and if I wasn't as tough as a halter, I should be half dead by this time.

And if the President wasn't tougher than a catamount, he'd kick the bucket before he'd been round to see one half the notions there is in Boston. Poor man, he has a hard time of it; you've no idea how much he has to go through. It's worse than being dragged through forty knot-holes.

To be bamboozled about from four o'clock in the morning till midnight, rain or shine—jammed into one great house to eat a breakfast, and into another great house to eat a dinner, and into another to eat supper, and into two or three others between meals, to eat cooliations, and to have to go out and review three or four regiments of troops, and then to be jammed into Funnel Hall two hours, and shake hands with three or four thousand folks, and then to go into the State House and stand there two or three hours, and see all Boston streaming through it like a river through a saw-mill, and then to ride about the city awhile in a fine painted covered wagon, with four or five horses to draw it, and then ride awhile in one without any cover to it, finney-fined off to the top notch, and then get on to the horses and ride awhile a horseback, and then run into a great picture-room and see more fine pictures than you could shake a stick at in a week, and then go into some grand gentleman's house, and shake hands a half an hour with a flock of ladies, and then after supper go and have a



Jack shaking hands for the President.

little still kind of a hubbub all alone with three or four hundred particular friends, and talk an hour or two, and take another cooliation, and then go home, and about midnight get ready to go to bed, and up again at four o'clock the next morning and at it. And if this aint enough to tucker a feller out, I don't know what is. The President wouldn't have stood it till this time, if he hadn't sent me and Mr. Van Buren to some of the parties, while he staid at home to rest.

The President's got so much better, I think we shall be able to start for Salem to-morrow, for we must go through with it now we've begun, as hard work as 'tis. I think we shall get to Portland about the 4th of July; so, if you get your guns and things all ready, you can kill two birds with one stone. I hope you'll be pretty careful there how you point your guns. They pointed 'em so careless at New York that a wad come within six inches of making daylight shine through the President.

Now I think on't, there is the most rascally set of fellers skulking about somewhere in this part of the country that ever I heard of, and I wish you would blow 'em up. They are worse than the pickpockets. I mean them are fellers that's got to writing letters and putting my name to 'em, and sending of 'em to the printers. And I heard there was one sassy feller last Saturday, down to Newburyport, that got on to a horse, and rid about town calling himself Major Jack Down-

ing, and all the soldiers and the folks marched up and shook hands with him, and thought it was me. Isn't it Mr. Shakespeare that says something about "he that steals my munnypus steals trash, but he that steals my name ought to have his head broke?" I wish you would find that story and print it.

Your old friend,

MAJOR JACK DOWNING

1833

THE PRESIDENT AND THE REST OF 'EM TURN A SHORT CORNER AT CONCORD, AND SET THEIR FACES TOWARD WASHINGTON

Concord, Nu Hamsheer, June 30, 1833

To the Editor of the Portland Courier

My Dear Old Friend:—The jig is all up about our going to Portland and Downingville, I've battled the watch with the President this two days about it, and told him he must go there if he had the breath of life in him; and he kept telling me he certainly would, if horses could carry him there.

But the President isn't very well, and that ain't the worst of it; there's been a little difficulty bruin' among us, and the President's got so riled about it, that he's finally concluded to start on his way back to-morrow. I can't help it; but I feel bad enough about it to cry a barrel of tears.

I don't know how they will stan' it in Downingville, when they come to get the news. I'm afraid there will be a master uproar there, for you know they are all great Demokrats. But the stage is jest agoing to start.

In haste, from your friend,

MAJOR JACK DOWNING

1833

COUSIN NABBY DESCRIBES THE UNUTTERABLE DISAPPOINTMENT AT DOWNINGVILLE BECAUSE THE PRESIDENT DIDN'T COME

Downingville, July 8, 1833

To the Editor of the Portland Courier

Respectable Sir:—As Cousin Jack is always so mity budge in writing letters to you, and as he and the President showed us a most provoking trick, and run off like a stream of chalk, back to Washington, without coming here, after they had promised over and over again that they would come, and we had got all slicked up and our clean gownds on, and more good victuals cooked than there ever was in all Downingville before—I say, Mr. Editor, I declare it's too bad; we are all as mad as blazes about it, and I mean to write and tell you all about it, if I live; and if Cousin Jack don't like it, he may lump it; so there now.

Ye see Cousin Jack writ to us that he and the President and some more gentlemen should be here the 4th of July, and we must spring to it and brush up and see how smart we could look, and how many fine things we could show to the President. This was a Saturday before the 4th of July come a Thursday. The letter was to Uncle Joshua, the Postmaster. Most all the folks in Downingville were at the Post-Office waiting when the mail come in, for we expected to hear from Jack.

Uncle Joshua put on his spettacles and opened the mail, and hauled out the papers and letters in a bunch. In a minute I see one to Uncle Joshua with the President's name on the outside; so I knew it was from Jack, for the President always puts his name on Jack's letters. We all cried out to Uncle Joshua to open it, and let us know what was in it. But he's such a provoking odd old man, he wouldn't touch it 'till he got every one of the papers and letters sorted and put up in their places. And then he took it and set down in his armchair, and took out his tobacker box and took a chaw of tobacker, and then he broke open the seal and sot and chawed and read to himself. We all stood tiptoe, with our hearts in our mouths, and he must needs read it over to himself three times, chawing his old quid, and once in a while giving us a knowing wink, before he would tell us what was in it. And he wouldn't tell us arter all, but, says he, "You must all be ready to put the best side out Thursday morning; there'll be business to attend to, such as Downingville never see before."

At that we all turned and run, and such a hubbub as we were in from that time 'till Thursday morning, I guess you never see. Such a washing and scrubbing, and making new clothes and mending old ones, and baking and cooking. Every thing seemed to be in a clutter all over the neighborhood. Sargent Joel flew round like a ravin' distracted rooster. He called out his com-

pany every morning before sunrise, and marched 'em up and down the road three hours every day. He sent to the store and got a whole new set of buttons, and had 'em sowed on to his regimental coat, and had a new piece of red put round the collar. And had his trowses washed and his boots greased, and looked as though he might take the shine off of most anything. But the greatest rumpus was at Uncle Joshua's; for they said the President must stay there all night. And Ant Keziah was in such a pucker to have everything nice, I didn't know but she would fly off the handle.

She had every part of the house washed from garret to cellar, and the floors all sanded, and a bunch of green bushes put into all the fire places. And she baked three overn-full of dried punkin pies, besides a few dried huckleberry pies, and cake, and a great pot of pork and beans. But the worst trouble was to fix up the bed so as to look nice; for Ant Keziah declared the President should have as good a night's lodging in her house as he had in New York or Boston. So she put on two feather beds on top the straw bed, and a bran-new calico quilt that she made the first summer after she was married, and never put it on a bed before. And to make it look as nice as the New York beds, she took her red silk gown and ripped it up and made a blanket to spread over the top. And then she hung up some sheets all round the bedroom, and the gals brought in a whole handful of roses and pinks, and pinned 'em up round as thick as flies in August.

After we got things pretty much fixed, Uncle Joshua started off to meet Cousin Jack and the President, and left Sargent Joel to put matters to rights, and told us we must all be ready and be paraded in the road by nine o'clock Thursday morning. Well, Thursday morning come, and we all mustered as soon as it was daylight and dressed up. The children were all washed, and had their clean aprons on and their heads combed, and were put under the care of the schoolmarm, to be paraded along with her scholars.

About eight o'clock, all the village got together down the road as fur as Uncle Joshua's new barn; and Sargent Joel told us how to stand, as he said, in military order. He placed Bill Johnson and Cousin Ephraim out a little ways in front, with each of 'em a great long fowling piece with a smart charge in to fire a salute, and told 'em as soon as the President hove in sight to



The unutterable disappointment at Downingville.

let drive, only to be careful and pint their guns up, so as not to hurt anybody. Then come Sargent Joel and his company; and then come the schoolmarm and the children; and then come all the women and gals over sixteen with Ant Keziah at their head; and then come all the men in town that owned horses riding on horseback; and all the boys that Sargent Joel didn't think was large enough to walk in the procession got up and sot on the fences along by the side of the road.

There we stood 'till about nine o'clock, when, sure enough, we saw somebody come riding out of the woods down the hill. The boys all screamed, ready to split their throats, "Hoorah for Jackson," and Bill Johnson fired off his gun. Cousin Ephraim, who ain't so easily fluttered, held on to his and didn't fire, for he couldn't see anybody but Uncle Joshua on his old gray horse. Along come Uncle Joshua, on a slow trot, and we looked and looked, and couldn't see anybody coming behind him.

Then they all begun to look at one another as wild as hawks, and turn all manner of colors. When Uncle Joshua got up so we could see him pretty plain, he looked as cross as a thunder-cloud. He rid up to Sar-

gent Joel, and says he, "You may all go home about your business, for Jack and the President are half way to Washington by this time."

My stars! what a time there was then. I never see so many folks boiling over mad before. Bill Johnson threw his gun over into the field as much as ten rods, and hopped up and down, and struck his fists together like all possessed. Sargent Joel marched back and forth across the road two or three times, growing redder and redder, till at last he drew out his sword and fetched a blow across a hemlock stump, and snapped it off like a pipe-stem. Ant Keziah fell down in a conniption fit; and it was an hour before we could bring her tu and get her into the house. And when she come to go round the house and see the victuals she had cooked up, and go into the bedroom and see her gown all cut up, she went into conniption fits again. But she's better to-day, and has gone to work to try to patch up her gown again.

I thought I would jest let you know about these things, and if you are a mind to send word on to Cousin Jack and the President, I'm willing. You may tell 'em there aint five folks in Downingville that would hoorah for Jackson now, and hardly one that would vote for him, unless 'tis Uncle Joshua, and he wouldn't if he wasn't afraid of losing the Post-Office.

Your respected friend,

NABBY DOWNING

1833

Charles Augustus Davis

1795 · 1867

During the 1830's, when Seba Smith's Jack Downing was winning fame, Charles Augustus Davis was in business in New York, a partner in the firm of Davis and Brooks, commission merchants. A friend of Merchant-Prince Aspinwall, of Fashion Leader Philip Howe, and of the aristocratic Brevoorts, he was at home in the most elegant metropolitan society. His taste in writing was for the elegant and old-fashioned literature of authors Halleck and Irving, with whom he frequently dined. In politics he was a Whig, bitterly opposed to Jackson and to Jackson's policies.

From Smith, in 1833, Davis "borrowed" the character Jack Downing and the device of writing political letters in the vernacular. He both wrote and published a number of letters in Yankee dialect urging his own views. (He changed the name to *J.* Downing, but the distinction was noticed by relatively few contemporaries.) Davis' letters had little authenticity: their author had been born in New Jersey, had long been in commerce in New York, and had acquired a knowledge of Yankee ways which probably was completely theoretical.

However, the letters signed "J. Downing" were at least as famous as Jack's—perhaps more famous. Newspapers everywhere reprinted them, and a collection in book form, *Letters of J. Downing, Major* (1834), went through ten editions in two years. They won success because of their remarkable effectiveness as hard-hitting political satire against Jackson, his associates, and his policies. So delighted was Nicholas Biddle with Davis' opposition to Jackson's United States Bank policy in the

letters that he appointed the author to a bank directorship in New York. The J. Downing letters were discontinued when the contest concerning the bank ended. The letters were important, however, because even more than Smith, Davis realized and pointed out to scores of humorists who were to follow him the value of homespun philosophizing for purposes of political argument.

Mary A. Wyman, Two American Pioneers, New York, 1927 • Walter Blair, Horse Sense in American Humor, Chicago, 1942

From

Letters of J. Downing, Major

To the Editor of the New-York Daily Advertiser

Downingville, 29th June, 1833

Dear Sir,—This is going to be rather a lengthy letter. We've had real times. I begun to feel pretty streaked for our folks when I see what was done on Boston Common, and over there to little Cambridge. I told you I was going on here to get things to rights; and when I got here, I found 'em in a terrible taken about that crowner's lie down in York Bay. There was nothin at all goin on.

I went full drive down to the meetin-house, and got hold of the rope, and pull'd away like smoke, and made the old bell turn clean over. The folks come up thick enough then to see what was to pay, and filled the old tabernacle chock full, and there was more outside than you could count. 'Now,' says I, 'I spose you think there's going to be preaching here today, but that is not the business. The Gineral is comin.' That was enough—'Now,' says I, 'be spry. I tell'd the Gineral last winter he'd see nothing till he got down here, and if we don't make him stare then there's no snakes. Where's Captain Finny?' says I. 'Here I be,' says he; and there he was, sure enough: the crittur had just come out of his bush-pasture, and had his bush-hook with him. Says I, 'Captain Finny, you are to be the marshal of the day.' Upon that he jumps right on eend. 'Now,' says I, 'where is Seth Sprague, the schoolmaster?' 'Here I be,' says he; and there he stood with his pitchpipe up in the gallery, just as if I was going to give out the salm for him. 'You just pocket your pitch-pipe,' says I, 'Seth, and brush up your larnin, for we have pitched on you to write the address.'—'Why, Major,' says Zekiel Bigelow, 'I thought I was to do that, and I've got one already.' 'But,' says I, 'you don't know nothing about Latin; the Gineral can't stomack any thing now without its got Latin in it, ever since they made a Doctor on him down there to Cambridge t'other day; but howsever,' says I, 'you shall give the address after all, only just let Seth stick a little Hog-latin into it here and there. And now,' says I, 'all on you be spry, and don't stop stirrin till the pudden's done.'

Then they begun to hunt for hats, and down the gallery-stairs they went. And if there'd been forty thanksgivens and independence days comin in a string, I don't believe there could be more racket than there was in Downingville that afternoon and night.

By ten o'clock next morning all was ready. I had 'em all stationed, and I went out and come back three or four times across the brook by the potash, to try 'em. I got a white hat on, and shag-bark stick, put some flour on my head, and got on to my sorrel horse, and looked just as much like the old gentleman as I could. Arter tryin them two or three times, I got 'em all as limber as a with, and the last time I tried 'em, you've no idee, it went off just as slick as ile.

'Now,' says I, 'tenshon the hull! Stand at ease till you see me agin;' and then I streaked it down to old Miss Crane's tavern, about two miles off, and waited till the Gineral come along; and afore I had mixed a second glass of switchel up they came, and the Gineral looked as chirk and lively as a skipper.

'Now,' says I, 'Gineral, we are going right into Downingville, and no man here is to give any orders but myself,' and I said this loud enough for Mr. Van Buren and Governor Woodbury and all on 'em to hear me, and they were all as hush arter that as cows in a clover-lot. Then

we all mounted, and on we went—I and the Gineral a leetle a-head on 'em. And when we crossed the brook, says I, 'don't be afeard of the string-pieces here, Gineral—we aint in York now.' 'I'll follow you, Major,' says he, 'through thick and thin—I feel safe here.'

Jest as we got on the nole on tother side the brook, we come in sight of Downingville. The Gineral riz right up in his stirrups, and pointed with his hickory, and says he, 'Major, that's Downingville.' Says I, 'that's true enuf, and I should like to hear any one say it aint,' says I—'for the sight on't makes me crawl all over, and whenever I hear any one say one word agin it, I feel as tho' I could take him, as I have done streaked snakes, by the tail, and snap his head off.' 'Why,' says the Gineral, 'I knew that was Downingville as soon as my eye caught a glimpse on't. I'd go,' says he, 'Major, east of sunrise any day to see sich a place.' The Gineral was tickled to pieces, and I thought I should go myself right through my shirt-collar—for, you see, the Gineral never see sich a sight afore. Seth Sprague had put the children all on the school-house—you couldn't see an atom of the roof—with green boughs, and singing a set piece he had made; and when I and the Gineral passed by they made it all ring agin, I tell you; whether it was his facing the sun or what, but he looked as if he was e'eny jist a going to cry (for he is a mazin tender-hearted crittur). Just then Sargent Joel, who had charge of the field-piece in front of the meetinhous, touched her off; and didn't she speak! This composed the Gineral in a minute—says he, 'Major, I shouldn't want nothing better than a dozen of them guns to change the boundry-line along here jest to suit you—but look, Major, what on earth has got into Mr. Van Buren's horse?' Sure enough, Sargent Joel had put in a leetle too much waddin, if any thing, and Enoch Bissel, as sly as a weasel, slipped in a swad of grass, that hit Mr. Van Buren's horse, and set him capering till he kinder flung him. I was as wrathy as murder; says I, 'where is he?' and I arter him full split—he was clippin it across the orchard, so that you might put an egg on his coat-flap, and it wouldn't role off. I streaked it round the corner of the stone-fence to head him—but afore I got to him he ketched Mr. Van Buren's horse, and was clearing out of the county—and afore this he is slick enough in the Province.

They tell different stories about it, but Deacon Willoby saw the hull on it, and he says Mr. Van Buren hung on like a lamper-eel, till he was kinder jerked up like a trounced toad, and he came down on the horse's rump jist as he kicked up behind and that sent him clean over the fence into the Deacon's potato-patch. He turned over so fast in the air you could not tell one end from tother; but his feet struck first, and he stood there, the Deacon says, and made as handsome a bow to the folks as if nothing on earth had happened to him.

The review of Captain Finny's company did take the shine off them are Boston and Salem sogers, I tell you; but they was all so keen arter the Gineral that all I and Captain Finny could do, we couldn't keep the line strait; and they all got into such a snarl, that you might as well try to straiten a sheep's wool.

The bell was ringing all the while; two people was up there with stone hammers poundin on her, caze Uncle Josh had gone and took the bell-rope, and tied one eend on't to the steeple, and carried the tother eend over to the Deacon's chimbly, more than twelve rods off; and every inch on't was hung full of flags, and where there wa'n't no flags, he had got all the cloth out of the fullin-mill; and the gals and Downingville boys had gin all their handkerchers, and gowns, and flannel shirts, and it was so high up, and the wind kinder shook'em all together so you couldn't tell a checked shirt from an old Continental. The Gineral was tickled half to death; says he, 'Major, that looks about right.' 'It does so,' says I; 'Gineral, if that ain't union, I don't know.' He's as keen as a brier to catch any thing cunnin; he don't care where he is, he snorts right out.

As soon as we got down to the meetinhouse door, Zekil Bigelow gin the address; it was stuck full of Latin words here and there, like burs in a stray sheep's fleece. Zekil is a knowin cretur; He keeps a packin-yard, and salts down more fish than any man in three counties round: he don't know so much about Latin as some folks, but he did get along with his address most curious. He thank'd the Gineral for comin to Downingville in the first place, and then he thank'd him for his proclamation, and for presarvin the Union, and threw in the salt, and the nitre and pickle, and when he come to talk of the nullifiers, he cut and shaved, and made the scales fly, I tell you. Every hair on the Gineral's head stood strait on eend. And there stood that cretur Zekiel right afore him, talking like a book, and his head was as smooth, and every hair on it slicked down with a dipped candle; and that are few of his wo'd tell the folks behind which way his eye turned jest as well as though they was lookin

strait in his face—caze it kinder lodged on his collar, and every time he looked up, it would stand still a minet, and point right straight up in the air.

Then cum the Gineral's turn,—his heart was so full, he could but jest speak, and I was jist agoin to begin for him, when out he came:—

'My friends,' says he, 'though I tell'd 'em down south my father was an Irishman, and my mother, too, I am as clear a Yankee (and he turned, and lookin round him, slap'd his hand on my shoulder), as the Major himself,' says he, 'and he knows it.' 'So I do,' says I, 'Gineral, I tell'd 'em all so often enough.' 'I will presarve the Union, I'll be hang'd and choak'd to death if I don't; and when I want pickle I know where to find it. I am glad to hear you say that salt petre once in a while is good—I always thought so—and if the Constitution spiles in my hands for the want of it, I wont stand another election.' Here the Gineral was goin to stop, but, says I, in his ear, 'You must give 'em a little Latin, Doctor.' Here he off hat agin—'E pluribus unum,' says he, 'my friends, sine qua non.' 'That'll do, Gineral,' says I; and then we turn'd to, and shook all the folks round till dinner time, and then we made the bake beans and salt pork fly, and the cider too, I tell you. The folks hadn't eat nothin since I got on to the ground. Arter dinner I tell'd the Gineral about that are blasted rascal, Enoch Bissel, who tucked in the grass waddin. 'That's the same fellow,' says I, 'Major Barry turn'd out of the Post Office. I knew he was a scamp, and if he wasn't *then*, he is *now*.' 'Why, Major,' says the Gineral, 'it was jest so with that infernal rascal Randolf; if he didn't desarve what I gin him *afore* he attacked me, he sartinly did afterwards, and where's the odds?' 'Plaguey little,' says I, 'Gineral.'

To-night we're going to a quiltin at Uncle Josh's. Miss Willoby, the Deacon's eldest darter, is sprucin up for it. She is rather too old to be handsome, but she is a keen cretur. The Gineral and Mr. Van Buren both talk about her considerable. If the Gineral don't keep a sharp look out, Mr. Van Buren will go clean ahead on him on that tack; for he is the *perlitest* cretur amongst the women you ever see. The Gineral says he must have some of our Yankee gals in the cabinet next winter, and I kinder have a notion there will be some hitchin teems doune here abouts afore we quit.

We shall go strait from here to *Saratogue,* and wash inside and out there. I expect we shall all need washin afore we get there.

This is the longest letter I ever writ in all my life, but I'm to hum now. It would cost you a good many of your odd nine-penses, I guess, to pay the postage, if it want for the President—he franks all my letters—and that aint what he does for most folks.

I may tell you about the quiltin frolic tonight, in my next, but I wont promise; for I have jest as much as I can do here, to do all the chores for the Gineral, and write near about fifty letters a day for him.

Yours to sarve,
J. DOWNING, MAJOR,
Downingville Militia, 2d Brigade

1833

Herman Melville

1819 · 1891

Herman Melville, whom John Freeman has called "the most powerful of all the great American writers," was born in New York City in 1819. When he was eleven years of age, his family moved to Albany, where he became a student in the Albany Academy. Two years later his father, a merchant, died in debt. During the five ensuing years the boy was variously occupied, clerking in a bank and in his brother's store in Albany, working



on his uncle's farm at Pittsfield. At the age of eighteen, he shipped as a sailor on a merchantman bound for Liverpool. The reasons for his so doing we must take from *Redburn,* which appears to be a pretty literal account of Melville's own experiences: "Sad disappointments in several plans which I had sketched for my future life; the necessity of doing something for myself, united to a naturally roving disposition, had now conspired within me, to send me to sea as a sailor." After a short stay in Liverpool, where he was shocked by the brutality and misery of the great city, he returned with his ship, sobered and matured, one must believe, by this early introduction to a world of violence and crime. Of his life during the next three or four years little is known except that he taught school in Albany and Pittsfield and tried his hand at writing.

The most decisive event of Melville's life came on January 3, 1841, when at the age of twenty-one he shipped at New Bedford on the *Acushnet,* a whaler, for the South Seas. This whale-ship was for him, in the words of Ishmael in *Moby Dick,* "my Yale College and my Harvard." Melville was gone three years and nine months, returning to Boston in October 1844. For his life during this period one is forced to draw largely upon *Typee, Omoo, White Jacket,* and *Moby Dick,* though Mr. C. R. Anderson has exposed some of the errors (in Mr. Mumford's biography, for example) which result from the unwary use of these fictional works for biographical purposes. The exact details of Melville's wanderings in the Pacific are in large measure still uncertain. But it is known that, after some eighteen months on the *Acushnet,* Melville deserted, July 9, 1842, at the Marquesas Islands. After a month or two among the cannibals he escaped to Tahiti; further travels may have taken him to Japan. Finally, on August 17, 1843, he joined the crew of the frigate *United States* at Honolulu and remained with this ship until his arrival at Boston more than a year later.

The eight or nine years following his return from his voyages were Melville's great productive period. He poured forth a veritable torrent of books: *Typee* (1846), *Omoo* (1847), *Mardi* (1849), *Redburn* (1849), *White Jacket* (1850), *Moby Dick* (1851), and *Pierre* (1852). It was inevitable, perhaps, that there should be a falling off after such extraordinary productivity. Melville seemed to have a premonitory sense of this in 1851, when, at the age of thirty-two, he wrote to Hawthorne: "From my twenty-fifth year I date my life. Three weeks have scarcely passed, at any time between then and now, that I have not unfolded within myself. But I feel that I am now come to the inmost leaf of the bulb, and that shortly the flower must fall to the mold." He lived on for forty years; but he failed to write another book as great as *Moby Dick,* and his productivity steadily diminished: *Israel Potter* (1855); *The Piazza Tales* (1856), which includes "Benito Cereno"; *The Confidence Man* (1857); two volumes of poetry, *Battle Pieces and Aspects of the War* (1866) and *Clarel* (1876); and *Billy Budd,* written near the end of his life and not published until

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Panel (l. to r.): Disaster · The clipper **Nightingale** · Herman Melville at 45 · Melville in the South Seas

1924. From 1866 to 1885, he was Inspector of Customs in New York City.

Mr. Thorp notes "five determining influences" in Melville's literary career: "the religious orthodoxy of his home, which left its imprint, though he revolted from it; his contact with the brutalities of a sailor's life and with savage societies which impelled him to question the premises of western civilization; his reading in philosophy and belles-lettres, which, though unmethodical, was prodigious between 1846 and 1851 [notably, Rabelais, Sir Thomas Browne, Shakespeare and other Elizabethan dramatists, the Bible, and Carlyle]; his friendships with artists and men of letters in New York who advanced his interests and educated him in his craft; and the sympathy of Hawthorne, which more than any other factor contributed to the fruition of his genius." This last influence is of special interest. From the summer of 1850 till the autumn of 1851, Melville and Hawthorne were near neighbors and frequent companions, the former residing at Pittsfield, the latter at Lenox. On more than one occasion the two men talked together "about time and eternity, things of this world and of the next, and books and publishers, and all possible and impossible matters" (Hawthorne's *American Notebooks*). Melville was somewhat extravagant in his admiration of his new friend (see his extraordinary letters to Hawthorne, in Thorp's *Melville*); Hawthorne, though reserved and older, gave to Melville a sympathetic understanding such as he had not known before and would never know again. *Moby Dick* was dedicated to Hawthorne, and Hawthorne's letter of acknowledgment and appreciation—unfortunately lost, as are all of his letters to Melville—was to Melville a "joy-giving and exultation-breeding letter." After Hawthorne left the Berkshires, their friendly intimacy was interrupted; but in 1856, when Melville was on a recuperative journey to Italy and the Holy Land, the two men met again in England. After this meeting, Hawthorne wrote in his journal the best contemporary characterization of Melville that we have: "We took a pretty long walk together, and sat down in a hollow among the sand hills (sheltering ourselves from the high, cool wind) and smoked a cigar. Melville, as he always does, began to reason of Providence and futurity, and of everything that lies beyond human ken, and informed me that he had 'pretty much made up his mind to be annihilated'; but still he does not seem to rest in that anticipation; and, I think, will never rest until he gets hold of a definite belief. It is strange how he persists—and has persisted ever since I knew him, and probably long before—in wandering to-and-fro over these deserts, as dismal and monotonous as the sand hills amid which we were sitting. He can neither believe, nor be comfortable in his unbelief; and he is too honest and courageous not to try to do one or the other . . . he has a very high and noble nature . . . " *(The English Notebooks).*

Melville began, in *Typee* and *Omoo,* with delightful narratives of travels in the South Seas, written in a simple, straightforward style. There is no allegory here, and no bitterness, except for occasional satirical sallies at the missionaries and the "civilized" nations. *Redburn* and *White Jacket,* also, are simple narratives, though imbued with darker elements: the former delves into the slums of Liverpool; the latter is an angry exposure of the cruelties practiced on board a frigate of the American Navy. The transition to allegory came in *Mardi*—a confused and confusing book, effective in parts, but lacking integration. Melville reached his full stature in *Moby Dick,* a powerful allegory of good and evil. By this time, too, his prose style had changed from one of Defoe-like simplicity to one of magnificent rhythms, which, while recalling Sir Thomas Browne's, were Melville's own. *Pierre,* in which Melville attempted for the first time the structure of the novel, has something of the power of *Moby Dick,* though it is much less successful as literary art. Among the productions after 1852, one may mention "Benito Cereno" (1856) and *Billy Budd* (1890?) as deserving to rank with his best work, always excepting the matchless *Moby Dick. Billy Budd* is of special interest because the book shows that Melville retained his creative power and also because its conclusion may throw some light on Melville's state of mind in his old age. Both Ahab, in *Moby Dick,* and Pierre went down in defeat, and that defeat perhaps was Melville's own. Billy Budd, a handsome young sailor, goes down in defeat also—he is hanged for the accidental killing of a man. But his defeat is not one of defiance, like Ahab's, or of despair, like Pierre's. Just before the trap is sprung, he blesses the Captain, his friend, who, compelled by naval law, has pronounced the death sentence with great reluctance. Mr. Freeman finds here an indication that Melville achieved in his later years an inward peace, a reconciliation with life.

Melville's reputation as one of the very greatest of American writers dates from about 1920. His early works were enjoyed by many readers, most of whom, however, were estranged by the obscurity and pessimism of *Mardi, Moby Dick,* and *Pierre.* After about 1860, Melville was a forgotten author. There were always, to be sure, a few readers, particularly in England, who knew his books; but "oblivion" is hardly too strong a term to describe Melville's fate for a half century and more. The almost total eclipse of his fame is sufficiently attested by the fact that he was given just one sentence in Barrett Wendell's *Literary History of America,* published in 1900: "Herman Melville, with his books about the South Seas, which Robert Louis Stevenson is said to have declared the best ever written, and with his novels of maritime adventure, began a career of literary promise, which never came to fruition." The exciting rediscovery occurred in both England and America about the time of the centenary of Melville's birth. The enthusiasm of the 1920's may be explained in various ways. It is perhaps sufficient here to say that his splendid literary qualities were for the first time recognized by a considerable number of readers and that the postwar mood of disillusionment and despair vibrated sympathetically with the mood of *Moby Dick* and *Pierre.* His fame, tardily established, bids fair to continue with little, if any, abatement.

The Works of Herman Melville, 16 vols., London, 1922-1924 • R. M. Weaver, **Herman Melville, Mariner and Mystic**, New York, 1921 • John Freeman, **Herman Melville**, London, 1926 • Lewis Mumford, **Herman Melville**, New York, 1929 • Willard Thorp, **Herman Melville, Representative Selections**, Cincinnati, 1938 • C. R. Anderson, **Melville in the South Seas**, New York, 1939

From

Mardi

Mardi, a satirical allegory, tells the story of voyages to mythical islands in the Pacific. Taji, the chief character, is accompanied on these voyages by the following dignitaries: Media, King of Odo; Babbalanja, the philosopher; Yoomy, the poet; and Mohi, the historian of "Mardi," which may be construed as standing for the world. Since the islands visited bear unmistakable resemblances to the nations of Europe and America, an almost limitless opportunity is afforded for comment on men, manners, and institutions. The names given to countries and persons are highly suggestive, usually obviously so, of Melville's satirical intentions. "Dominora," the name for England, for example, emphasizes the imperialistic history of that nation; "Vivenza," the name for the United States, suggests boastfulness and vociferous patriotism. In the three chapters which have been selected, Melville draws an extravagantly satirical picture of the United States Senate during the debate on the Oregon boundary question in 1846, gives sobering counsel to our too exuberant republic, and tries to see clearly the tragic problem of Negro slavery in the South.

Throughout the book runs the theme of Taji's search for Yillah, a blue-eyed maiden, who may be supposed to represent a spiritual ideal. The quest is unsuccessful; Yillah is not to be found in Vivenza, North or South, or in any of the islands of Mardi. At the end of the book, Taji is the "unreturning wanderer" still pursuing Yillah "over an endless sea." Mardi, then, is an allegory of Melville's search for the highest good. He doesn't find what he is looking for, but he writes eloquently of the search and acutely of the limitations and defects in what he finds.

Chapter CLVIII

THEY VISIT THE GREAT CENTRAL TEMPLE OF VIVENZA

The throng that greeted us upon landing were exceedingly boisterous.

"Whence came ye?" they cried. "Whither bound? Saw ye ever such a land as this? Is it not a great and extensive republic? Pray, observe how tall we are; just feel

of our thighs; are we not a glorious people? Here, feel of our beards. Look round; look round; be not afraid; behold those palms; swear now, that this land surpasses all others. Old Bello's mountains are mole-hills to ours; his rivers, rills; his empires, villages; his palm-trees, shrubs."

"True," said Babbalanja. "But great Oro must have had some hand in making your mountains and streams. —Would ye have been as great in a desert?"

"Where is your king?" asked Media, drawing himself up in his robe, and cocking his crown.

"Ha, ha, my fine fellow! We are all kings here; royalty breathes in the common air. But come on, come on. Let us show you our great Temple of Freedom."

And so saying, irreverently grasping his sacred arm, they conducted us toward a lofty structure, planted upon a bold hill, and supported by thirty pillars of palm; four quite green; as if recently added; and beyond these, an almost interminable vacancy, as if all the palms in Mardi, were at some future time, to aid in upholding that fabric.

Upon the summit of the temple was a staff; and as we drew nigh, a man with a collar round his neck, and the red marks of stripes upon his back, was just in the act of hoisting a tappa standard—correspondingly striped. Other collared menials were going in and out of the temple.

Near the porch, stood an image like that on the top of the arch we had seen. Upon its pedestal, were pasted certain hieroglyphical notices; according to Mohi, offering rewards for missing men, so many hands high.

Entering the temple, we beheld an amphitheatrical space, in the middle of which, a great fire was burning. Around it, were many chiefs, robed in long togas, and presenting strange contrasts in their style of tattooing.

Some were sociably laughing and chatting; others diligently making excavations between their teeth with slivers of bamboo; or turning their heads into mills, were grinding up leaves and ejecting their juices. Some were busily inserting the down of a thistle into their ears. Several stood erect, intent upon maintaining striking attitudes; their javelins tragically crossed upon their chests. They would have looked very imposing, were it not, that in rear their vesture was sadly disordered. Others, with swelling fronts, seemed chiefly indebted to their dinners for their dignity. Many were nodding and napping. And, here and there, were sundry indefatigable worthies, making a great show of imperious and indispensable business; sedulously folding banana leaves into scrolls, and recklessly placing them into the hands of little boys, in gay turbans and trim little girdles, who thereupon fled as if with salvation for the dying.

It was a crowded scene; the dusky chiefs, here and there, grouped together, and their fantastic tattooings showing like the carved work on quaint old chimney-stacks, seen from afar. But one of their number overtopped all the rest. As when, drawing nigh unto old Rome, amid the crowd of sculptured columns and gables, St. Peter's grand dome soars far aloft, serene in the upper air; so, showed one calm grand forehead among those of this mob of chieftains. That head was Saturnina's. Gall and Spurzheim! saw you ever such a brow?—poised like an avalanche, under the shadow of a forest! woe betide the devoted valleys below! Lavatar! behold those lips, —like mystic scrolls! Those eyes,—like panthers' caves at the base of Popocatepetl!

"By my right hand, Saturnina," cried Babbalanja, "but thou wert made in the image of thy Maker! Yet, have I beheld men, to the eye as commanding as thou; and surmounted by heads globe-like as thine, who never had thy caliber. We must measure brains, not heads, my lord; else, the sperm-whale, with his tun of an occiput, would transcend us all."

Near by, were arched ways, leading to subterranean places, whence issued a savory steam, and an extraordinary clattering of calabashes, and smacking of lips, as if something were being eaten down there by the fattest of fat fellows, with the heartiest of appetites, and the most irresistible of relishes. It was a quaffing, guzzling, gobbling noise. Peeping down, we beheld a company, breasted up against a board, groaning under numerous

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4 **Bello,** the king of England • 6 **Oro,** the god of Mardi; the name is suggestive of "gold" • 13 **Temple of Freedom,** the Capitol at Washington • 16 **thirty pillars,** referring to the states of the Union • 16 **four . . . green,** recently admitted states: Texas (1845), Florida (1845), Iowa (1846), Wisconsin (1848) • 21 **man . . . neck,** a Negro slave • 23 **tappa,** fabric made from the bark of the mulberry tree which grows in the Pacific islands • 29 **missing men,** fugitive slaves • 30 **amphitheatrical space,** the Senate chamber • 59 **Saturnina,** Daniel Webster • 59 **Gall,** Franz Joseph Gall (1758-1828), German physician and founder of phrenology • 60 **Spurzheim,** Johann Kaspar Spurzheim (1776-1832), German physician and phrenologist • 62 **Lavatar,** Johann Kaspar Lavater (1741-1801), Swiss physiognomist • 64 **Popocatepetl,** a volcano in Mexico nearly 18,000 feet high • 70 **sperm-whale,** a large whale whose head contains spermaceti (used in making candles, ointments, etc.) • 70 **occiput,** the back part of the head

viands. In the middle of all, was a mighty great gourd, yellow as gold, and jolly round like a pumpkin in October, and so big it must have grown in the sun. Thence flowed a tide of red wine. And before it, stood plenty of paunches being filled therewith like portly stone jars at a fountain. Melancholy to tell, before that fine flood of old wine, and among those portly old topers, was a lean man; who occasionally ducked in his bill. He looked like an ibis standing in the Nile at flood tide, among a tongue-lapping herd of hippopotami.

They were jolly as the jolliest; and laughed so uproariously, that their hemispheres all quivered and shook, like vast provinces in an earthquake. Ha! ha! ha! how they laughed, and they roared. A deaf man might have heard them; and no milk could have soured within a forty-two-pounder ball shot of that place.

Now, the smell of good things is no very bad thing in itself. It is the savor of good things beyond; proof positive of a glorious good meal. So snuffing up those zephyrs from Araby the blest, those boisterous gales, blowing from out the mouths of baked boars, stuffed with bread-fruit, bananas, and sage, we would fain have gone down and partaken.

But this could not be; for we were told that those worthies below, were a club in secret conclave; very busy in settling certain weighty state affairs upon a solid basis. They were all chiefs of immense capacity:—how many gallons, there was no finding out.

Be sure, now, a most riotous noise came up from those catacombs, which seemed full of the ghosts of fat Lamberts; and this uproar it was, that heightened the din above ground.

But heedless of all, in the midst of the amphitheater, stood a tall, gaunt warrior, ferociously tattooed, with a beak like a buzzard; long dusty locks; and his hands full of headless arrows. He was laboring under violent paroxysms; three benevolent individuals essaying to hold him. But repeatedly breaking loose, he burst anew into his delirium; while with an absence of sympathy, distressing to behold, the rest of the assembly seemed wholly engrossed with themselves; nor did they appear to care how soon the unfortunate lunatic might demolish himself by his frantic proceedings.

Toward one side of the amphitheatrical space, perched high upon an elevated dais, sat a white-headed old man with a tomahawk in his hand: earnestly engaged in overseeing the tumult; though not a word did he say. Occasionally, however, he was regarded by those present with a mysterious sort of deference; and when they chanced to pass between him and the crazy man, they invariably did so in a stooping position; probably to elude the atmospheric grape and cannister, continually flying from the mouth of the lunatic.

"What mob is this?" cried Media.

"'Tis the grand council of Vivenza," cried a bystander. "Hear ye not Alanno?" and he pointed to the lunatic.

Now coming close to Alanno, we found, that with incredible volubility, he was addressing the assembly upon some all-absorbing subject connected with King Bello, and his presumed encroachments toward the northwest of Vivenza.

One hand smiting his hip, and the other his head, the lunatic thus proceeded; roaring like a wild beast, and beating the air like a windmill:—

"I have said it! the thunder is flashing, the lightning is crashing! already there's an earthquake in Dominora! Full soon will old Bello discover that his diabolical machinations against this ineffable land must soon come to naught. Who dare not declare, that we are not invincible? I repeat it, we are. Ha! ha! Audacious Bello must bite the dust! Hair by hair, we will trail his gory gray beard at the end of our spears! Ha! ha! I grow hoarse; but would mine were a voice like the wild bulls of Bullorom, that I might be heard from one end of this great and gorgeous land to its farthest zenith; ay, to the uttermost diameter of its circumference. Awake! oh Vivenza. The signs of the times are portentous; nay, extraordinary; I hesitate not to add, peculiar! Up! up! Let us not descend to the bathos, when we should soar to the climax! Does not all Mardi wink and look on? Is the great sun itself a frigid spectator? Then let us double up our mandibles to the deadly encounter. Methinks I see it now. Old Bello is crafty, and his oath is recorded to obliterate us! Across this wide lagoon he casts his serpent eyes; whets his insatiate bill; mumbles his bar-

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31 **Lamberts.** Daniel Lambert (1770-1803), an Englishman, weighed 739 pounds • 34 **warrior,** Senator William Allen of Ohio, a strenuous advocate of the occupation of Oregon. The Oregon boundary dispute with England was settled in 1846 • 45 **old man,** G. M. Dallas, vice-president in Polk's administration (1845-1849), and hence presiding officer of the Senate during the debate on Oregon • 84 **lagoon,** the Atlantic Ocean

barous tusks; licks his forked tongues; and who knows when we shall have the shark in our midst? Yet be not deceived; for though as yet, Bello has forborn molesting us openly, his emissaries are at work; his infernal sappers, and miners, and wet-nurses, and midwives, and grave-diggers are busy! His canoe-yards are all in commotion! In navies his forests are being launched upon the wave; and ere long typhoons, zephyrs, white-squalls, balmy breezes, hurricanes, and besoms will be raging round us!"

His philippic concluded, Alanno was conducted from the place; and being now quite exhausted, cold cobble-stones were applied to his temples, and he was treated to a bath in a stream.

This chieftain, it seems, was from a distant western valley, called Hio-Hio, one of the largest and most fertile in Vivenza, though but recently settled. Its inhabitants, and those of the vales adjoining,—a right sturdy set of fellows,—were accounted the most dogmatically democratic and ultra of all the tribes in Vivenza; ever seeking to push on their brethren to the uttermost; and especially were they bitter against Bello. But they were a fine young tribe, nevertheless. Like strong new wine they worked violently in becoming clear. Time, perhaps, would make them all right.

An interval of greater uproar than ever now ensued; during which, with his tomahawk, the white-headed old man repeatedly thumped and pounded the seat where he sat, apparently to augment the din, though he looked anxious to suppress it.

At last, tiring of his posture, he whispered in the ear of a chief, his friend; who, approaching a portly warrior present, prevailed upon him to rise and address the assembly. And no sooner did this one do so, than the whole convocation dispersed, as if to their yams; and with a grin, the little old man leaped from his seat, and stretched his legs on a mat.

The fire was now extinguished, and the temple deserted.

Chapter CLXI

THEY HEARKEN UNTO A VOICE FROM THE GODS

Next day we retraced our voyage northward, to visit that section of Vivenza.

In due time we landed.

To look round was refreshing. Of all the lands we had seen, none looked more promising. The groves stood tall and green; the fields spread flush and broad; the dew of the first morning seemed hardly vanished from the grass. On all sides was heard the fall of waters, the swarming of bees, and the rejoicing hum of a thriving population.

"Ha, ha!" laughed Yoomy, "Labor laughs in this land; and claps his hands in the jubilee groves! methinks that Yillah will yet be found."

Generously entertained, we tarried in this land; till at length, from over the Lagoon, came full tidings of the eruption we had witnessed in Franko, with many details. The conflagration had spread through Porpheero; and the kings were to and fro hunted, like malefactors by blood-hounds; all that part of Mardi was heaving with throes.

With the utmost delight, these tidings were welcomed by many; yet others heard them with boding concern.

Those, too, there were, who rejoiced that the kings were cast down; but mourned that the people themselves stood not firmer. A victory, turned to no wise and enduring account, said they, is no victory at all. Some victories revert to the vanquished.

But day by day great crowds ran down to the beach, in wait for canoes periodically bringing further intelligence. Every hour new cries startled the air. "Hurrah! another kingdom is burnt down to the earth's edge; another demi-god is unhelmed; another republic is dawning. Shake hands, freemen, shake hands! Soon will we hear of Dominora down in the dust; of hapless Verdanna free as ourselves; all Porpheero's volcanoes are bursting! Who may withstand the people? The times tell terrible tales to tyrants! Ere we die, freemen, all Mardi will be free."

Overhearing these shouts, Babbalanja thus addressed Media:—"My lord, I can not but believe, that these men, are far more excited than those with whom they so ardently sympathize. But no wonder. The single discharges which are heard in Porpheero; here come con-

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9 besoms, brooms. Compare Isaiah 14:23: "I will sweep it with the besom of destruction" • 16 Hio-Hio, Ohio • 55 Franko, France • 56 conflagration, the Revolutions of 1848 • 56 Porpheero, Europe • 73 Verdanna, Ireland

densed in one tremendous report. Every arrival is a firing off of events by platoons."

Now, during this tumultuous interval, King Media very prudently kept himself exceedingly quiet. He doffed his regalia; and in all things carried himself with a dignified discretion. And many hours he absented himself; none knowing whither he went, or what his employment.

So also with Babbalanja. But still pursuing our search, at last we all journeyed into a great valley, whose inhabitants were more than commonly inflated with the ardor of the times.

Rambling on, we espied a clamorous crowd gathered about a conspicuous palm, against which, a scroll was fixed.

The people were violently agitated; storming out maledictions against the insolent knave, who, over night must have fixed there, that scandalous document. But whoever he may have been, certain it was, he had contrived to hood himself effectually.

After much vehement discussion, during which sundry inflammatory harangues were made from the stumps of trees near by, it was proposed, that the scroll should be read aloud, so that all might give ear.

Seizing it, a fiery youth mounted upon the bowed shoulders of an old man, his sire; and with a shrill voice, ever and anon interrupted by outcries, read as follows:—

"Sovereign-kings of Vivenza! it is fit you should hearken to wisdom. But well aware, that you give ear to little wisdom except of your own; and that as freemen, you are free to hunt down him who dissents from your majesties; I deem it proper to address you anonymously.

"And if it please you, you may ascribe this voice to the gods: for never will you trace it to man.

"It is not unknown, sovereign-kings! that in these boisterous days, the lessons of history are almost discarded, as superseded by present experiences. And that while all Mardi's Present has grown out of its Past, it is becoming obsolete to refer to what has been. Yet, peradventure, the Past is an apostle.

"The grand error of this age, sovereign-kings! is the general supposition, that the very special Diabolus is abroad; whereas, the very special Diabolus has been abroad ever since Mardi began.

"And the grand error of your nation, sovereign-kings! seems this:—The conceit that Mardi is now in the last scene of the last act of her drama; and that all preceding events were ordained, to bring about the catastrophe you believe to be at hand,—a universal and permanent Republic.

"May it please you, those who hold to these things are fools, and not wise.

"Time is made up of various ages; and each thinks its own a novelty. But imbedded in the walls of the pyramids, which outrun all chronologies, sculptured stones are found, belonging to yet older fabrics. And as in the mound-building period of yore, so every age thinks its erections will forever endure. But as your forests grow apace, sovereign-kings! overrunning the tumuli in your western vales; so, while deriving their substance from the past, succeeding generations overgrow it; but in time, themselves decay.

"Oro decrees these vicissitudes.

"In chronicles of old, you read, sovereign-kings! that an eagle from the clouds presaged royalty to the fugitive Taquinoo; and a king, Taquinoo reigned. No end to my dynasty, thought he.

"But another omen descended, foreshadowing the fall of Zooperbi, his son; and Zooperbi returning from his camp, found his country a fortress against him. No more kings would she have. And for five hundred twelve-moons the Regifugium or King's-flight, was annually celebrated like your own jubilee day. And rampant young orators stormed out detestation of kings; and augurs swore that their birds presaged immortality to freedom.

"Then, Romara's free eagles flew over all Mardi, and perched on the topmost diadems of the east.

"Ever thus must it be.

"For, mostly, monarchs are gemmed bridles upon the world, checking the plungings of a steed from the Pampas. And republics are as vast reservoirs, draining down all streams to one level; and so, breeding a fullness which can not remain full, without overflowing. And thus, Romara flooded all Mardi, till scarce an Ararat was left of the lofty kingdoms which had been.

"Thus, also, did Franko, fifty twelve-moons ago. Thus may she do again. And though not yet, have you, sov-

43 **Diabolus,** the devil • 60 **tumuli,** mounds over ancient graves • 67 **Taquinoo,** of the Tarquin dynasty of ancient Rome • 87 **Franko . . . ago,** a reference to the Napoleonic conquests

ereign-kings! in any large degree done likewise, it is because you overflow your redundancies within your own mighty borders; having a wild western waste, which many shepherds with their flocks could not overrun in a day. Yet overrun at last it will be; and then, the recoil must come.

"And, may it please you, that thus far your chronicles had narrated a very different story, had your population been pressed and packed, like that of your old sire-land Dominora. Then, your great experiment might have proved an explosion; like the chemist's who, stirring his mixture, was blown by it into the air.

"For though crossed, and recrossed by many brave quarterings, and boasting the great Bull in your pedigree; yet, sovereign-kings! you are not meditative philosophers like the people of a small republic of old; nor enduring stoics, like their neighbors. Pent up, like them, may it please you, your thirteen original tribes had proved more turbulent, than so many mutinous legions. Free horses need wide prairies; and fortunate for you, sovereign-kings! that you have room enough, wherein to be free.

"And, may it please you, you are free, partly, because you are young. Your nation is like a fine, florid youth, full of fiery impulses, and hard to restrain; his strong hand nobly championing his heart. On all sides, freely he gives, and still seeks to acquire. The breath of his nostrils is like smoke in spring air; every tendon is electric with generous resolves. The oppressor he defies to his beard; the high walls of old opinions he scales with a bound. In the future he sees all the domes of the East.

"But years elapse, and this bold boy is transformed. His eyes open not as of yore; his heart is shut up as a vice. He yields not a groat; and seeking no more acquisitions, is only bent on preserving his hoard. The maxims once trampled under foot, are now printed on his front; and he who hated oppressors, is become an oppressor himself.

"Thus, often, with men; thus, often, with nations. Then marvel not, sovereign-kings! that old states are different from yours; and think not, your own must forever remain liberal as now.

"Each age thinks its own is eternal. But though for five hundred twelve-moons, all Romara, by courtesy of history, was republican; yet, at last, her terrible king-tigers came, and spotted themselves with gore.

"And time was, when Dominora was republican, down to her sturdy back-bone. The son of an absolute monarch became the man Karolus; and his crown and head, both rolled in the dust. And Dominora had her patriots by thousands; and lusty Defenses, and glorious Areopagiticas were written, not since surpassed; and no turban was doffed save in homage of Oro.

"Yet, may it please you, to the sound of pipe and tabor, the second King Karolus returned in good time; and was hailed gracious majesty by high and low.

"Throughout all eternity, the parts of the past are but parts of the future reversed. In the old foot-prints, up and down, you mortals go, eternally traveling your Sierras. And not more infallible the ponderings of the Calculating Machine than the deductions from the decimals of history.

"In nations, sovereign-kings! there is a transmigration of souls; in you, is a marvelous destiny. The eagle of Romara revives in your own mountain bird, and once more is plumed for her flight. Her screams are answered by the vauntful cries of a hawk; his red comb yet reeking with slaughter. And one East, one West, those bold birds may fly, till they lock pinions in the midmost beyond.

"But, soaring in the sky over the nations that shall gather their broods under their wings, that bloody hawk may hereafter be taken for the eagle.

"And though crimson republics may rise in constellations, like fiery Aldebarans, speeding to their culminations; yet, down must they sink at last, and leave the old sultan-sun in the sky; in time, again to be deposed.

"For little longer, may it please you, can republics subsist now, than in days gone by. For, assuming that Mardi is wiser than of old; nevertheless, though all men approached sages in intelligence, some would yet be more wise than others; and so, the old degrees be preserved. And no exemption would an equality of knowledge furnish, from the inbred servility of mortal to mortal; from all the organic causes, which inevitably divide mankind into brigades and battalions, with captains at their head.

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48 Karolus . . . dust, the execution of Charles I in 1649 • 50 Areopagiticas, Milton's Areopagitica, a famous defense of freedom of speech and of the press, published in 1644 • 54 second . . . Karolus, the "restoration" of Charles II in 1660 • 74 Aldebarans. Aldebaran is a red star of particular brightness • 81 degrees, ranks

"Civilization has not ever been the brother of equality. Freedom was born among the wild eyries in the mountains; and barbarous tribes have sheltered under her wings, when the enlightened people of the plain have nestled under different pinions.

"Though, thus far, for you, sovereign-kings! your republic has been fruitful of blessings; yet, in themselves, monarchies are not utterly evil. For many nations, they are better than republics; for many, they will ever so remain. And better, on all hands, that peace should rule with a scepter, than that the tribunes of the people should brandish their broadswords. Better be the subject of a king, upright and just; than a freeman in Franko, with the executioner's ax at every corner.

"It is not the prime end, and chief blessing, to be politically free. And freedom is only good as a means; is no end in itself. Nor, did man fight it out against his masters to the haft, not then, would he uncollar his neck from the yoke. A born thrall to the last, yelping out his liberty, he still remains a slave unto Oro; and well is it for the universe, that Oro's scepter is absolute.

"World-old the saying, that it is easier to govern others, than oneself. And that all men should govern themselves as nations, needs that all men be better, and wiser, than the wisest of one-man rulers. But in no stable democracy do all men govern themselves. Though an army be all volunteers, martial law must prevail. Delegate your power, you leagued mortals must. The hazard you must stand. And though unlike King Bello of Dominora, your great chieftain, sovereign-kings! may not declare war of himself; nevertheless, has he done a still more imperial thing:—gone to war without declaring intentions. You yourselves were precipitated upon a neighboring nation, ere you knew your spears were in your hands.

"But, as in stars you have written it on the welkin, sovereign-kings! you are a great and glorious people. And verily, yours is the best and happiest land under the sun. But not wholly, because you, in your wisdom, decreed it: your origin and geography necessitated it. Nor, in their germ, are all your blessings to be ascribed to the noble sires, who of yore fought in your behalf, sovereign-kings! Your nation enjoyed no little independence before your Declaration declared it. Your ancient pilgrims fathered your liberty; and your wild woods harbored the nursling. For the state that to-day is made up of slaves, can not to-morrow transmute her bond into free; though lawlessness may transform them into brutes. Freedom is the name for a thing that is *not* freedom; this, a lesson never learned in an hour or an age. By some tribes it will never be learned.

"Yet, if it please you, there may be such a thing as being free under Caesar. Ages ago, there were as many vital freemen, as breathe vital air to-day.

"Names make not distinctions; some despots rule without swaying scepters. Though King Bello's palace was not put together by yokel men; your federal temple of freedom, sovereign-kings! was the handiwork of slaves.

"It is not gildings, and gold maces, and crown-jewels alone, that make a people servile. There is much bowing and cringing among you yourselves, sovereign-kings! Poverty is abased before riches, all Mardi over; any where, it is hard to be a debtor; any where, the wise will lord it over fools; every where, suffering is found.

"Thus, freedom is more social than political. And its real felicity is not to be shared. *That* is of a man's own individual getting and holding. It is not, who rules the state, but who rules me. Better be secure under one king, than exposed to violence from twenty millions of monarchs, though oneself be of the number.

"But superstitious notions you harbor, sovereign-kings! Did you visit Dominora, you would not be marched straight into a dungeon. And though you would behold sundry sights displeasing, you would start to inhale such liberal breezes; and hear crowds boasting of their privileges; as you, of yours. Nor has the wine of Dominora, a monarchical flavor.

"Now, though far and wide, to keep equal pace with the times, great reforms, of a verity, be needed; nowhere are bloody revolutions required. Though it be the most certain of remedies, no prudent invalid opens his veins, to let out his disease with his life. And though all evils may be assuaged; all evils can not be done away. For evil is the chronic malady of the universe; and checked in one place, breaks forth in another.

"Of late, on this head, some wild dreams have departed.

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22 **saying.** Compare Proverbs 16:32: "He that ruleth his spirit is better than he that taketh a city" • 32 **gone . . . intentions.** On May 11, 1846, President Polk declared that "War exists . . . by the act of Mexico herself"

"There are many, who erewhile believed that the age of pikes and javelins was passed; that after a heady and blustering youth, old Mardi was at last settling down into a serene old age; and that the Indian summer, first discovered in your land, sovereign-kings! was the hazy vapor emitted from its tranquil pipe. But it has not so proved. Mardi's peaces are but truces. Long absent, at last the red comets have returned. And return they must, though their periods be ages. And should Mardi endure until mountain melt into mountain, and all the isles form one table-land; yet, would it but expand the old battle-plain.

"Students of history are horror-struck at the massacres of old; but in the shambles, men are being murdered to-day. Could time be reversed, and the future change places with the past, the past would cry out against us, and our future, full as loudly, as we against the ages foregone. All the Ages are his children, calling each other names.

"Hark ye, sovereign-kings! cheer not on the yelping pack too furiously. Hunters have been torn by their hounds. Be advised; wash your hands. Hold aloof. Oro has poured out an ocean for an everlasting barrier between you and the worst folly which other republics have perpetrated. That barrier hold sacred. And swear never to cross over to Porpheero, by manifesto or army, unless you traverse dry land.

"And be not too grasping, nearer home. It is not freedom to filch. Expand not your area too widely, now. Seek you proselytes? Neighboring nations may be free without coming under your banner. And if you can not lay your ambition, know this: that it is best served, by waiting events.

"Time, but Time only, may enable you to cross the equator; and give you the Arctic Circles for your boundaries."

So read the anonymous scroll; which straightway, was torn into shreds.

"Old tory, and monarchist!" they shouted, "Preaching over his benighted sermons in these enlightened times! Fool! does he not know that all the Past and its graves are being dug over?"

They were furious; so wildly rolling their eyes after victims, that well was it for King Media, he wore not his crown; and in silence, we moved unnoted from out the crowd.

"My lord, I am amazed at the indiscretion of a demigod," said Babbalanja, as we passed on our way; "I recognized your sultanic style the very first sentence. This, then, is the result of your hours of seclusion."

"Philosopher! I am astounded at your effrontery. I detected your philosophy the very first maxim. Who posted that parchment for you?"

So, each charged the other with its authorship: and there was no finding out, whether, indeed, either knew aught of its origin.

Now, could it have been Babbalanja? Hardly. For, philosophic as the document was, it seemed too dogmatic and conservative for him. King Media? But though imperially absolute in his political sentiments, Media delivered not himself so boldly, when actually beholding the eruption in Franko.

Indeed, the settlement of this question must be left to the commentators on Mardi, some four or five hundred centuries hence.

Chapter CLXII

THEY VISIT THE EXTREME SOUTH OF VIVENZA

We penetrated further and further into the valleys around; but, though, as elsewhere, at times we heard whisperings that promised an end to our wanderings; —we still wandered on; and once again, even Yoomy abated his sanguine hopes.

And now, we prepared to embark for the extreme south of the land.

But we were warned by the people, that in that portion of Vivenza, whither we were going, much would be seen repulsive to strangers. Such things, however, indulgent visitors overlooked. For themselves, they were well aware of those evils. Northern Vivenza had done all it could to assuage them; but in vain; the inhabitants of those southern valleys were a fiery, and intractable race; heeding neither expostulations, nor entreaties. They were wedded to their ways. Nay, they swore, that if the northern tribes persisted in intermeddlings, they would dissolve the common alliance, and establish a distinct confederacy among themselves.

Our coasting voyage at an end, our keels grated the beach among many prostrate palms, decaying, and washed by the billows. Though part and parcel of the shore we

had left, this region seemed another land. Fewer thriving things were seen; fewer cheerful sounds were heard.

"Here labor has lost his laugh!" cried Yoomy.

It was a great plain where we landed; and there, under a burning sun, hundreds of collared men were toiling in trenches, filled with the taro plant: a root most flourishing in that soil. Standing grimly over these, were men unlike them; armed with long thongs, which descended upon the toilers, and made wounds. Blood and sweat mixed; and in great drops, fell.

"Who ate these plants thus nourished?" cried Yoomy.

"Are these men?" asked Babbalanja.

"Which mean you?" said Mohi.

Heeding him not, Babbalanja advanced toward the foremost of those with the thongs,—one Nulli: a cadaverous, ghost-like man; with a low ridge of forehead; hair, steel-gray; and wondrous eyes;—bright, nimble, as the twin Corposant balls, playing about the ends of ships' royal-yards in gales.

The sun passed under a cloud; and Nulli, darting at Babbalanja those wondrous eyes, there fell upon him a baleful glare.

"Have they souls?" he said, pointing to the serfs.

"No," said Nulli, "their ancestors may have had; but their souls have been bred out of their descendants; as the instinct of scent is killed in pointers."

Approaching one of the serfs, Media took him by the hand, and felt of it long; and looked into his eyes; and placed his ear to his side; and exclaimed, "Surely this being has flesh that is warm; he has Oro in his eye; and a heart in him that beats. I swear he is a man."

"Is this our lord the king?" cried Mohi, starting.

"What art thou," said Babbalanja to the serf. "Dost ever feel in thee a sense of right and wrong? Art ever glad or sad?—They tell us thou art not a man:—speak, then, for thyself; say, whether thou beliest thy Maker."

"Speak not of my Maker to me. Under the lash, I believe my masters, and account myself a brute; but in my dreams, bethink myself an angel. But I am bond; and my little ones;—their mother's milk is gall."

"Just Oro!" cried Yoomy, "do no thunders roll,—no lightnings flash in this accursed land!"

"Asylum for all Mardi's thralls!" cried Media.

"Incendiaries!" cried he with the wondrous eyes, "come ye, firebrands, to light the flame of revolt? Know ye not, that there are many serfs, who, incited to obtain their liberty, might wreak some dreadful vengeance? Avaunt, thou king! *thou* horrified at this? Go back to Odo, and right her wrongs! These serfs are happier than thine; though thine, no collars wear; more happy as they are, than if free. Are they not fed, clothed, and cared for? Thy serfs pine for food: never yet did these; who have no thoughts, no cares."

"Thoughts and cares are life, and liberty, and immortality!" cried Babbalanja; "and are their souls, then, blown out as candles?"

"Ranter! they are content," cried Nulli. "They shed no tears."

"Frost never weeps," said Babbalanja; "and tears are frozen in those frigid eyes."

"Oh fettered sons of fettered mothers, conceived and born in manacles," cried Yoomy; "dragging them through life; and falling with them, clanking in the grave:—oh, beings as ourselves, how my stiff arm shivers to avenge you! 'Twere absolution for the matricide, to strike one rivet from your chains. My heart outswells its home!"

"Oro! Art thou?" cried Babbalanja; "and doth this thing exist? It shakes my little faith." Then, turning upon Nulli, "How can ye abide to sway this curs'd dominion?"

"Peace, fanatic! Who else may till unwholesome fields, but these? And as these beings are, so shall they remain; 'tis right and righteous! Maramma champions it! —*I* swear it! The first blow struck for them, dissolves the union of Vivenza's vales. The northern tribes well know it; and know me."

Said Media, "Yet if—"

"No more! another word, and, king as thou art, thou shalt be dungeoned:—here, there is such a law; thou art not among the northern tribes."

"And this is freedom!" murmured Media; "when heaven's own voice is throttled. And were these serfs to rise, and fight for it; like dogs, they would be hunted down by her pretended sons!"

"Pray, heaven!" cried Yoomy, "they may yet find a way to loose their bonds without one drop of blood. But hear me, Oro! were there no other way, and should their

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15 **Nulli**, John C. Calhoun (1782-1850), the chief exponent of the doctrine of nullification • 18 **Corposant**, St. Elmo's fire, a luminous electrical discharge visible at the tips of a ship's masts and rigging during stormy weather • 73 **Maramma**, the Church

masters not relent, all honest hearts must cheer this tribe of Hamo on; though they cut their chains with blades thrice edged, and gory to the haft! 'Tis right to fight for freedom, whoever be the thrall."

"These South savannahs may yet prove battle-fields," said Mohi, gloomily, as we retraced our steps.

"Be it," said Yoomy. "Oro will van the right."

"Not always has it proved so," said Babbalanja. "Oft-times, the right fights single-handed against the world; and Oro champions none. In all things, man's own battles, man himself must fight. Yoomy: so far as feeling goes, your sympathies are not more hot than mine; but for these serfs you would cross spears; yet, I would not. Better present woes for some, than future woes for all."

"No need to fight," cried Yoomy, "to liberate that tribe of Hamo instantly; a way may be found, and no irretrievable evil ensue."

"Point it out, and be blessed, Yoomy."

"That is for Vivenza; but the head is dull, where the heart is cold."

"My lord," said Babbalanja, "you have startled us by your kingly sympathy for suffering; say thou, then, in what wise manner it shall be relieved."

"That is for Vivenza," said Media.

"Mohi, you are old: speak thou."

"Let Vivenza speak," said Mohi.

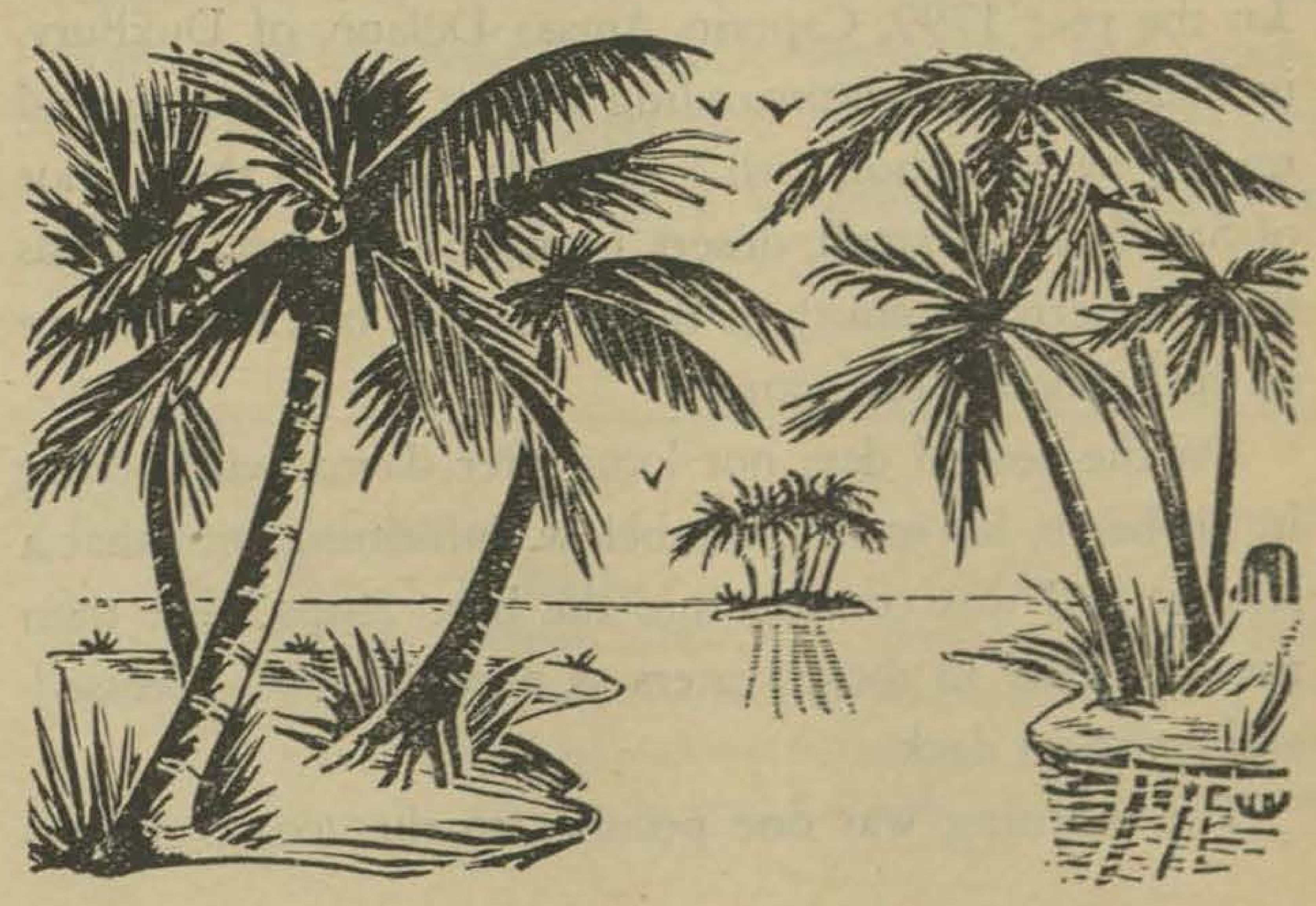
"Thus, then, we all agree; and weeping, all but echo hard-hearted Nulli. Tears are not swords; and wrongs seem almost natural as rights. For the righteous to suppress an evil, is sometimes harder than for others to uphold it. Humanity cries out against this vast enormity:—not one man knows a prudent remedy. Blame not, then, the North; and wisely judge the South. Ere, as a nation, they became responsible, this thing was planted in their midst. Such roots strike deep. Place to-day those serfs in Dominora; and with them, all Vivenza's Past;—and serfs, for many years, in Dominora, they would be. Easy is it to stand afar and rail. All men are censors who have lungs. We can say, the stars are wrongly marshaled. Blind men say the sun is blind. A thousand muscles wag our tongues; though our tongues were housed, that they might have a home. Whoso is free from crime, let him cross himself—but hold his cross upon his lips. That he is not bad, is not of him. Potters' clay and wax are all, molded by hands invisible. The soil decides the man. And, ere birth, man wills not to be born here or there. These southern tribes have grown up with this thing; bond-women were their nurses, and bondmen serve them still. Nor are all their serfs such wretches as those we saw. Some seem happy: yet not as men. Unmanned, they know not what they are. And though, of all the south, Nulli must stand almost alone in his insensate creed; yet, to all wrong-doers, custom backs the sense of wrong. And if to every Mardian, conscience be the awarder of its own doom; then, of these tribes, many shall be found exempted from the least penalty of this sin. But sin it is, no less;—a blot, foul as the crater-pool of hell; it puts out the sun at noon; it parches all fertility; and, conscience or no conscience—ere he die—let every master who wrenches bond-babe from mother, that the nipple tear; unwreathes the arms of sisters; or cuts the holy unity in twain; till apart fall man and wife, like one bleeding body cleft:—let that master thrice shrive his soul; take every sacrament; on his bended knees give up the ghost;—yet shall he die despairing; and live again, to die forever damned. The future is all hieroglyphics. Who may read? But, methinks the great laggard Time must now march up apace, and somehow befriend these thralls. It can not be, that misery is perpetually entailed; though, in a land proscribing primogeniture, the first-born and last of Hamo's tribe must still succeed to all their sires' wrongs. Yes: Time—all-healing Time—Time, great Philanthropist!—Time must befriend these thralls!"

"Oro grant it!" cried Yoomy, "and let Mardi say, amen!"

"Amen! amen! amen!" cried echoes echoing echoes.

We traversed many of these southern vales; but as in Dominora,—so, throughout Vivenza, North and South,—Yillah harbored not.

1849



Benito Cereno

"Benito Cereno" was first printed serially in **Putnam's Monthly Magazine** in October, November, and December 1855, and was reprinted, with minor revisions, in **Piazza Tales** in 1856. Melville derived the principal facts of his narrative from Chapter XVIII of Amasa Delano's **Narrative of Voyages and Travels in the Northern and Southern Hemispheres . . .**, Boston, 1817; but the artistry which made of the facts a literary masterpiece was Melville's own. Delano's chapter is reprinted in Harold H. Scudder's "Melville's 'Benito Cereno' and Captain Delano's Voyages," **Publications of the Modern Language Association**, June 1928, XLIII.

The late Edward J. O'Brien regarded "Benito Cereno" as "the noblest short story in American literature" (**Twenty-Five Finest Short Stories**, New York, 1931). The story is indeed remarkable for its atmosphere and suggestion, its cumulative suspense, its horror, its pictorial qualities, its portrayal of contrasting types of character. Only in **Moby Dick** perhaps is Melville's power more fully revealed.

In the year 1799, Captain Amasa Delano, of Duxbury, in Massachusetts, commanding a large sealer and general trader, lay at anchor with a valuable cargo, in the harbor of St. Maria—a small, desert, uninhabited island towards the southern extremity of the long coast of Chili. There he had touched for water.

On the second day, not long after dawn, while lying in his berth, his mate came below, informing him that a strange sail was coming into the bay. Ships were then not so plenty in those waters as now. He rose, dressed, and went on deck.

The morning was one peculiar to that coast. Everything was mute and calm; everything gray. The sea, though undulated into long roods of swells, seemed fixed, and was sleeked at the surface like waved lead that has cooled and set in the smelter's mould. The sky seemed a gray surtout. Flights of troubled gray fowl, kith and kin with flights of troubled gray vapors among which they were mixed, skimmed low and fitfully over the waters, as swallows over meadows before storms. Shadows present, foreshadowing deeper shadows to come.

To Captain Delano's surprise, the stranger, viewed through the glass, showed no colors; though to do so upon entering a haven, however unhabited in its shores, where but a single other ship might be lying, was the custom among peaceful seamen of all nations. Considering the lawlessness and loneliness of the spot, and the sort of stories, at that day, associated with those seas, Captain Delano's surprise might have deepened into some uneasiness had he not been a person of a singularly undistrustful good nature, not liable, except on extraordinary and repeated incentives, and hardly then, to indulge in personal alarms, any way involving the imputation of malign evil in man. Whether, in view of what humanity is capable, such a trait implies, along with a benevolent heart, more than ordinary quickness and accuracy of intellectual perception, may be left to the wise to determine.

But whatever misgivings might have obtruded on first seeing the stranger, would almost, in any seaman's mind, have been dissipated by observing that the ship, in navigating into the harbor, was drawing too near the land; a sunken reef making out off her bow. This seemed to prove her a stranger, indeed, not only to the sealer, but the island; consequently, she could be no wonted freebooter on that ocean. With no small interest, Captain Delano continued to watch her—a proceeding not much facilitated by the vapors partly mantling the hull, through which the far matin light from her cabin streamed equivocally enough; much like the sun—by this time hemisphered on the rim of the horizon, and, apparently, in company with the strange ship, entering the harbor—which, wimpled by the same low, creeping clouds, showed not unlike a Lima intriguante's one sinister eye peering

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54 **Lima,** the capital of Peru • 54 **intriguante,** a woman who carries on an illicit love affair

across the Plaza from the Indian loop-hole of her dusk *saya-y-manta.*

It might have been but a deception of the vapors, but, the longer the stranger was watched the more singular appeared her manoeuvers. Ere long it seemed hard to decide whether she meant to come in or no—what she wanted, or what she was about. The wind, which had breezed up a little during the night, was now extremely light and baffling, which the more increased the apparent uncertainty of her movements.

Surmising, at last, that it might be a ship in distress, Captain Delano ordered his whale-boat to be dropped, and, much to the wary opposition of his mate, prepared to board her, and, at the least, pilot her in. On the night previous, a fishing-party of the seamen had gone a long distance to some detached rocks out of sight from the sealer, and, an hour or two before daybreak, had returned, having met with no small success. Presuming that the stranger might have been long off soundings, the good captain put several baskets of the fish, for presents, into his boat, and so pulled away. From her continuing too near the sunken reef, deeming her in danger, calling to his men, he made all haste to apprise those on board of their situation. But, some time ere the boat came up, the wind, light though it was, having shifted, had headed the vessel off, as well as partly broken the vapors from about her.

Upon gaining a less remote view, the ship, when made signally visible on the verge of the leaden-hued swells, with the shreds of fog here and there raggedly furring her, appeared like a white-washed monastery after a thunderstorm, seen perched upon some dun cliff among the Pyrenees. But it was no purely fanciful resemblance which now, for a moment, almost led Captain Delano to think that nothing less than a ship-load of monks was before him. Peering over the bulwarks were what really seemed, in the hazy distance, throngs of dark cowls; while, fitfully revealed through the open port-holes, other dark moving figures were dimly descried, as of Black Friars pacing the cloisters.

Upon a still nigher approach, this appearance was modified, and the true character of the vessel was plain—a Spanish merchantman of the first class, carrying Negro slaves, amongst other valuable freight, from one colonial port to another. A very large, and, in its time, a very fine vessel, such as in those days were at intervals encountered along that main; sometimes superseded Acapulco treasure-ships, or retired frigates of the Spanish king's navy, which, like superannuated Italian palaces, still, under a decline of masters, preserved signs of former state.

As the whale-boat drew more and more nigh, the cause of the peculiar pipe-clayed aspect of the stranger was seen in the slovenly neglect pervading her. The spars, ropes, and great part of the bulwarks, looked woolly, from long unacquaintance with the scraper, tar, and the brush. Her keel seemed laid, her ribs put together, and she launched, from Ezekiel's Valley of Dry Bones.

In the present business in which she was engaged, the ship's general model and rig appeared to have undergone no material change from their original warlike and Froissart pattern. However, no guns were seen.

The tops were large, and were railed about with what had once been octagonal net-work, all now in sad disrepair. These tops hung overhead like three ruinous aviaries, in one of which was seen perched on a ratlin, a white noddy, a strange fowl, so called from its lethargic somnambulistic character, being frequently caught by hand at sea. Battered and mouldy, the castellated forecastle seemed some ancient turret, long ago taken by assault, and then left to decay. Toward the stern, two high-raised quarter galleries—the balustrades here and there covered with dry, tindery sea-moss—opening out from the unoccupied state-cabin, whose dead-lights, for all the mild weather, were hermetically closed and calked—these tenantless balconies hung over the sea as if it were the grand Venetian canal. But the principal relic of faded grandeur was the ample oval of the shield-like stern-piece, intricately carved with the arms of Castile and Leon, medallioned about by groups of mythological or symbolical devices; uppermost and central of which was a dark satyr in a mask, holding his foot on the prostrate neck of a writhing figure, likewise masked.

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2 saya-y-manta, skirt and shawl • 48 **Acapulco,** a Mexican port on the Pacific Ocean • 58 **Ezekiel's . . . Bones.** See Ezekiel 37:1-10 • 62 **Froissart,** Jean Froissart (1337-1410), author of the famous **Chronicles.** "Froissart pattern" apparently means that the ship was of medieval design • 63 **tops,** platforms in the mast • 74 **dead-lights,** shutters on the cabin windows to keep out water • 80 **Castile and Leon.** See note, p. 966

Whether the ship had a figure-head, or only a plain beak, was not quite certain, owing to canvas wrapped about that part, either to protect it while undergoing a re-furbishing, or else decently to hide its decay. Rudely painted or chalked, as in a sailor freak, along the forward side of a sort of pedestal below the canvas, was the sentence, "*Seguid vuestro jefe*" (follow your leader); while upon the tarnished head-boards, near by, appeared, in stately capitals, once gilt, the ship's name "SAN DOMINICK," each letter streakingly corroded with tricklings of copper-spike rust; while, like mourning weeds, dark festoons of sea-grass slimily swept to and fro over the name, with every hearse-like roll of the hull.

As, at last, the boat was hooked from the bow along toward the gangway amidship, its keel, while yet some inches separated from the hull, harshly grated as on a sunken coral reef. It proved a huge bunch of conglobated barnacles adhering below the water to the side like a wen—a token of baffling airs and long calms passed somewhere in those seas.

Climbing the side, the visitor was at once surrounded by a clamorous throng of whites and blacks, but the latter outnumbering the former more than could have been expected, Negro transportation-ship as the stranger in port was. But, in one language, and as with one voice, all poured out a common tale of suffering; in which the Negresses, of whom there were not a few, exceeded the others in their dolorous vehemence. The scurvy, together with a fever, had swept off a great part of their number, more especially the Spaniards. Off Cape Horn, they had narrowly escaped shipwreck; then, for days together, they had lain tranced without wind; their provisions were low; their water next to none; their lips that moment were baked.

While Captain Delano was thus made the mark of all eager tongues, his one eager glance took in all the faces, with every other object about him.

Always upon first boarding a large and populous ship at sea, especially a foreign one, with a nondescript crew such as Lascars or Manilla men, the impression varies in a peculiar way from that produced by first entering a strange house with strange inmates in a strange land. Both house and ship—the one by its walls and blinds, the other by its high bulwarks like ramparts—hoard from view their interiors till the last moment; but in the case of the ship there is this addition: that the living spectacle it contains, upon its sudden and complete disclosure, has, in contrast with the blank ocean which zones it, something of the effect of enchantment. The ship seems unreal; these strange costumes, gestures, and faces, but a shadowy tableau just emerged from the deep, which directly must receive back what it gave.

Perhaps it was some such influence, as above is attempted to be described, which, in Captain Delano's mind, heightened whatever, upon a staid scrutiny, might have seemed unusual; especially the conspicuous figures of four elderly grizzled Negroes, their heads like black, doddered willow tops, who, in venerable contrast to the tumult below them, were couched sphynx-like, one on the starboard cat-head, another on the larboard, and the remaining pair face to face on the opposite bulwarks above the main-chains. They each had bits of unstranded old junk in their hands, and, with a sort of stoical self-content, were picking the junk into oakum, a small heap of which lay by their sides. They accompanied the task with a continuous, low, monotonous chant; droning and druling away like so many gray-headed bag-pipers playing a funeral march.

The quarter-deck rose into an ample elevated poop, upon the forward verge of which, lifted, like the oakum-pickers, some eight feet above the general throng, sat along in a row, separated by regular spaces, the cross-legged figures of six other blacks; each with a rusty hatchet in his hand, which, with a bit of brick and a rag, he was engaged like a scullion in scouring; while between each two was a small stack of hatchets, their rusted edges turned forward awaiting a like operation. Though occasionally the four oakum-pickers would briefly address some person or persons in the crowd below, yet the six hatchet-polishers neither spoke to others, nor breathed a whisper among themselves, but sat intent upon their task, except at intervals, when, with the peculiar love in Negroes of uniting industry with pastime, two-and-two they sideways clashed their hatchets together, like cymbals, with a barbarous din. All six, unlike the generality, had the raw aspect of unsophisticated Africans.

But that first comprehensive glance which took in

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40 Lascars, East Indian sailors • 58 doddered, having lost their branches because of age or decay • 62 main-chains, attached to the mainmast

those ten figures, with scores less conspicuous, rested but an instant upon them, as, impatient of the hubbub of voices, the visitor turned in quest of whomsoever it might be that commanded the ship.

But as if not unwilling to let nature make known her own case among his suffering charge, or else in despair of restraining it for the time, the Spanish captain, a gentlemanly, reserved-looking, and rather young man to a stranger's eye, dressed with singular richness, but bearing plain traces of recent sleepless cares and disquietudes, stood passively by, leaning against the mainmast, at one moment casting a dreary, spiritless look upon his excited people, at the next an unhappy glance toward his visitor. By his side stood a black of small stature, in whose rude face, as occasionally, like a shepherd's dog, he mutely turned it up into the Spaniard's, sorrow and affection were equally blended.

Struggling through the throng, the American advanced to the Spaniard, assuring him of his sympathies, and offering to render whatever assistance might be in his power. To which the Spaniard returned for the present but grave and ceremonious acknowledgments, his national formality dusked by the saturnine mood of ill-health.

But losing no time in mere compliments, Captain Delano, returning to the gangway, had his basket of fish brought up; and as the wind still continued light, so that some hours at least must elapse ere the ship could be brought to the anchorage, he bade his men return to the sealer, and fetch back as much water as the whale-boat could carry, with whatever soft bread the steward might have, all the remaining pumpkins on board, with a box of sugar, and a dozen of his private bottles of cider.

Not many minutes after the boat's pushing off, to the vexation of all, the wind entirely died away, and the tide turning, began drifting back the ship helplessly seaward. But trusting this would not long last, Captain Delano sought, with good hopes, to cheer up the strangers, feeling no small satisfaction that, with persons in their condition he could—thanks to his frequent voyages along the Spanish main—converse with some freedom in their native tongue.

While left alone with them, he was not long in observing some things tending to heighten his first impressions; but surprise was lost in pity, both for the Spaniards and blacks, alike evidently reduced from scarcity of water and provisions; while long-continued suffering seemed to have brought out the less good-natured qualities of the Negroes, besides, at the same time, impairing the Spaniard's authority over them. But, under the circumstances, precisely this condition of things was to have been anticipated. In armies, navies, cities, or families, in nature herself, nothing more relaxes good order than misery. Still, Captain Delano was not without the idea, that had Benito Cereno been a man of greater energy, misrule would hardly have come to the present pass. But the debility, constitutional or induced by the hardships, bodily and mental, of the Spanish captain, was too obvious to be overlooked. A prey to settled dejection, as if long mocked with hope he would not now indulge it, even when it had ceased to be a mock, the prospect of that day or evening at furthest, lying at anchor, with plenty of water for his people, and a brother captain to counsel and befriend, seemed in no perceptible degree to encourage him. His mind appeared unstrung, if not still more seriously affected. Shut up in these oaken walls, chained to one dull round of command, whose unconditionality cloyed him, like some hypochondriac abbot he moved slowly about, at times suddenly pausing, starting, or staring, biting his lip, biting his finger-nail, flushing, paling, twitching his beard, with other symptoms of an absent or moody mind. This distempered spirit was lodged, as before hinted, in as distempered a frame. He was rather tall, but seemed never to have been robust, and now with nervous suffering was almost worn to a skeleton. A tendency to some pulmonary complaint appeared to have been lately confirmed. His voice was like that of one with lungs half gone—hoarsely suppressed, a husky whisper. No wonder that, as in this state he tottered about, his private servant apprehensively followed him. Sometimes the Negro gave his master his arm, or took his handkerchief out of his pocket for him; performing these and similar offices with that affectionate zeal which transmutes into something filial or fraternal acts in themselves but menial; and which has gained for the Negro the repute of making the most pleasing body-servant in the world, one, too, whom a master need be on no stiffly superior terms with, but may treat with familiar trust; less a servant than a devoted companion.

Marking the noisy indocility of the blacks in general, as well as what seemed the sullen inefficiency of the

whites, it was not without humane satisfaction that Captain Delano witnessed the steady good conduct of Babo.

But the good conduct of Babo, hardly more than the ill-behavior of others, seemed to withdraw the half-lunatic Don Benito from his cloudy languor. Not that such precisely was the impression made by the Spaniard on the mind of his visitor. The Spaniard's individual unrest was, for the present, but noted as a conspicuous feature in the ship's general affliction. Still, Captain Delano was not a little concerned at what he could not help taking for the time to be Don Benito's unfriendly indifference toward himself. The Spaniard's manner, too, conveyed a sort of sour and gloomy disdain, which he seemed at no pains to disguise. But this the American in charity ascribed to the harassing effects of sickness, since, in former instances, he had noted that there are peculiar natures on whom prolonged physical suffering seems to cancel every social instinct of kindness; as if forced to black bread themselves, they deemed it but equity that each person coming nigh them should, indirectly, by some slight or affront, be made to partake of their fare.

But ere long Captain Delano bethought him that, indulgent as he was at the first, in judging the Spaniard, he might not, after all, have exercised charity enough. At bottom it was Don Benito's reserve which displeased him; but the same reserve was shown toward all but his personal attendant. Even the formal reports which, according to sea-usage, were at stated times made to him by some petty underling, either a white, mulatto or black, he hardly had patience enough to listen to, without betraying contemptuous aversion. His manner upon such occasions was, in its degree, not unlike that which might be supposed to have been his imperial countryman's, Charles V., just previous to the anchoritish retirement of that monarch from the throne.

This splenetic disrelish of his place was evinced in almost every function pertaining to it. Proud as he was moody, he condescended to no personal mandate. Whatever special orders were necessary, their delivery was delegated to his body-servant, who in turn transferred them to their ultimate destination, through runners, alert Spanish boys or slave boys, like pages or pilot-fish within easy call continually hovering around Don Benito. So that to have beheld this undemonstrative invalid gliding about, apathetic and mute, no landsman could have dreamed that in him was lodged a dictatorship beyond which, while at sea, there was no earthly appeal.

Thus, the Spaniard, regarded in his reserve, seemed as the involuntary victim of mental disorder. But, in fact, his reserve might, in some degree, have proceeded from design. If so, then here was evinced the unhealthy climax of that icy though conscientious policy, more or less adopted by all commanders of large ships, which, except in signal emergencies, obliterates alike the manifestation of sway with every trace of sociality; transforming the man into a block, or rather into a loaded cannon, which, until there is call for thunder, has nothing to say.

Viewing him in this light, it seemed but a natural token of the perverse habit induced by a long course of such hard self-restraint, that, notwithstanding the present condition of his ship, the Spaniard should still persist in a demeanor, which, however harmless, or it may be, appropriate, in a well-appointed vessel, such as the San Dominick might have been at the outset of the voyage, was anything but judicious now. But the Spaniard, perhaps, thought that it was with captains as with gods: reserve, under all events, must still be their cue. But probably this appearance of slumbering dominion might have been but an attempted disguise to conscious imbecility—not deep policy, but shallow device. But be all this as it might, whether Don Benito's manner was designed or not, the more Captain Delano noted its pervading reserve, the less he felt uneasiness at any particular manifestation of that reserve toward himself.

Neither were his thoughts taken up by the captain alone. Wonted to the quiet orderliness of the sealer's comfortable family of a crew, the noisy confusion of the San Dominick's suffering host repeatedly challenged his eye. Some prominent breaches, not only of discipline but of decency, were observed. These Captain Delano could not but ascribe, in the main, to the absence of those subordinate deck-officers to whom, along with higher duties, is entrusted what may be styled the police department of a populous ship. True, the old oakum-pickers appeared at times to act the part of monitorial constables to their countrymen, the blacks; but though

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36 Charles V (1500-1558), Holy Roman Emperor and king of Spain • 44 pilot-fish, so named because often seen with a shark, as if acting as a pilot to the shark

occasionally succeeding in allaying trifling outbreaks now and then between man and man, they could do little or nothing toward establishing general quiet. The San Dominick was in the condition of a transatlantic emigrant ship, among whose multitude of living freight are some individuals, doubtless, as little troublesome as crates and bales; but the friendly remonstrances of such with their ruder companions are of not so much avail as the unfriendly arm of the mate. What the San Dominick wanted was, what the emigrant ship has, stern superior officers. But on these decks not so much as a fourth-mate was to be seen.

The visitor's curiosity was roused to learn the particulars of those mishaps which had brought about such absenteeism, with its consequences; because, though deriving some inkling of the voyage from the wails which at the first moment had greeted him, yet of the details no clear understanding had been had. The best account would, doubtless, be given by the captain. Yet at first the visitor was loth to ask it, unwilling to provoke some distant rebuff. But plucking up courage, he at last accosted Don Benito, renewing the expression of his benevolent interest, adding, that did he (Captain Delano) but know the particulars of the ship's misfortunes, he would, perhaps, be better able in the end to relieve them. Would Don Benito favor him with the whole story.

Don Benito faltered; then, like some somnambulist suddenly interfered with, vacantly stared at his visitor, and ended by looking down on the deck. He maintained this posture so long, that Captain Delano, almost equally disconcerted, and involuntarily almost as rude, turned suddenly from him, walking forward to accost one of the Spanish seamen for the desired information. But he had hardly gone five paces, when, with a sort of eagerness, Don Benito invited him back, regretting his momentary absence of mind, and professing readiness to gratify him.

While most part of the story was being given, the two captains stood on the after part of the main-deck, a privileged spot, no one being near but the servant.

"It is now a hundred and ninety days," began the Spaniard, in his husky whisper, "that this ship, well officered and well manned, with several cabin passengers—some fifty Spaniards in all—sailed from Buenos Ayres bound to Lima, with a general cargo, hardware, Paraguay tea and the like—and," pointing forward, "that parcel of Negroes, now not more than a hundred and fifty, as you see, but then numbering over three hundred souls. Off Cape Horn we had heavy gales. In one moment, by night, three of my best officers, with fifteen sailors, were lost, with the main-yard; the spar snapping under them in the slings, as they sought, with heavers, to beat down the icy sail. To lighten the hull, the heavier sacks of mata were thrown into the sea, with most of the water-pipes lashed on deck at the time. And this last necessity it was, combined with the prolonged detentions afterwards experienced, which eventually brought about our chief causes of suffering. When—"

Here there was a sudden fainting attack of his cough, brought on, no doubt, by his mental distress. His servant sustained him, and drawing a cordial from his pocket placed it to his lips. He a little revived. But unwilling to leave him unsupported while yet imperfectly restored, the black with one arm still encircled his master, at the same time keeping his eye fixed on his face, as if to watch for the first sign of complete restoration, or relapse, as the event might prove.

The Spaniard proceeded, but brokenly and obscurely, as one in a dream.

—"Oh, my God! rather than pass through what I have, with joy I would have hailed the most terrible gales; but—"

His cough returned and with increased violence; this subsiding, with reddened lips and closed eyes he fell heavily against his supporter.

"His mind wanders. He was thinking of the plague that followed the gales," plaintively sighed the servant; "my poor, poor master!" wringing one hand, and with the other wiping the mouth. "But be patient, Señor," again turning to Captain Delano, "these fits do not last long; master will soon be himself."

Don Benito reviving, went on; but as this portion of the story was very brokenly delivered, the substance only will here be set down.

It appeared that after the ship had been many days tossed in storms off the Cape, the scurvy broke out, carrying off numbers of the whites and blacks. When at last they had worked round into the Pacific, their spars and sails were so damaged, and so inadequately handled

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54 **water-pipes**, large casks of water

by the surviving mariners, most of whom were become invalids, that, unable to lay her northerly course by the wind, which was powerful, the unmanageable ship, for successive days and nights, was blown northwestward, where the breeze suddenly deserted her, in unknown waters, to sultry calms. The absence of the water-pipes now proved as fatal to life as before their presence had menaced it. Induced, or at least aggravated, by the more than scanty allowance of water, a malignant fever followed the scurvy; with the excessive heat of the lengthened calm, making such short work of it as to sweep away, as by billows, whole families of the Africans, and a yet larger number, proportionably, of the Spaniards, including, by a luckless fatality, every remaining officer on board. Consequently, in the smart west winds eventually following the calm, the already rent sails, having to be simply dropped, not furled, at need, had been gradually reduced to the beggar's rags they were now. To procure substitutes for his lost sailors, as well as supplies of water and sails, the captain, at the earliest opportunity, had made for Baldivia, the southernmost civilized port of Chili and South America; but upon nearing the coast the thick weather had prevented him from so much as sighting that harbor. Since which period, almost without a crew, and almost without canvas and almost without water, and, at intervals, giving its added dead to the sea, the San Dominick had been battle-dored about by contrary winds, inveigled by currents, or grown weedy in calms. Like a man lost in woods, more than once she had doubled upon her own track.

"But throughout these calamities," huskily continued Don Benito, painfully turning in the half embrace of his servant, "I have to thank those Negroes you see, who, though to your inexperienced eyes appearing unruly, have, indeed, conducted themselves with less of restlessness than even their owner could have thought possible under such circumstances."

Here he again fell faintly back. Again his mind wandered; but he rallied, and less obscurely proceeded.

"Yes, their owner was quite right in assuring me that no fetters would be needed with his blacks; so that while, as is wont in this transportation, these Negroes have always remained upon deck—not thrust below, as in the Guinea-men—they have, also, from the beginning, been freely permitted to range within given bounds at their pleasure."

Once more the faintness returned—his mind roved—but, recovering, he resumed:

"But it is Babo here to whom, under God, I owe not only my own preservation, but likewise to him, chiefly, the merit is due, of pacifying his more ignorant brethren, when at intervals tempted to murmurings."

"Ah, master," sighed the black, bowing his face, "don't speak of me; Babo is nothing; what Babo has done was but duty."

"Faithful fellow!" cried Captain Delano. "Don Benito, I envy you such a friend; slave I cannot call him."

As master and man stood before him, the black upholding the white, Captain Delano could not but bethink him of the beauty of that relationship which could present such a spectacle of fidelity on the one hand and confidence on the other. The scene was heightened by the contrast in dress, denoting their relative positions. The Spaniard wore a loose Chili jacket of dark velvet; white small-clothes and stockings, with silver buckles at the knee and instep; a high-crowned sombrero, of fine grass; a slender sword, silver mounted, hung from a knot in his sash—the last being an almost invariable adjunct, more for utility than ornament, of a South American gentleman's dress to this hour. Excepting when his occasional nervous contortions brought about disarray, there was a certain precision in his attire, curiously at variance with the unsightly disorder around: especially in the belittered Ghetto, forward of the mainmast, wholly occupied by the blacks.

The servant wore nothing but wide trowsers, apparently, from their coarseness and patches, made out of some old topsail; they were clean, and confined at the waist by a bit of unstranded rope, which, with his composed, deprecatory air at times, made him look something like a begging friar of St. Francis.

However unsuitable for the time and place, at least in the blunt-thinking American's eyes, and however strangely surviving in the midst of all his afflictions, the toilette of Don Benito might not, in fashion at least, have gone beyond the style of the day among South Americans of his class. Though on the present voyage sailing from Buenos Ayres, he had avowed himself a native and resident of Chili, whose inhabitants had not so generally

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44 Guinea-men, ships trading with Guinea in West Africa

adopted the plain coat and once plebeian pantaloons; but, with a becoming modification, adhered to their provincial costume, picturesque as any in the world. Still, relatively to the pale history of the voyage, and his own pale face, there seemed something so incongruous in the Spaniard's apparel, as almost to suggest the image of an invalid courtier tottering about London streets in the time of the plague.

The portion of the narrative which, perhaps, most excited interest, as well as some surprise, considering the latitudes in question, was the long calms spoken of, and more particularly the ship's so long drifting about. Without communicating the opinion, of course, the American could not but impute at least part of the detentions both to clumsy seamanship and faulty navigation. Eyeing Don Benito's small, yellow hands, he easily inferred that the young captain had not got into command at the hawse-hole but the cabin-window; and if so, why wonder at incompetence, in youth, sickness, and gentility united?

But drowning criticism in compassion, after a fresh repetition of his sympathies, Captain Delano, having heard out his story, not only engaged, as in the first place, to see Don Benito and his people supplied in their immediate bodily needs, but, also, now further promised to assist him in procuring a large permanent supply of water, as well as some sails and rigging; and, though it would involve no small embarrassment to himself, yet he would spare three of his best seamen for temporary deck officers; so that without delay the ship might proceed to Conception, there fully to refit for Lima, her destined port.

Such generosity was not without its effect, even upon the invalid. His face lighted up; eager and hectic, he met the honest glance of his visitor. With gratitude he seemed overcome.

"This excitement is bad for master," whispered the servant, taking his arm, and with soothing words gently drawing him aside.

When Don Benito returned, the American was pained to observe that his hopefulness, like the sudden kindling in his cheek, was but febrile and transient.

Ere long, with a joyless mien, looking up towards the poop, the host invited his guest to accompany him there, for the benefit of what little breath of wind might be stirring.

As, during the telling of the story, Captain Delano had once or twice started at the occasional cymballing of the hatchet-polishers, wondering why such an interruption should be allowed, especially in that part of the ship, and in the ears of an invalid; and moreover, as the hatchets had anything but an attractive look, and the handlers of them still less so, it was, therefore, to tell the truth, not without some lurking reluctance, or even shrinking, it may be, that Captain Delano, with apparent complaisance, acquiesced in his host's invitation. The more so, since, with an untimely caprice of punctilio, rendered distressing by his cadaverous aspect, Don Benito, with Castilian bows, solemnly insisted upon his guest's preceding him up the ladder leading to the elevation; where, one on each side of the last step, sat for armorial supporters and sentries two of the ominous file. Gingerly enough stepped good Captain Delano between them, and in the instant of leaving them behind, like one running the gauntlet, he felt an apprehensive twitch in the calves of his legs.

But when, facing about, he saw the whole file, like so many organ-grinders, still stupidly intent on their work, unmindful of everything beside, he could not but smile at his late fidgety panic.

Presently, while standing with his host, looking forward upon the decks below, he was struck by one of those instances of insubordination previously alluded to. Three black boys, with two Spanish boys, were sitting together on the hatches, scraping a rude wooden platter, in which some scanty mess had recently been cooked. Suddenly, one of the black boys, enraged at a word dropped by one of his white companions, seized a knife, and, though called to forbear by one of the oakum-pickers, struck the lad over the head, inflicting a gash from which blood flowed.

In amazement, Captain Delano inquired what this meant. To which the pale Don Benito dully muttered, that it was merely the sport of the lad.

"Pretty serious sport, truly," rejoined Captain Delano. "Had such a thing happened on board the Bachelor's Delight, instant punishment would have followed."

At these words, the Spaniard turned upon the American one of his sudden, staring, half-lunatic looks; then, relapsing into his torpor, answered, "Doubtless, doubtless, Señor."

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18 **hawse-hole**, one of the holes in the bow of a ship, through which a cable passes. The statement means that the captain had had no experience as a common sailor • 30 **Conception**, Concepción, a city on the Chilean coast

Is it, thought Captain Delano, that this hapless man is one of those paper captains I've known, who by policy wink at what by power they cannot put down? I know no sadder sight than a commander who has little of command but the name.

"I should think, Don Benito," he now said, glancing towards the oakum-picker who had sought to interfere with the boys, "that you would find it advantageous to keep all your blacks employed, especially the younger ones, no matter at what useless task, and no matter what happens to the ship. Why, even with my little band, I find such a course indispensable. I once kept a crew on my quarter-deck thrumming mats for my cabin, when, for three days, I had given up my ship—mats, men, and all—for a speedy loss, owing to the violence of a gale, in which we could do nothing but helplessly drive before it."

"Doubtless, doubtless," muttered Don Benito.

"But," continued Captain Delano, again glancing upon the oakum-pickers and then at the hatchet-polishers, near by, "I see you keep some, at least, of your host employed."

"Yes," was again the vacant response.

"Those old men there, shaking their pows from their pulpits," continued Captain Delano, pointing to the oakum-pickers, "seem to act the part of old dominies to the rest, little heeded as their admonitions are at times. Is this voluntary on their part, Don Benito, or have you appointed them shepherds to your flock of black sheep?"

"What posts they fill, I appointed them," rejoined the Spaniard in an acrid tone, as if resenting some supposed satiric reflection.

"And these others, these Ashantee conjurors here," continued Captain Delano, rather uneasily eyeing the brandished steel of the hatchet-polishers, where, in spots, it had been brought to a shine, "this seems a curious business they are at, Don Benito?"

"In the gales we met," answered the Spaniard, "what of our general cargo was not thrown overboard was much damaged by the brine. Since coming into calm weather, I have had several cases of knives and hatchets daily brought up for overhauling and cleaning."

"A prudent idea, Don Benito. You are part owner of ship and cargo, I presume; but not of the slaves, perhaps?"

"I am owner of all you see," impatiently returned Don Benito, "except the main company of blacks, who belonged to my late friend Alexandro Aranda."

As he mentioned this name, his air was heart-broken; his knees shook; his servant supported him.

Thinking he divined the cause of such unusual emotion, to confirm his surmise, Captain Delano, after a pause, said: "And may I ask, Don Benito, whether—since awhile ago you spoke of some cabin passengers—the friend, whose loss so afflicts you, at the outset of the voyage accompanied his blacks?"

"Yes."

"But died of the fever?"

"Died of the fever.—Oh, could I but—"

Again quivering, the Spaniard paused.

"Pardon me," said Captain Delano, lowly, "but I think that, by a sympathetic experience, I conjecture, Don Benito, what it is that gives the keener edge to your grief. It was once my hard fortune to lose, at sea, a dear friend, my own brother, then supercargo. Assured of the welfare of his spirit, its departure I could have borne like a man; but that honest eye, that honest hand—both of which had so often met mine—and that warm heart; all, all—like scraps to the dogs—to throw all to the sharks! It was then I vowed never to have for fellow-voyager a man I loved, unless, unbeknown to him, I had provided every requisite, in case of a fatality, for embalming his mortal part for interment on shore. Were your friend's remains now on board this ship, Don Benito, not thus strangely would the mention of his name affect you."

"On board this ship?" echoed the Spaniard. Then, with horrified gestures, as directed against some spectre, he unconsciously fell into the ready arms of his attendant, who, with a silent appeal toward Captain Delano, seemed beseeching him not again to broach a theme so unspeakably distressing to his master.

This poor fellow now, thought the pained American, is the victim of that sad superstition which associates goblins with the deserted body of man, as ghosts with an abandoned house. How unlike are we made! What to me, in like case, would have been a solemn satis-

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33 **Ashantee,** a native kingdom in West Africa • 64 **supercargo,** an officer in a merchant ship whose duty is to manage the business affairs of the voyage

faction, the bare suggestion, even, terrifies the Spaniard into this trance. Poor Alexandro Aranda! what would you say could you here see your friend—who, on former voyages, when you, for months, were left behind, has, I dare say, often longed, and longed, for one peep at you—now transported with terror at the least thought of having you anyway nigh him.

At this moment, with a dreary grave-yard toll, betokening a flaw, the ship's forecastle bell, smote by one of the grizzled oakum-pickers, proclaimed ten o'clock, through the leaden calm; when Captain Delano's attention was caught by the moving figure of a gigantic black, emerging from the general crowd below, and slowly advancing toward the elevated poop. An iron collar was about his neck, from which depended a chain, thrice wound round his body; the terminating links padlocked together at a broad band of iron, his girdle.

"How like a mute Atufal moves," murmured the servant.

The black mounted the steps of the poop, and, like a brave prisoner, brought up to receive sentence, stood in unquailing muteness before Don Benito, now recovered from his attack.

At the first glimpse of his approach, Don Benito had started, a resentful shadow swept over his face; and, as with the sudden memory of bootless rage, his white lips glued together.

This is some mulish mutineer, thought Captain Delano, surveying, not without a mixture of admiration, the colossal form of the Negro.

"See, he waits your question, master," said the servant.

Thus reminded, Don Benito, nervously averting his glance, as if shunning, by anticipation, some rebellious response, in a disconcerted voice, thus spoke:—

"Atufal, will you ask my pardon now?"

The black was silent.

"Again, master," murmured the servant, with bitter upbraiding eyeing his countryman, "again, master; he will bend to master yet."

"Answer," said Don Benito, still averting his glance, "say but the one word, *pardon,* and your chains shall be off."

Upon this, the black, slowly raising both arms, let them lifelessly fall, his links clanking, his head bowed; as much as to say, "No, I am content."

"Go," said Don Benito, with inkept and unknown emotion.

Deliberately as he had come, the black obeyed.

"Excuse me, Don Benito," said Captain Delano, "but this scene surprises me; what means it, pray?"

"It means that that Negro alone, of all the band, has given me peculiar cause of offence. I have put him in chains; I—"

Here he paused; his hand to his head, as if there were a swimming there, or a sudden bewilderment of memory had come over him; but meeting his servant's kindly glance seemed reassured, and proceeded:—

"I could not scourge such a form. But I told him he must ask my pardon. As yet he has not. At my command, every two hours he stands before me."

"And how long has this been?"

"Some sixty days."

"And obedient in all else? And respectful?"

"Yes."

"Upon my conscience, then," exclaimed Captain Delano, impulsively, "he has a royal spirit in him, this fellow."

"He may have some right to it," bitterly returned Don Benito; "he says he was king in his own land."

"Yes," said the servant, entering a word, "those slits in Atufal's ears once held wedges of gold; but poor Babo here, in his own land, was only a poor slave; a black man's slave was Babo, who now is the white's."

Somewhat annoyed by these conversational familiarities, Captain Delano turned curiously upon the attendant, then glanced inquiringly at his master; but, as if long wonted to these little informalities, neither master nor man seemed to understand him.

"What, pray, was Atufal's offence, Don Benito?" asked Captain Delano; "if it was not something very serious, take a fool's advice, and, in view of his general docility, as well as in some natural respect for his spirit, remit him his penalty."

"No, no, master never will do that," here murmured the servant to himself, "proud Atufal must first ask master's pardon. The slave there carries the padlock, but master here carries the key."

His attention thus directed, Captain Delano now noticed for the first time, that, suspended by a slender silken cord, from Don Benito's neck, hung a key. At

once, from the servant's muttered syllables, divining the key's purpose, he smiled and said:—"So, Don Benito—padlock and key—significant symbols, truly."

Biting his lip, Don Benito faltered.

Though the remark of Captain Delano, a man of such native simplicity as to be incapable of satire or irony, had been dropped in playful allusion to the Spaniard's singularly evidenced lordship over the black; yet the hypochondriac seemed in some way to have taken it as a malicious reflection upon his confessed inability thus far to break down, at least, on a verbal summons, the entrenched will of the slave. Deploring this supposed misconception, yet despairing of correcting it, Captain Delano shifted the subject; but finding his companion more than ever withdrawn, as if still sourly digesting the lees of the presumed affront above-mentioned, by-and-by Captain Delano likewise became less talkative, oppressed, against his own will, by what seemed the secret vindictiveness of the morbidly sensitive Spaniard. But the good sailor, himself of a quite contrary disposition, refrained, on his part, alike from the appearance as from the feeling of resentment, and if silent, was only so from contagion.

Presently the Spaniard, assisted by his servant, somewhat discourteously crossed over from his guest; a procedure which, sensibly enough, might have been allowed to pass for idle caprice of ill-humor, had not master and man, lingering round the corner of the elevated skylight, began whispering together in low voices. This was unpleasing. And more: the moody air of the Spaniard, which at times had not been without a sort of valetudinarian stateliness, now seemed anything but dignified; while the menial familiarity of the servant lost its original charm of simple-hearted attachment.

In his embarrassment, the visitor turned his face to the other side of the ship. By so doing, his glance accidentally fell on a young Spanish sailor, a coil of rope in his hand, just stepped from the deck to the first round of the mizzen-rigging. Perhaps the man would not have been particularly noticed, were it not that, during his ascent to one of the yards, he, with a sort of covert intentness, kept his eye fixed on Captain Delano, from whom, presently, it passed, as if by a natural sequence, to the two whisperers.

His own attention thus redirected to that quarter, Captain Delano gave a slight start. From something in Don Benito's manner just then, it seemed as if the visitor had, at least partly, been the subject of the withdrawn consultation going on—a conjecture as little agreeable to the guest as it was little flattering to the host.

The singular alternations of courtesy and ill-breeding in the Spanish captain were unaccountable, except on one of two suppositions—innocent lunacy, or wicked imposture.

But the first idea, though it might naturally have occurred to an indifferent observer, and, in some respects, had not hitherto been wholly a stranger to Captain Delano's mind, yet, now that, in an incipient way, he began to regard the stranger's conduct something in the light of an intentional affront, of course the idea of lunacy was virtually vacated. But if not a lunatic, what then? Under the circumstances, would a gentleman, nay, any honest boor, act the part now acted by his host? The man was an impostor. Some low-born adventurer, masquerading as an oceanic grandee; yet so ignorant of the first requisites of mere gentlemanhood as to be betrayed into the present remarkable indecorum. That strange ceremoniousness, too, at other times evinced, seemed not uncharacteristic of one playing a part above his real level. Benito Cereno—Don Benito Cereno—a sounding name. One, too, at that period, not unknown, in the surname, to supercargoes and sea captains trading along the Spanish Main, as belonging to one of the most enterprising and extensive mercantile families in all those provinces; several members of it having titles; a sort of Castilian Rothschild, with a noble brother, or cousin, in every great trading town of South America. The alleged Don Benito was in early manhood, about twenty-nine or thirty. To assume a sort of roving cadetship in the maritime affairs of such a house, what more likely scheme for a young knave of talent and spirit? But the Spaniard was a pale invalid. Never mind. For even to the degree of simulating mortal disease, the craft of some tricksters had been known to attain. To think that, under the aspect of infantile weakness, the most savage energies might be couched—those velvets of the Spaniard but the silky paw to his fangs.

From no train of thought did these fancies come; not

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76 Rothschild. The Rothschilds were a family of wealthy bankers who flourished first in Germany and later in England from the eighteenth to the present century

from within, but from without; suddenly, too, and in one throng, like hoar frost; yet as soon to vanish as the mild sun of Captain Delano's good-nature regained its meridian.

Glancing over once more towards his host—whose side-face, revealed above the skylight, was now turned toward him—he was struck by the profile, whose clearness of cut was refined by the thinness incident to ill-health, as well as ennobled about the chin by the beard. Away with suspicion. He was a true off-shoot of a true hidalgo Cereno.

Relieved by these and other better thoughts, the visitor, lightly humming a tune, now began indifferently pacing the poop, so as not to betray to Don Benito that he had at all mistrusted incivility, much less duplicity; for such mistrust would yet be proved illusory, and by the event; though, for the present, the circumstance which had provoked that distrust remained unexplained. But when that little mystery should have been cleared up, Captain Delano thought he might extremely regret it, did he allow Don Benito to become aware that he had indulged in ungenerous surmises. In short, to the Spaniard's black-letter text, it was best, for a while, to leave open margin.

Presently, his pale face twitching and overcast, the Spaniard, still supported by his attendant, moved over towards his guest, when, with even more than his usual embarrassment, and a strange sort of intriguing intonation in his husky whisper, the following conversation began:—

"Señor, may I ask how long you have lain at this isle?"

"Oh, but a day or two, Don Benito."

"And from what port are you last?"

"Canton."

"And there, Señor, you exchanged your seal-skins for teas and silks, I think you said?"

"Yes. Silks, mostly."

"And the balance you took in specie, perhaps?"

Captain Delano, fidgeting a little, answered—

"Yes; some silver; not a very great deal, though."

"Ah—well. May I ask how many men have you, Señor?"

Captain Delano slightly started, but answered—

"About five-and-twenty, all told."

"And at present, Señor, all on board, I suppose?"

"All on board, Don Benito," replied the Captain, now with satisfaction.

"And will be to-night, Señor?"

At this last question, following so many pertinacious ones, for the soul of him Captain Delano could not but look very earnestly at the questioner, who, instead of meeting the glance, with every token of craven discomposure dropped his eyes to the deck; presenting an unworthy contrast to his servant, who, just then, was kneeling at his feet, adjusting a loose shoe-buckle; his disengaged face meantime, with humble curiosity, turned openly up into his master's downcast one.

The Spaniard, still with a guilty shuffle, repeated his question:

"And—and will be to-night, Señor?"

"Yes, for aught I know," returned Captain Delano—"but nay," rallying himself into fearless truth, "some of them talked of going off on another fishing party about midnight."

"Your ships generally go—go more or less armed, I believe, Señor?"

"Oh, a six-pounder or two, in case of emergency," was the intrepidly indifferent reply, "with a small stock of muskets, sealing-spears, and cutlasses, you know."

As he thus responded, Captain Delano again glanced at Don Benito, but the latter's eyes were averted; while abruptly and awkwardly shifting the subject, he made some peevish allusion to the calm, and then, without apology, once more, with his attendant, withdrew to the opposite bulwarks, where the whispering was resumed.

At this moment, and ere Captain Delano could cast a cool thought upon what had just passed, the young Spanish sailor, before mentioned, was seen descending from the rigging. In act of stooping over to spring inboard to the deck, his voluminous, unconfined frock, or shirt, of coarse woolen, much spotted with tar, opened out far down the chest, revealing a soiled under garment of what seemed the finest linen, edged, about the neck, with a narrow blue ribbon, sadly faded and worn. At this moment the young sailor's eye was again fixed on the whisperers, and Captain Delano thought he observed a

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11 **hidalgo**, a title denoting a Spanish nobleman • 22 **black-letter**, a style of type, also known as Gothic or Old English, which was copied by the early printers from a form of manuscript letter current at the time. The phrase in this connection connotes strangeness and unfamiliarity • 23 **open margin**, without marginal gloss or commentary • 33 **Canton**, in China

lurking significance in it, as if silent signs, of some Freemason sort, had that instant been interchanged.

This once more impelled his own glance in the direction of Don Benito, and, as before, he could not but infer that himself formed the subject of the conference. He paused. The sound of the hatchet-polishing fell on his ears. He cast another swift side-look at the two. They had the air of conspirators. In connection with the late questionings, and the incident of the young sailor, these things now begat such return of involuntary suspicion, that the singular guilelessness of the American could not endure it. Plucking up a gay and humorous expression, he crossed over to the two rapidly, saying:—"Ha, Don Benito, your black here seems high in your trust; a sort of privy-counsellor, in fact."

Upon this, the servant looked up with a good-natured grin, but the master started as from a venomous bite. It was a moment or two before the Spaniard sufficiently recovered himself to reply; which he did, at last, with cold constraint:—"Yes, Señor, I have trust in Babo."

Here Babo, changing his previous grin of mere animal humor into an intelligent smile, not ungratefully eyed his master.

Finding that the Spaniard now stood silent and reserved, as if involuntarily, or purposely giving hint that his guest's proximity was inconvenient just then, Captain Delano, unwilling to appear uncivil even to incivility itself, made some trivial remark and moved off; again and again turning over in his mind the mysterious demeanor of Don Benito Cereno.

He had descended from the poop, and, wrapped in thought, was passing near a dark hatchway, leading down into the steerage, when, perceiving motion there, he looked to see what moved. The same instant there was a sparkle in the shadowy hatchway, and he saw one of the Spanish sailors, prowling there, hurriedly placing his hand in the bosom of his frock, as if hiding something. Before the man could have been certain who it was that was passing, he slunk below out of sight. But enough was seen of him to make it sure that he was the same young sailor before noticed in the rigging.

What was that which so sparkled? thought Captain Delano. It was no lamp—no match—no live coal. Could it have been a jewel? But how come sailors with jewels?—or with silk-trimmed under-shirts either? Has he been robbing the trunks of the dead cabin-passengers? But if so, he would hardly wear one of the stolen articles on board ship here. Ah, ah—if, now, that was, indeed, a secret sign I saw passing between this suspicious fellow and his captain awhile since; if I could only be certain that, in my uneasiness, my senses did not deceive me, then—

Here, passing from one suspicious thing to another, his mind revolved the strange questions put to him concerning his ship.

By a curious coincidence, as each point was recalled, the black wizards of Ashantee would strike up with their hatchets, as in ominous comment on the white stranger's thoughts. Pressed by such enigmas and portents, it would have been almost against nature, had not, even into the least distrustful heart, some ugly misgivings obtruded.

Observing the ship now helplessly fallen into a current, with enchanted sails, drifting with increased rapidity seaward; and noting that, from a lately intercepted projection of the land, the sealer was hidden, the stout mariner began to quake at thoughts which he barely durst confess to himself. Above all, he began to feel a ghostly dread of Don Benito. And yet when he roused himself, dilated his chest, felt himself strong on his legs, and coolly considered it—what did all these phantoms amount to?

Had the Spaniard any sinister scheme, it must have reference not so much to him (Captain Delano) as to his ship (the Bachelor's Delight). Hence the present drifting away of the one ship from the other, instead of favoring any such possible scheme, was, for the time at least, opposed to it. Clearly any suspicion, combining such contradictions, must needs be delusive. Besides, was it not absurd to think of a vessel in distress—a vessel by sickness almost dismanned of her crew—a vessel whose inmates were parched for water—was it not a thousand times absurd that such a craft should, at present, be of a piratical character; or her commander, either for himself or those under him, cherish any desire but for speedy relief and refreshment? But then, might not general distress, and thirst in particular, be affected? And might not that same undiminished Spanish crew, alleged to have perished off to a remnant, be at that very moment lurking in the hold? On heart-broken pretence of entreating

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86 affected, pretended

a cup of cold water, fiends in human form had got into lonely dwellings, nor retired until a dark deed had been done. And among the Malay pirates, it was no unusual thing to lure ships after them into their treacherous harbors, or entice boarders from a declared enemy at sea, by the spectacle of thinly manned or vacant decks, beneath which prowled a hundred spears with yellow arms ready to upthrust them through the mats. Not that Captain Delano had entirely credited such things. He had heard of them—and now, as stories, they recurred. The present destination of the ship was the anchorage. There she would be near his own vessel. Upon gaining that vicinity, might not the San Dominick, like a slumbering volcano, suddenly let loose energies now hid?

He recalled the Spaniard's manner while telling his story. There was a gloomy hesitancy and subterfuge about it. It was just the manner of one making up his tale for evil purposes, as he goes. But if that story was not true, what was the truth? That the ship had unlawfully come into the Spaniard's possession? But in many of its details, especially in reference to the more calamitous parts, such as the fatalities among the seamen, the consequent prolonged beating about, the past sufferings from obstinate calms, and still continued suffering from thirst; in all these points, as well as others, Don Benito's story had corroborated not only the wailing ejaculations of the indiscriminate multitude, white and black, but likewise—what seemed impossible to be counterfeit—by the very expression and play of every human feature, which Captain Delano saw. If Don Benito's story was, throughout, an invention, then every soul on board, down to the youngest Negress, was his carefully drilled recruit in the plot: an incredible inference. And yet, if there was ground for mistrusting his veracity, that inference was a legitimate one.

But those questions of the Spaniard. There, indeed, one might pause. Did they not seem put with much the same object with which the burglar or assassin, by daytime, reconnoitres the walls of a house? But, with ill purposes, to solicit such information openly of the chief person endangered, and so, in effect, setting him on his guard; how unlikely a procedure was that. Absurd, then, to suppose that those questions had been prompted by evil designs. Thus, the same conduct, which, in this instance, had raised the alarm, served to dispel it. In short, scarce any suspicion or uneasiness, however apparently reasonable at the time, which was not now, with equal apparent reason, dismissed.

At last, he began to laugh at his former forebodings; and laugh at the strange ship for, in its aspect someway siding with them, as it were; and laugh, too, at the odd-looking blacks, particularly those old scissors-grinders, the Ashantees; and those bed-ridden old knitting women, the oakum-pickers; and almost at the dark Spaniard himself, the central hobgoblin of all.

For the rest, whatever in a serious way seemed enigmatical, was now good-naturedly explained away by the thought that, for the most part the poor invalid scarcely knew what he was about; either sulking in black vapors, or putting idle questions without sense or object. Evidently, for the present, the man was not fit to be entrusted with the ship. On some benevolent plea withdrawing the command from him, Captain Delano would yet have to send her to Conception in charge of his second mate, a worthy person and good navigator—a plan not more convenient for the San Dominick than for Don Benito; for, relieved from all anxiety, keeping wholly to his cabin, the sick man, under the good nursing of his servant, would probably, by the end of the passage, be in a measure restored to health, and with that he should also be restored to authority.

Such were the American's thoughts. They were tranquilizing. There was a difference between the idea of Don Benito's darkly pre-ordaining Captain Delano's fate, and Captain Delano's lightly arranging Don Benito's. Nevertheless, it was not without something of relief that the good seaman presently perceived his whale-boat in the distance. Its absence had been prolonged by unexpected detention at the sealer's side, as well as its returning trip lengthened by the continual recession of the goal.

The advancing speck was observed by the blacks. Their shouts attracted the attention of Don Benito, who, with a return of courtesy, approaching Captain Delano, expressed satisfaction at the coming of some supplies, slight and temporary as they must necessarily prove.

Captain Delano responded; but while doing so, his attention was drawn to something passing on the deck below: among the crowd climbing the landward bulwarks, anxiously watching the coming boat, two blacks, to all appearances accidentally incommoded by one of the sailors, violently pushed him aside, which the sailor

someway resenting, they dashed him to the deck, despite the earnest cries of the oakum-pickers.

"Don Benito," said Captain Delano quickly, "do you see what is going on there? Look!"

But, seized by his cough, the Spaniard staggered, with both hands to his face, on the point of falling. Captain Delano would have supported him, but the servant was more alert, who, with one hand sustaining his master, with the other applied the cordial. Don Benito restored, the black withdrew his support, slipping aside a little, but dutifully remaining within call of a whisper. Such discretion was here evinced as quite wiped away, in the visitor's eyes, any blemish of impropriety which might have attached to the attendant, from the indecorous conferences before mentioned; showing, too, that if the servant were to blame, it might be more the master's fault than his own, since, when left to himself, he could conduct thus well.

His glance called away from the spectacle of disorder to the more pleasing one before him, Captain Delano could not avoid again congratulating his host upon possessing such a servant, who, though perhaps a little too forward now and then, must upon the whole be invaluable to one in the invalid's situation.

"Tell me, Don Benito," he added, with a smile—"I should like to have your man here, myself—what will you take for him? Would fifty doubloons be any object?"

"Master wouldn't part with Babo for a thousand doubloons," murmured the black, overhearing the offer, and taking it in earnest, and, with the strange vanity of a faithful slave, appreciated by his master, scorning to hear so paltry a valuation put upon him by a stranger. But Don Benito, apparently hardly yet completely restored, and again interrupted by his cough, made but some broken reply.

Soon his physical distress became so great, affecting his mind, too, apparently, that, as if to screen the sad spectacle, the servant gently conducted his master below.

Left to himself, the American, to while away the time till his boat should arrive, would have pleasantly accosted some one of the few Spanish seamen he saw; but recalling something that Don Benito had said touching their ill conduct, he refrained; as a ship-master indisposed to countenance cowardice or unfaithfulness in seamen.

While, with these thoughts, standing with eye directed forward toward that handful of sailors, suddenly he thought that one or two of them returned the glance and with a sort of meaning. He rubbed his eyes, and looked again; but again seemed to see the same thing. Under a new form, but more obscure than any previous one, the old suspicions recurred, but, in the absence of Don Benito, with less of panic than before. Despite the bad account given of the sailors, Captain Delano resolved forthwith to accost one of them. Descending the poop, he made his way through the blacks, his movement drawing a queer cry from the oakum-pickers, prompted by whom, the Negroes, twitching each other aside, divided before him; but, as if curious to see what was the object of this deliberate visit to their Ghetto, closing in behind, in tolerable order, followed the white stranger up. His progress thus proclaimed as by mounted kings-at-arms, and escorted as by a Caffre guard of honor, Captain Delano, assuming a good-humored, off-handed air, continued to advance; now and then saying a blithe word to the Negroes, and his eye curiously surveying the white faces, here and there sparsely mixed in with the blacks, like stray white pawns venturously involved in the ranks of the chess-men opposed.

While thinking which of them to select for his purpose, he chanced to observe a sailor seated on the deck engaged in tarring the strap of a large block, a circle of blacks squatted round him inquisitively eyeing the process.

The mean employment of the man was in contrast with something superior in his figure. His hand, black with continually thrusting it into the tar-pot held for him by a Negro, seemed not naturally allied to his face, a face which would have been a very fine one but for its haggardness. Whether this haggardness had aught to do with criminality, could not be determined; since, as intense heat and cold, though unlike, produce like sensations, so innocence and guilt, when, through casual association with mental pain, stamping any visible impress, use one seal—a hacked one.

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18 conduct. According to Bartlett's Dictionary of Americanisms (1848), quoted in the Dictionary of American English, the intransitive use of the verb "conduct" without the reflexive pronoun was common in New England, both in speech and in writing. Bartlett deplored the usage as an "offensive barbarism" • **62 kings-at-arms,** the chief heraldic officers of England • **63 Caffre,** Kafir, a tribe of South Africa

Not again that this reflection occurred to Captain Delano at the time, charitable man as he was. Rather another idea. Because observing so singular a haggardness combined with a dark eye, averted as in trouble and shame, and then, again recalling Don Benito's confessed ill opinion of his crew, insensibly he was operated upon by certain general notions which, while disconnecting pain and abashment from virtue, invariably link them with vice.

If, indeed, there be any wickedness on board this ship, thought Captain Delano, be sure that man there has fouled his hand in it, even as now he fouls it in the pitch. I don't like to accost him. I will speak to this other, this old Jack here on the windlass.

He advanced to an old Barcelona tar, in ragged red breeches and dirty nightcap, cheeks trenched and bronzed, whiskers dense as thorn hedges. Seated between two sleepy-looking Africans, this mariner, like his younger shipmate, was employed upon some rigging—splicing a cable—the sleepy-looking blacks performing the inferior function of holding the outer parts of the ropes for him.

Upon Captain Delano's approach, the man at once hung his head below its previous level; the one necessary for business. It appeared as if he desired to be thought absorbed, with more than common fidelity, in his task. Being addressed, he glanced up, but with what seemed a furtive, diffident air, which sat strangely enough on his weather-beaten visage, much as if a grizzly bear, instead of growling and biting, should simper and cast sheep's eyes. He was asked several questions concerning the voyage—questions purposely referring to several particulars in Don Benito's narrative, not previously corroborated by those impulsive cries greeting the visitor on first coming on board. The questions were briefly answered, confirming all that remained to be confirmed of the story. The Negroes about the windlass joined in with the old sailor; but, as they became talkative, he by degrees became mute, and at length quite glum, seemed morosely unwilling to answer more questions, and yet, all the while, this ursine air was somehow mixed with his sheepish one.

Despairing of getting into unembarrassed talk with such a centaur, Captain Delano, after glancing round for a more promising countenance, but seeing none, spoke pleasantly to the blacks to make way for him; and so, amid various grins and grimaces, returned to the poop, feeling a little strange at first, he could hardly tell why, but upon the whole with regained confidence in Benito Cereno.

How plainly, thought he, did that old whiskerando yonder betray a consciousness of ill desert. No doubt, when he saw me coming, he dreaded lest I, apprised by his Captain of the crew's general misbehavior, came with sharp words for him, and so down with his head. And yet—and yet, now that I think of it, that very old fellow, if I err not, was one of those who seemed so earnestly eyeing me here awhile since. Ah, these currents spin one's head around almost as much as they do the ship. Ha, there now's a pleasant sort of sunny sight; quite sociable, too.

His attention had been drawn to a slumbering Negress, partly disclosed through the lace-work of some rigging, lying, with youthful limbs carelessly disposed, under the lee of the bulwarks, like a doe in the shade of a woodland rock. Sprawling at her lapped breasts, was her wide-awake fawn, stark naked, its black little body half lifted from the deck, crosswise with its dam's; its hands, like two paws, clambering upon her; its mouth and nose ineffectually rooting to get at the mark; and meantime giving a vexatious half-grunt, blending with the composed snore of the Negress.

The uncommon vigor of the child at length roused the mother. She started up, at a distance facing Captain Delano. But as if not at all concerned at the attitude in which she had been caught, delightedly she caught the child up, with maternal transports, covering it with kisses.

There's naked nature, now; pure tenderness and love, thought Captain Delano, well pleased.

This incident prompted him to remark the other Negresses more particularly than before. He was gratified with their manners; like most uncivilized women, they seemed at once tender of heart and tough of constitution; equally ready to die for their infants or fight for them. Unsophisticated as leopardesses; loving as doves. Ah! thought Captain Delano, these, perhaps, are some of the very women whom Ledyard saw in Africa, and gave such a noble account of.

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15 Barcelona, a seaport in Spain • 87 Ledyard, John Ledyard (1751-1788), American traveler

These natural sights somehow insensibly deepened his confidence and ease. At last he looked to see how his boat was getting on; but it was still pretty remote. He turned to see if Don Benito had returned; but he had not.

To change the scene, as well as to please himself with a leisurely observation of the coming boat, stepping over into the mizzen-chains, he clambered his way into the starboard quarter-gallery—one of those abandoned Venetian-looking water-balconies previously mentioned—retreats cut off from the deck. As his foot pressed the half-damp, half-dry sea-mosses matting the place, and a chance phantom cats-paw—an islet of breeze, unheralded, unfollowed—as this ghostly cats-paw came fanning his cheek; as his glance fell upon the row of small, round dead-lights—all closed like coppered eyes of the coffined—and the state-cabin door, once connecting with the gallery, even as the dead-lights had once looked out upon it, but now calked fast like a sarcophagus lid; and to a purple-black, tarred-over panel, threshold, and post; and he bethought him of the time, when that state-cabin and this state-balcony had heard the voices of the Spanish king's officers, and the forms of the Lima viceroy's daughters had perhaps leaned where he stood—as these and other images flitted through his mind, as the cats-paw through the calm, gradually he felt rising a dreamy inquietude, like that of one who alone on the prairie feels unrest from the repose of the noon.

He leaned against the carved balustrade, again looking off toward his boat; but found his eye falling upon the ribbon grass, trailing along the ship's waterline, straight as a border of green box; and parterres of sea-weed, broad ovals and crescents, floating nigh and far, with what seemed long formal alleys between, crossing the terraces of swells, and sweeping round as if leading to the grottoes below. And overhanging all was the balustrade by his arm, which, partly stained with pitch and partly embossed with moss, seemed the charred ruin of some summer-house in a grand garden long running to waste.

Trying to break one charm, he was but becharmed anew. Though upon the wide sea, he seemed in some far inland country; prisoner in some deserted chateau, left to stare at empty grounds, and peer out at vague roads, where never wagon or wayfarer passed.

But these enchantments were a little disenchanted as his eye fell on the corroded main-chains. Of an ancient style, massy and rusty in link, shackle and bolt, they seemed even more fit for the ship's present business than the one for which she had been built.

Presently he thought something moved nigh the chains. He rubbed his eyes, and looked hard. Groves of rigging were about the chains; and there, peering from behind a great stay, like an Indian from behind a hemlock, a Spanish sailor, a marlingspike in his hand, was seen, who made what seemed an imperfect gesture toward the balcony, but immediately, as if alarmed by some advancing step along the deck within, vanished into the recesses of the hempen forest, like a poacher.

What meant this? Something the man had sought to communicate, unbeknown to any one, even to his captain. Did the secret involve aught unfavorable to his captain? Were those previous misgivings of Captain Delano's about to be verified? Or, in his haunted mood at the moment, had some random, unintentional motion of the man, while busy with the stay, as if repairing it, been mistaken for a significant beckoning?

Not unbewildered, again he gazed off for his boat. But it was temporarily hidden by a rocky spur of the isle. As with some eagerness he bent foward, watching for the first shooting view of its beak, the balustrade gave way before him like charcoal. Had he not clutched an outreaching rope he would have fallen into the sea. The crash, though feeble, and the fall, though hollow, of the rotten fragments, must have been overheard. He glanced up. With sober curiosity peering down upon him was one of the old oakum-pickers, slipped from his perch to an outside boom; while below the old Negro, and, invisible to him, reconnoitering from a port-hole like a fox from the mouth of its den, crouched the Spanish sailor again. From something suddenly suggested by the man's air, the mad idea now darted into Captain Delano's mind, that Don Benito's plea of indisposition, in withdrawing below, was but a pretense: that he was engaged there maturing his plot, of which the sailor, by some means gaining an inkling, had a mind to warn the stranger against; incited, it may be, by gratitude for a kind word on first boarding the ship. Was it from foreseeing some possible interference like this, that Don Benito had, beforehand, given such a bad character of his sailors, while praising the Negroes; though, indeed, the former seemed as docile as the latter the contrary? The whites, too, by nature, were the shrewder race. A man with some evil design, would he not be likely to

speak well of that stupidity which was blind to his depravity, and malign that intelligence from which it might not be hidden? Not unlikely, perhaps. But if the whites had dark secrets concerning Don Benito, could then Don Benito be any way in complicity with the blacks? But they were too stupid. Besides, who ever heard of a white so far a renegade as to apostatize from his very species almost, by leaguing in against it with Negroes? These difficulties recalled former ones. Lost in their mazes, Captain Delano, who had now regained the deck, was uneasily advancing along it, when he observed a new face; an aged sailor seated cross-legged near the main hatchway. His skin was shrunk up with wrinkles like a pelican's empty pouch; his hair frosted; his countenance grave and composed. His hands were full of ropes, which he was working into a large knot. Some blacks were about him obligingly dipping the strands for him, here and there, as the exigencies of the operation demanded.

Captain Delano crossed over to him, and stood in silence surveying the knot; his mind, by a not uncongenial transition, passing from its own entanglements to those of the hemp. For intricacy such a knot he had never seen in an American ship, or indeed any other. The old man looked like an Egyptian priest, making Gordian knots for the temple of Ammon. The knot seemed a combination of double-bowline-knot, treble-crown-knot, back-handed-well-knot, knot-in-and-out-knot, and jamming-knot.

At last, puzzled to comprehend the meaning of such a knot, Captain Delano addressed the knotter:—

"What are you knotting there, my man?"

"The knot," was the brief reply, without looking up.

"So it seems; but what is it for?"

"For some one else to undo," muttered back the old man, plying his fingers harder than ever, the knot being now nearly completed.

While Captain Delano stood watching him, suddenly the old man threw the knot toward him, saying in broken English,—the first heard in the ship,—something to this effect: "Undo it, cut it, quick." It was said lowly, but with such condensation of rapidity, that the long, slow words in Spanish, which had preceded and followed, almost operated as covers to the brief English between.

For a moment, knot in hand, and knot in head, Captain Delano stood mute; while, without further heeding him the old man was now intent upon other ropes. Presently there was a slight stir behind Captain Delano. Turning, he saw the chained Negro, Atufal, standing quietly there. The next moment the old sailor rose, muttering, and, followed by his subordinate Negroes, removed to the forward part of the ship, where in the crowd he disappeared.

An elderly Negro, in a clout like an infant's, and with a pepper and salt head, and a kind of attorney air, now approached Captain Delano. In tolerable Spanish, and with a good-natured, knowing wink, he informed him that the old knotter was simple-witted, but harmless; often playing his odd tricks. The Negro concluded by begging the knot, for of course the stranger would not care to be troubled with it. Unconsciously, it was handed to him. With a sort of congé, the Negro received it, and, turning his back, ferreted into it like a detective custom-house officer after smuggled laces. Soon, with some African word, equivalent to pshaw, he tossed the knot overboard.

All this is very queer now, thought Captain Delano, with a qualmish sort of emotion; but, as one feeling incipient sea-sickness, he strove, by ignoring the symptoms, to get rid of the malady. Once more he looked off for his boat. To his delight, it was now again in view, leaving the rocky spur astern.

The sensation here experienced, after at first relieving his uneasiness, with unforeseen efficacy soon began to remove it. The less distant sight of that well-known boat—showing it, not as before, half blended with the haze, but with outline defined, so that its individuality, like a man's, was manifest; that boat, *Rover* by name, which, though now in strange seas, had often pressed the beach of Captain Delano's home, and, brought to its threshold for repairs, had familiarly lain there, as a Newfoundland dog; the sight of that household boat evoked a thousand trustful associations, which, contrasted with previous suspicions, filled him not only with lightsome confidence, but somehow with half humorous self-reproaches at his former lack of it.

"What, I, Amasa Delano—Jack of the Beach, as they called me when a lad—I, Amasa; the same that, duck-satchel in hand, used to paddle along the waterside to

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25 **Gordian knot**, in classical mythology, an intricate knot tied by Gordius and cut by Alexander the Great with his sword • 26 **Ammon**, Amen, an Egyptian deity

the school-house made from the old hulk—I, little Jack of the Beach, that used to go berrying with cousin Nat and the rest; I to be murdered here at the ends of the earth, on board a haunted pirate-ship by a horrible Spaniard? Too nonsensical to think of! Who would murder Amasa Delano? His conscience is clean. There is some one above. Fie, fie, Jack of the Beach! you are a child indeed; a child of the second childhood, old boy; you are beginning to dote and drule, I'm afraid."

Light of heart and foot, he stepped aft, and there was met by Don Benito's servant, who, with a pleasing expression, responsive to his own present feelings, informed him that his master had recovered from the effects of his coughing fit, and had just ordered him to go present his compliments to his good guest, Don Amasa, and say that he (Don Benito) would soon have the happiness to rejoin him.

There now, do you mark that? again thought Captain Delano, walking the poop. What a donkey I was. This kind gentleman who here sends me his kind compliments, he, but ten minutes ago, dark-lantern in hand, was dodging round some old grind-stone in the hold, sharpening a hatchet for me, I thought. Well, well; these long calms have a morbid effect on the mind, I've often heard, though I never believed it before. Ha! glancing towards the boat; there's *Rover;* good dog; a white bone in her mouth. A pretty big bone though, seems to me.—What? Yes, she has fallen afoul of the bubbling tide-rip there. It sets her the other way, too, for the time. Patience.

It was now about noon, though, from the grayness of everything, it seemed to be getting toward dusk.

The calm was confirmed. In the far distance, away from the influence of land, the leaden ocean seemed laid out and leaded up, its course finished, soul gone, defunct. But the current from landward, where the ship was, increased; silently sweeping her further and further toward the tranced waters beyond.

Still, from his knowledge of those latitudes, cherishing hopes of a breeze, and a fair and fresh one, at any moment, Captain Delano, despite present prospects, buoyantly counted upon bringing the San Dominick safely to anchor ere night. The distance swept over was nothing; since, with a good wind, ten minutes' sailing would retrace more than sixty minutes' drifting. Meantime, one moment turning to mark *Rover* fighting the tide-rip, and the next to see Don Benito approaching, he continued walking the poop.

Gradually he felt a vexation arising from the delay of his boat; this soon merged into uneasiness; and at last—his eye falling continually, as from a stage-box into the pit, upon the strange crowd before and below him, and, by-and-by, recognizing there the face—now composed to indifference—of the Spanish sailor who had seemed to beckon from the main-chains—something of his old trepidations returned.

Ah, thought he—gravely enough—this is like the ague: because it went off, it follows not that it won't come back.

Though ashamed of the relapse, he could not altogether subdue it; and so, exerting his good-nature to the utmost, insensibly he came to a compromise.

Yes, this is a strange craft; a strange history, too, and strange folks on board. But—nothing more.

By way of keeping his mind out of mischief till the boat should arrive, he tried to occupy it with turning over and over, in a purely speculative sort of way, some lesser peculiarities of the captain and crew. Among others, four curious points recurred:

First, the affair of the Spanish lad assailed with a knife by the slave boy; an act winked at by Don Benito. Second, the tyranny in Don Benito's treatment of Atufal, the black; as if a child should lead a bull of the Nile by the ring in his nose. Third, the trampling of the sailor by the two Negroes; a piece of insolence passed over without so much as a reprimand. Fourth, the cringing submission to their master of all the ships' underlings, mostly blacks; as if by the least inadvertence they feared to draw down his despotic displeasure.

Coupling these points, they seemed somewhat contradictory. But what then, thought Captain Delano, glancing toward his now nearing boat—what then? Why, Don Benito is a very capricious commander. But he is not the first of the sort I have seen; though it's true he rather exceeds any other. But as a nation—continued he in his reveries—these Spaniards are all an odd set; the very word Spaniard has a curious, conspirator, Guy-Fawkish twang to it. And yet, I dare say, Spaniards in

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87 **Guy-Fawkish.** On November 5, 1605, Guy Fawkes attempted to set fire to barrels of gunpowder which had been placed under the English Houses of Parliament

the main are as good folks as any in Duxbury, Massachusetts. Ah, good! At last *Rover* has come.

As, with its welcome freight, the boat touched the side, the oakum-pickers, with venerable gestures, sought to restrain the blacks, who, at the sight of three gurried water-casks in its bottom, and a pile of wilted pumpkins in its bow, hung over the bulwarks in disorderly raptures.

Don Benito, with his servant, now appeared; his coming, perhaps, hastened by hearing the noise. Of him Captain Delano sought permission to serve out the water, so that all might share alike, and none injure themselves by unfair excess. But sensible, and, on Don Benito's account, kind as this offer was, it was received with what seemed impatience; as if aware that he lacked energy as a commander, Don Benito, with the true jealousy of weakness, resented as an affront any interference. So, at least, Captain Delano inferred.

In another moment the casks were being hoisted in, when some of the eager Negroes accidentally jostled Captain Delano, where he stood by the gangway; so that, unmindful of Don Benito, yielding to the impulse of the moment, with good-natured authority he bade the blacks stand back; to enforce his words making use of a half-mirthful, half-menacing gesture. Instantly the blacks paused, just where they were, each Negro and Negress suspended in his or her posture, exactly as the word had found them—for a few seconds continuing so—while, as between the responsive posts of a telegraph, an unknown syllable ran from man to man among the perched oakum-pickers. While the visitor's attention was fixed by this scene, suddenly the hatchet-polishers half rose, and a rapid cry came from Don Benito.

Thinking that at the signal of the Spaniard he was about to be massacred, Captain Delano would have sprung for his boat, but paused, as the oakum-pickers dropping down into the crowd with earnest exclamations, forced every white and every Negro back, at the same moment, with gestures friendly and familiar, almost jocose, bidding him, in substance, not be a fool. Simultaneously the hatchet-polishers resumed their seats, quietly as so many tailors, and at once, as if nothing had happened, the work of hoisting in the casks was resumed, whites and blacks singing at the tackle.

Captain Delano glanced toward Don Benito. As he saw his meagre form in the act of recovering itself from reclining in the servant's arms, into which the agitated invalid had fallen, he could not but marvel at the panic by which himself had been surprised on the darting supposition that such a commander, who, upon a legitimate occasion, so trivial, too, as it now appeared, could lose all self-command, was, with energetic iniquity, going to bring about his murder.

The casks being on deck, Captain Delano was handed a number of jars and cups by one of the steward's aids, who, in the name of his captain, entreated him to do as he had proposed—dole out the water. He complied, with republican impartiality as to this republican element, which always seeks one level, serving the oldest white no better than the youngest black; excepting, indeed, poor Don Benito, whose condition, if not rank, demanded an extra allowance. To him, in the first place, Captain Delano presented a fair pitcher of the fluid; but, thirsting as he was for it, the Spaniard quaffed not a drop until after several grave bows and salutes. A reciprocation of courtesies which the sight-loving Africans hailed with clapping hands.

Two of the less wilted pumpkins being reserved for the cabin table, the residue were minced up on the spot for the general regalement. But the soft bread, sugar, and bottled cider, Captain Delano would have given the whites alone, and in chief Don Benito; but the latter objected; which disinterestedness not a little pleased the American; and so mouthfuls all around were given alike to whites and blacks; excepting one bottle of cider, which Babo insisted upon setting aside for his master.

Here it may be observed that as, on the first visit of the boat, the American had not permitted his men to board the ship, neither did he now; being unwilling to add to the confusion of the decks.

Not uninfluenced by the peculiar good-humor at present prevailing, and for the time oblivious of any but benevolent thoughts, Captain Delano, who, from recent indications, counted upon a breeze within an hour or two at furthest, dispatched the boat back to the sealer, with orders for all the hands that could be spared immediately to set about rafting casks to the watering-place and filling them. Likewise he bade word be carried to his chief officer, that if, against present expectation, the ship was not brought to anchor by sunset, he need

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5 gurried, fouled with gurry, or the offal of fish

be under no concern; for as there was to be a full moon that night, he (Captain Delano) would remain on board ready to play the pilot, come the wind soon or late.

As the two captains stood together, observing the departing boat—the servant, as it happened, having just spied a spot on his master's velvet sleeve, and silently engaged rubbing it out—the American expressed his regrets that the San Dominick had no boats; none, at least, but the unseaworthy old hulk of the long-boat, which, warped as a camel's skeleton in the desert, and almost as bleached, lay pot-wise inverted amidships, one side a little tipped, furnishing a subterraneous sort of den for family groups of the blacks, mostly women and small children; who, squatting on old mats below, or perched above in the dark dome, on the elevated seats, were descried, some distance within, like a social circle of bats, sheltering in some friendly cave; at intervals, ebon flights of naked boys and girls, three or four years old, darting in and out of the den's mouth.

"Had you three or four boats now, Don Benito," said Captain Delano, "I think that, by tugging at the oars, your Negroes here might help along matters some. Did you sail from port without boats, Don Benito?"

"They were stove in the gales, Señor."

"That was bad. Many men, too, you lost then. Boats and men. Those must have been hard gales, Don Benito."

"Past all speech," cringed the Spaniard.

"Tell me, Don Benito," continued his companion with increased interest, "tell me, were these gales immediately off the pitch of Cape Horn?"

"Cape Horn?—who spoke of Cape Horn?"

"Yourself did, when giving me an account of your voyage," answered Captain Delano, with almost equal astonishment at this eating of his own words, even as he ever seemed eating his own heart, on the part of the Spaniard. "You yourself, Don Benito, spoke of Cape Horn," he emphatically repeated.

The Spaniard turned, in a sort of stooping posture, pausing an instant, as one about to make a plunging exchange of elements, as from air to water.

At this moment a messenger-boy, a white, hurried by, in the regular performance of his function carrying the last expired half-hour forward to the forecastle, from the cabin time-piece, to have it struck at the ship's large bell.

"Master," said the servant, discontinuing his work on the coat sleeve, and addressing the rapt Spaniard with a sort of timid apprehensiveness, as one charged with a duty, the discharge of which, it was foreseen, would prove irksome to the very person who had imposed it, and for whose benefit it was intended, "master told me never mind where he was, or how engaged, always to remind him, to a minute, when shaving-time comes. Miguel has gone to strike the half-hour afternoon. It is *now,* master. Will master go into the cuddy?"

"Ah—yes," answered the Spaniard, starting, as from dreams into realities; then turning upon Captain Delano, he said that ere long he would resume the conversation.

"Then if master means to talk more to Don Amasa," said the servant, "why not let Don Amasa sit by master in the cuddy, and master can talk, and Don Amasa can listen, while Babo here lathers and strops."

"Yes," said Captain Delano, not unpleased with this sociable plan, "yes, Don Benito, unless you had rather not, I will go with you."

"Be it so, Señor."

As the three passed aft, the American could not but think it another strange instance of his host's capriciousness, this being shaved with such uncommon punctuality in the middle of the day. But he deemed it more than likely that the servant's anxious fidelity had something to do with the matter; inasmuch as the timely interruption served to rally his master from the mood which had evidently been coming upon him.

The place called the cuddy was a light deck-cabin formed by the poop, a sort of attic to the large cabin below. Part of it had formerly been the quarters of the officers; but since their death all the partitionings had been thrown down, and the whole interior converted into one spacious and airy marine hall; for absence of fine furniture and picturesque disarray of odd appurtenances, somewhat answering to the wide, cluttered hall of some eccentric bachelor-squire in the country, who hangs his shooting-jacket and tobacco-pouch on deer antlers, and keeps his fishing-rod, tongs, and walking-stick in the same corner.

The similitude was heightened, if not originally suggested, by glimpses of the surrounding sea; since, in one aspect, the country and the ocean seem cousins-german.

The floor of the cuddy was matted. Overhead, four or five old muskets were stuck into horizontal holes along the beams. On one side was a claw-footed old table

lashed to the deck; a thumbed missal on it, and over it a small, meagre crucifix attached to the bulk-head. Under the table lay a dented cutlass or two, with a hacked harpoon, among some melancholy old rigging, like a heap of poor friars' girdles. There were also two long, sharp-ribbed settees of Malacca cane, black with age, and uncomfortable to look at as inquisitors' racks, with a large, misshapen arm-chair, which, furnished with a rude barber's crotch at the back, working with a screw, seemed some grotesque engine of torment. A flag locker was in one corner, open, exposing various colored bunting, some rolled up, others half unrolled, still others tumbled. Opposite was a cumbrous washstand, of black mahogany, all of one block, with a pedestal, like a font, and over it a railed shelf, containing combs, brushes, and other implements of the toilet. A torn hammock of stained grass swung near; the sheets tossed, and the pillow wrinkled up like a brow, as if whoever slept here slept but illy, with alternate visitations of sad thoughts and bad dreams.

The further extremity of the cuddy, overhanging the ship's stern, was pierced with three openings, windows or port-holes, according as men or cannon might peer, socially or unsocially, out of them. At present neither men nor cannon were seen, though huge ring-bolts and other rusty iron fixtures of the woodwork hinted of twenty-four-pounders.

Glancing toward the hammock as he entered, Captain Delano said, "You sleep here, Don Benito?"

"Yes, Señor, since we got into mild weather."

"This seems a sort of dormitory, sitting-room, sail-loft, chapel, armory, and private closet all together, Don Benito," added Captain Delano, looking round.

"Yes, Señor; events have not been favorable to much order in my arrangements."

Here the servant, napkin on arm, made a motion as if waiting his master's good pleasure. Don Benito signified his readiness, when, seating him in the Malacca arm-chair, and for the guest's convenience drawing opposite one of the settees, the servant commenced operations by throwing back his master's collar and loosening his cravat.

There is something in the Negro which, in a peculiar way, fits him for avocations about one's person. Most Negroes are natural valets and hair-dressers; taking to the comb and brush congenially as to the castinets, and flourishing them apparently with almost equal satisfaction. There is, too, a smooth tact about them in this employment, with a marvelous, noiseless, gliding briskness, not ungraceful in its way, singularly pleasing to behold, and still more so to be the manipulated subject of. And above all is the great gift of good-humor. Not the mere grin or laugh is here meant. Those were unsuitable. But a certain easy cheerfulness, harmonious in every glance and gesture; as though God had set the whole Negro to some pleasant tune.

When to this is added the docility arising from the unaspiring contentment of a limited mind, and that susceptibility of blind attachment sometimes inhering in indisputable inferiors, one readily perceives why those hypochondriacs, Johnson and Byron—it may be something like the hypochondriac, Benito Cereno—took to their hearts, almost to the exclusion of the entire white race, their serving men, the Negroes, Barber and Fletcher. But if there be that in the Negro which exempts him from the inflicted sourness of the morbid or cynical mind, how, in his most prepossessing aspects, must he appear to a benevolent one? When at ease with respect to exterior things, Captain Delano's nature was not only benign, but familiarly and humorously so. At home, he had often taken rare satisfaction in sitting in his door, watching some free man of color at his work or play. If on a voyage he chanced to have a black sailor, invariably he was on chatty, and half-gamesome terms with him. In fact, like most men of a good, blithe heart, Captain Delano took to Negroes, not philanthropically, but genially, just as other men to Newfoundland dogs.

Hitherto the circumstances in which he found the San Dominick had repressed the tendency. But in the cuddy, relieved from his former uneasiness, and, for various reasons, more sociably inclined than at any previous period of the day, and seeing the colored servant, napkin on arm, so debonair about his master, in a business so familiar as that of shaving, too, all his old weakness for Negroes returned.

Among other things, he was amused with an odd instance of the African love of bright colors and fine shows, in the black's informally taking from the flag-locker a great piece of bunting of all hues, and lavishly tucking it under his master's chin for an apron.

The mode of shaving among the Spaniards is a little different from what it is with other nations. They have

a basin, specifically called a barber's basin, which on one side is scooped out, so as accurately to receive the chin, against which it is closely held in lathering; which is done, not with a brush, but with soap dipped in the water of the basin and rubbed on the face.

In the present instance salt-water was used for lack of better; and the parts lathered were only the upper lip, and low down under the throat, all the rest being cultivated beard.

The preliminaries being somewhat novel to Captain Delano he sat curiously eying them, so that no conversation took place, nor, for the present, did Don Benito appear disposed to renew any.

Setting down his basin, the Negro searched among the razors, as for the sharpest, and having found it, gave it an additional edge by expertly stropping it on the firm, smooth, oily skin of his open palm; he then made a gesture as if to begin, but midway stood suspended for an instant, one hand elevating the razor, the other professionally dabbling among the bubbling suds on the Spaniard's lank neck. Not unaffected by the close sight of the gleaming steel, Don Benito nervously shuddered; his usual ghastliness was heightened by the lather, which lather, again, was intensified in its hue by the contrasting sootiness of the Negro's body. Altogether the scene was somewhat peculiar, at least to Captain Delano, nor, as he saw the two thus postured, could he resist the vagary, that in the black he saw a headsman, and in the white a man at the block. But this was one of those antic conceits, appearing and vanishing in a breath, from which, perhaps, the best regulated mind is not always free.

Meantime the agitation of the Spaniard had a little loosened the bunting from around him, so that one broad fold swept curtain-like over the chair-arm to the floor, revealing, amid a profusion of armorial bars and ground-colors—black, blue and yellow—a closed castle in a blood-red field diagonal with a lion rampant in a white.

"The castle and the lion," exclaimed Captain Delano—"why, Don Benito, this is the flag of Spain you use here. It's well it's only I, and not the King, that sees this," he added with a smile, "but"—turning toward the black,—"it's all one, I suppose, so the colors be gay;" which playful remark did not fail somewhat to tickle the Negro.

"Now, master," he said, readjusting the flag, and pressing the head gently further back into the crotch of the chair; "now, master," and the steel glanced nigh the throat.

Again Don Benito faintly shuddered.

"You must not shake so, master. See, Don Amasa, master always shakes when I shave him. And yet master knows I never yet have drawn blood, though it's true, if master will shake so, I may some of these times. Now, master," he continued. "And now, Don Amasa, please go on with your talk about the gale, and all that; master can hear, and between times, master can answer."

"Ah yes, these gales," said Captain Delano; "but the more I think of your voyage, Don Benito, the more I wonder, not at the gales, terrible as they must have been, but at the disastrous interval following them. For here, by your account, have you been these two months and more getting from Cape Horn to St. Maria, a distance which I myself, with a good wind, have sailed in a few days. True, you had calms, and long ones, but to be becalmed for two months, that is, at least, unusual. Why, Don Benito, had almost any other gentleman told me such a story, I should have been half disposed to a little incredulity."

Here an involuntary expression came over the Spaniard, similar to that just before on the deck, and whether it was the start he gave, or a sudden gawky roll of the hull in the calm, or a momentary unsteadiness of the servant's hand, however it was, just then the razor drew blood, spots of which stained the creamy lather under the throat; immediately the black barber drew back his steel, and remaining in his professional attitude, back to Captain Delano, and face to Don Benito, held up the trickling razor, saying, with a sort of half humorous sorrow, "See, master—you shook so—here's Babo's first blood."

No sword drawn before James the First of England, no assassination in that timid King's presence, could have produced a more terrified aspect than was now presented by Don Benito.

Poor fellow, thought Captain Delano, so nervous he can't even bear the sight of barber's blood; and this unstrung, sick man, is it credible that I should have imagined he meant to spill all my blood, who can't endure the sight of one little drop of his own? Surely, Amasa Delano, you have been beside yourself this day. Tell it not when you get home, sappy Amasa. Well, well, he looks like a murderer, doesn't he? More like as if himself were to be done for. Well, well, this day's experience shall be a good lesson.

Meantime, while these things were running through

the honest seaman's mind, the servant had taken the napkin from his arm, and to Don Benito had said—"But answer Don Amasa, please, master, while I wipe this ugly stuff off the razor, and strop it again."

As he said the words, his face was turned half round, so as to be alike visible to the Spaniard and the American, and seemed, by its expression, to hint, that he was desirous, by getting his master to go on with the conversation, considerately to withdraw his attention from the recent annoying accident. As if glad to snatch the offered relief, Don Benito resumed, rehearsing to Captain Delano, that not only were the calms of unusual duration, but the ship had fallen in with obstinate currents; and other things he added, some of which were but repetitions of former statements, to explain how it came to pass that the passage from Cape Horn to St. Maria had been so exceedingly long; now and then mingling with his words, incidental praises, less qualified than before, to the blacks, for their general good conduct. These particulars were not given consecutively, the servant, at convenient times, using his razor, and so, between the intervals of shaving, the story and panegyric went on with more than usual huskiness.

To Captain Delano's imagination, now again not wholly at rest, there was something so hollow in the Spaniard's manner, with apparently some reciprocal hollowness in the servant's dusky comment of silence, that the idea flashed across him, that possibly master and man, for some unknown purpose, were acting out, both in word and deed, nay, to the very tremor of Don Benito's limbs, some juggling play before him. Neither did the suspicion of collusion lack apparent support, from the fact of those whispered conferences before mentioned. But then, what could be the object of enacting this play of the barber before him? At last, regarding the notion as a whimsy, insensibly suggested, perhaps, by the theatrical aspect of Don Benito in his harlequin ensign, Captain Delano speedily banished it.

The shaving over, the servant bestirred himself with a small bottle of scented waters, pouring a few drops on the head, and then diligently rubbing; the vehemence of the exercise causing the muscles of his face to twitch rather strangely.

His next operation was with comb, scissors and brush; going round and round, smoothing a curl here, clipping an unruly whisker-hair there, giving a graceful sweep to the temple-lock, with other impromptu touches evincing the hand of a master; while, like any resigned gentleman in barber's hands, Don Benito bore all, much less uneasily, at least, than he had done the razoring; indeed, he sat so pale and rigid now, that the Negro seemed a Nubian sculptor finishing off a white statue-head.

All being over at last, the standard of Spain removed, tumbled up, and tossed back into the flag-locker, the Negro's warm breath blowing away any stray hair which might have lodged down his master's neck; collar and cravat readjusted; a speck of lint whisked off the velvet lapel; all this being done; backing off a little space, and pausing with an expression of subdued self-complacency, the servant for a moment surveyed his master, as, in toilet at least, the creature of his own tasteful hands.

Captain Delano playfully complimented him upon his achievement; at the same time congratulating Don Benito.

But neither sweet waters, nor shampooing, nor fidelity, nor sociality, delighted the Spaniard. Seeing him relapsing into forbidding gloom, and still remaining seated, Captain Delano, thinking that his presence was undesired just then, withdrew, on pretense of seeing whether, as he had prophesied, any signs of a breeze were visible.

Walking forward to the mainmast, he stood awhile thinking over the scene and not without some undefined misgivings, when he heard a noise near the cuddy, and turning, saw the Negro, his hand to his cheek. Advancing, Captain Delano perceived that the cheek was bleeding. He was about to ask the cause, when the Negro's wailing soliloquy enlightened him.

"Ah, when will master get better from his sickness; only the sour heart that sour sickness breeds made him serve Babo so; cutting Babo with the razor, because, only by accident, Babo had given master one little scratch; and for the first time in so many a day, too. Ah, ah, ah," holding his hand to his face.

Is it possible, thought Captain Delano; was it to wreak in private his Spanish spite against this poor friend of his, that Don Benito, by his sullen manner, impelled me to withdraw? Ah, this slavery breeds ugly passions in man.—Poor fellow!

He was about to speak in sympathy to the Negro, but with a timid reluctance he now re-entered the cuddy.

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51 Nubian, one of the Negro tribe of Nubia, in eastern Africa

Presently master and man came forth; Don Benito leaning on his servant as if nothing had happened.

But a sort of love-quarrel, after all, thought Captain Delano.

He accosted Don Benito, and they slowly walked together. They had gone but a few paces, when the steward —a tall, rajah-looking mulatto, orientally set off with a pagoda turban formed by three or four Madras handkerchiefs wound about his head, tier on tier—approaching with a salaam, announced lunch in the cabin.

On their way thither, the two captains were preceded by the mulatto, who, turning round as he advanced, with continual smiles and bows, ushered them on, a display of elegance which quite completed the insignificance of the small bare-headed Babo, who, as if not unconscious of inferiority, eyed askance the graceful steward. But in part, Captain Delano imputed his jealous watchfulness to that peculiar feeling which the full-blooded African entertains for the adulterated one. As for the steward, his manner, if not bespeaking much dignity of self-respect, yet evidenced his extreme desire to please; which is doubly meritorious, as at once Christian and Chesterfieldian.

Captain Delano observed with interest that while the complexion of the mulatto was hybrid, his physiognomy was European—classically so.

"Don Benito," whispered he, "I am glad to see this usher-of-the-golden-rod of yours; the sight refutes an ugly remark once made to me by a Barbados planter; that when a mulatto has a regular European face, look out for him; he is a devil. But see, your steward here has features more regular than King George's of England; and yet there he nods, and bows, and smiles; a king, indeed—the king of kind hearts and polite fellows. What a pleasant voice he has, too!"

"He has, Señor."

"But, tell me, has he not, so far as you have known him, always proved a good, worthy fellow?" said Captain Delano, pausing, while with a final genuflexion the steward disappeared into the cabin; "come, for the reason just mentioned, I am curious to know."

"Francesco is a good man," rather sluggishly responded Don Benito, like a sort of phlegmatic appreciator, who would neither find fault nor flatter.

"Ah, I thought so. For it were strange, indeed, and not very creditable to us white-skins, if a little of our blood mixed with the African's, should, far from improving the latter's quality, have the sad effect of pouring vitriolic acid into black broth; improving the hue, perhaps, but not the wholesomeness."

"Doubtless, doubtless, Señor, but"—glancing at Babo —"not to speak of Negroes, your planter's remark I have heard applied to the Spanish and Indian intermixtures in our provinces. But I know nothing about the matter," he listlessly added.

And here they entered the cabin.

The lunch was a frugal one. Some of Captain Delano's fresh fish and pumpkins, biscuit and salt beef, the reserved bottle of cider, and the San Dominick's last bottle of Canary.

As they entered, Francesco, with two or three colored aids, was hovering over the table giving the last adjustments. Upon perceiving their master they withdrew, Francesco making a smiling congé, and the Spaniard, without condescending to notice it, fastidiously remarking to his companion that he relished not superfluous attendance.

Without companions, host and guest sat down, like a childless married couple, at opposite ends of the table, Don Benito waving Captain Delano to his place, and, weak as he was, insisting upon that gentleman being seated before himself.

The Negro placed a rug under Don Benito's feet, and a cushion behind his back, and then stood behind, not his master's chair, but Captain Delano's. At first, this a little surprised the latter. But it was soon evident that, in taking his position, the black was still true to his master; since by facing him he could the more readily anticipate his slightest want.

"This is an uncommonly intelligent fellow of yours, Don Benito," whispered Captain Delano across the table.

"You say true, Señor."

During the repast, the guest again reverted to parts of Don Benito's story, begging further particulars here and there. He inquired how it was that the scurvy and fever should have committed such wholesale havoc upon the whites, while destroying less than half of the blacks. As if this question reproduced the whole scene of plague before the Spaniard's eyes, miserably reminding him of his solitude in a cabin where before he had had so many friends and officers round him, his hand shook, his face became hueless, broken words escaped; but directly the sane memory of the past seemed replaced by insane terrors of the present. With starting eyes he stared before

him at vacancy. For nothing was to be seen but the hand of his servant pushing the Canary over toward him. At length a few sips served partially to restore him. He made random reference to the different constitutions of races, enabling one to offer more resistance to certain maladies than another. The thought was new to his companion.

Presently Captain Delano, intending to say something to his host concerning the pecuniary part of the business he had undertaken for him, especially—since he was strictly accountable to his owners—with reference to the new suit of sails, and other things of that sort; and naturally preferring to conduct such affairs in private, was desirous that the servant should withdraw; imagining that Don Benito for a few minutes could dispense with his attendance. He, however, waited awhile; thinking that, as the conversation proceeded, Don Benito, without being prompted, would perceive the propriety of the step.

But it was otherwise. At last catching his host's eye, Captain Delano, with a slight backward gesture of his thumb, whispered, "Don Benito, pardon me, but there is an interference with the full expression of what I have to say to you."

Upon this the Spaniard changed countenance; which was imputed to his resenting the hint, as in some way a reflection upon his servant. After a moment's pause, he assured his guest that the black's remaining with them could be of no disservice; because since losing his officers he had made Babo (whose original office, it now appeared, had been captain of the slaves) not only his constant attendant and companion, but in all things his confidant.

After this, nothing more could be said; though, indeed, Captain Delano could hardly avoid some little tinge of irritation upon being left ungratified in so inconsiderable a wish, by one, too, for whom he intended such solid services. But it is only his querulousness, thought he; and so filling his glass he proceeded to business.

The price of the sails and other matters was fixed upon. But while this was being done, the American observed that, though his original offer of assistance had been hailed with hectic animation, yet now when it was reduced to a business transaction, indifference and apathy were betrayed. Don Benito, in fact, appeared to submit to hearing the details more out of regard to common propriety, than from any impression that weighty benefit to himself and his voyage was involved.

Soon, his manner became still more reserved. The effort was vain to seek to draw him into social talk. Gnawed by his splenetic mood, he sat twitching his beard, while to little purpose the hand of his servant, mute as that on the wall, slowly pushed over the Canary.

Lunch being over, they sat down on the cushioned transom; the servant placing a pillow behind his master. The long continuance of the calm had now affected the atmosphere. Don Benito sighed heavily, as if for breath.

"Why not adjourn to the cuddy," said Captain Delano; "there is more air there." But the host sat silent and motionless.

Meantime his servant knelt before him with a large fan of feathers. And Francesco coming in on tiptoes, handed the Negro a little cup of aromatic waters, with which at intervals he chafed his master's brow; smoothing the hair along the temples as a nurse does a child's. He spoke no word. He only rested his eye on his master's as if, amid all Don Benito's distress, a little to refresh his spirit by the silent sight of fidelity.

Presently the ship's bell sounded two o'clock; and through the cabin-windows a slight rippling of the sea was discerned; and from the desired direction.

"There," exclaimed Captain Delano, "I told you so, Don Benito, look!"

He had risen to his feet, speaking in a very animated tone, with a view the more to rouse his companion. But though the crimson curtain of the stern-window near him that moment fluttered against his pale cheek, Don Benito seemed to have even less welcome for the breeze than the calm.

Poor fellow, thought Captain Delano, bitter experience has taught him that one ripple does not make a wind, any more than one swallow a summer. But he is mistaken for once. I will get his ship in for him, and prove it.

Briefly alluding to his weak condition, he urged his host to remain quietly where he was, since he (Captain Delano) would with pleasure take upon himself the responsibility of making the best use of the wind.

Upon gaining the deck, Captain Delano started at the unexpected figure of Atufal, monumentally fixed at the threshold, like one of those sculptured porters of black marble guarding the porches of Egyptian tombs.

But this time the start was, perhaps, purely physical. Atufal's presence, singularly attesting docility even in sullenness, was contrasted with that of the hatchet-polish-

ers, who in patience evinced their industry; while both spectacles showed, that lax as Don Benito's general authority might be, still, whenever he chose to exert it, no man so savage or colossal but must, more or less, bow.

Snatching a trumpet which hung from the bulwarks, with a free step Captain Delano advanced to the forward edge of the poop, issuing his orders in his best Spanish. The few sailors and many Negroes, all equally pleased, obediently set about heading the ship toward the harbour.

While giving some directions about setting a lower stu'n'-sail, suddenly Captain Delano heard a voice faithfully repeating his orders. Turning, he saw Babo, now for the time acting, under the pilot, his original part of captain of the slaves. This assistance proved valuable. Tattered sails and warped yards were soon brought into some trim. And no brace or halyard was pulled but to the blithe songs of the inspirited Negroes.

Good fellows, thought Captain Delano, a little training would make fine sailors of them. Why see, the very women pull and sing, too. These must be some of those Ashantee Negresses that make such capital soldiers, I've heard. But who's at the helm? I must have a good hand there.

He went to see.

The San Dominick steered with a cumbrous tiller, with large horizontal pullies attached. At each pulley-end stood a subordinate black, and between them, at the tiller-head, the responsible post, a Spanish seaman, whose countenance evinced his due share in the general hopefulness and confidence at the coming of the breeze.

He proved the same man who had behaved with so shame-faced an air on the windlass.

"Ah,—it is you, my man," exclaimed Captain Delano —"well, no more sheep's-eyes now;—look straight forward and keep the ship so. Good hand, I trust? And want to get into the harbor, don't you?"

The man assented with an inward chuckle, grasping the tiller-head firmly. Upon this, unperceived by the American, the two blacks eyed the sailor intently.

Finding all right at the helm, the pilot went forward to the forecastle, to see how matters stood there.

The ship now had way enough to breast the current. With the approach of evening the breeze would be sure to freshen.

Having done all that was needed for the present, Captain Delano, giving his last orders to the sailors, turned aft to report affairs to Don Benito in the cabin; perhaps additionally incited to rejoin him by the hope of snatching a moment's private chat while his servant was engaged upon deck.

From opposite sides, there were, beneath the poop, two approaches to the cabin; one further forward than the other, and consequently communicating with a longer passage. Marking the servant still above, Captain Delano, taking the nighest entrance—the one last named, and at whose porch Atufal still stood—hurried on his way, till, arrived at the cabin threshold, he paused an instant, a little to recover from his eagerness. Then, with the words of his intended business upon his lips, he entered. As he advanced toward the seated Spaniard, he heard another footstep, keeping time with his. From the opposite door, a salver in hand, the servant was likewise advancing.

"Confound the faithful fellow," thought Captain Delano; "what a vexatious coincidence."

Possibly, the vexation might have been something different, were it not for the brisk confidence inspired by the breeze. But even as it was, he felt a slight twinge, from a sudden indefinite association in his mind of Babo with Atufal.

"Don Benito," said he, "I give you joy; the breeze will hold, and will increase. By the way, your tall man and time-piece, Atufal, stands without. By your order, of course?"

Don Benito recoiled, as if at some bland satirical touch, delivered with such adroit garnish of apparent good breeding as to present no handle for retort.

He is like one flayed alive, thought Captain Delano; where may one touch him without causing a shrink?

The servant moved before his master, adjusting a cushion; recalled to civility, the Spaniard stiffly replied: "You are right. The slave appears where you saw him, according to my command; which is, that if at the given hour I am below, he must take his stand and abide my coming."

"Ah now, pardon me, but that is treating the poor fellow like an ex-king indeed. Ah, Don Benito," smiling, "for all the license you permit in some things, I fear lest, at bottom, you are a bitter hard master."

Again Don Benito shrank; and this time, as the good sailor thought, from a genuine twinge of his conscience.

Again conversation became constrained. In vain Captain Delano called attention to the now perceptible mo-

tion of the keel gently cleaving the sea; with lack-lustre eye, Don Benito returned words few and reserved.

By-and-by, the wind having steadily risen, and still blowing right into the harbour, bore the San Dominick swiftly on. Rounding a point of land, the sealer at distance came into open view.

Meantime Captain Delano had again repaired to the deck, remaining there some time. Having at last altered the ship's course, so as to give the reef a wide berth, he returned for a few moments below.

I will cheer up my poor friend, this time, thought he.

"Better and better, Don Benito," he cried as he blithely re-entered: "there will soon be an end to your cares, at least for awhile. For when, after a long, sad voyage, you know, the anchor drops into the haven, all its vast weight seems lifted from the captain's heart. We are getting on famously, Don Benito. My ship is in sight. Look through this side-light here; there she is; all a-taunt-o! The Bachelor's Delight, my good friend. Ah, how this wind braces one up. Come, you must take a cup of coffee with me this evening. My old steward will give you as fine a cup as ever any sultan tasted. What say you, Don Benito, will you?"

At first, the Spaniard glanced feverishly up, casting a longing look toward the sealer, while with mute concern his servant gazed into his face. Suddenly the old ague of coldness returned, and dropping back to his cushions he was silent.

"You do not answer. Come, all day you have been my host; would you have hospitality all on one side?"

"I cannot go," was the response.

"What? It will not fatigue you. The ships will lie together as near as they can, without swinging foul. It will be little more than stepping from deck to deck; which is but as from room to room. Come, come, you must not refuse me."

"I cannot go," decisively and repulsively repeated Don Benito.

Renouncing all but the last appearance of courtesy, with a sort of cadaverous sullenness, and biting his thin nails to the quick, he glanced, almost glared, at his guest, as if impatient that a stranger's presence should interfere with the full indulgence of his morbid hour. Meantime the sound of the parted waters came more and more gurglingly and merrily in at the windows; as reproaching him for his dark spleen; as telling him that, sulk as he might, and go mad with it, nature cared not a jot; since, whose fault was it, pray?

But the foul mood was now at its depth, as the fair wind at its height.

There was something in the man so far beyond any mere unsociality or sourness previously evinced, that even the forbearing good-nature of his guest could no longer endure it. Wholly at a loss to account for such demeanor, and deeming sickness with eccentricity, however extreme, no adequate excuse, well satisfied, too, that nothing in his own conduct could justify it, Captain Delano's pride began to be roused. Himself became reserved. But all seemed one to the Spaniard. Quitting him, therefore, Captain Delano once more went to the deck.

The ship was now within less than two miles of the sealer. The whale-boat was seen darting over the interval.

To be brief, the two vessels, thanks to the pilot's skill, ere long in neighborly style lay anchored together.

Before returning to his own vessel, Captain Delano had intended communicating to Don Benito the smaller details of the proposed services to be rendered. But, as it was, unwilling anew to subject himself to rebuffs, he resolved, now that he had seen the San Dominick safely moored, immediately to quit her, without further allusion to hospitality or business. Indefinitely postponing his ulterior plans, he would regulate his future actions according to future circumstances. His boat was ready to receive him; but his host still tarried below. Well, thought Captain Delano, if he has little breeding, the more need to show mine. He descended to the cabin to bid a ceremonious, and, it may be, tacitly rebukeful adieu. But to his great satisfaction, Don Benito, as if he began to feel the weight of that treatment with which his slighted guest had, not indecorously, retaliated upon him, now supported by his servant, rose to his feet, and grasping Captain Delano's hand, stood tremulous; too much agitated to speak. But the good augury hence drawn was suddenly dashed, by his resuming all his previous reserve, with augmented gloom, as, with half-averted eyes, he silently reseated himself on his cushions. With a corresponding return of his own chilled feelings, Captain Delano bowed and withdrew.

He was hardly midway in the narrow corridor, dim as a tunnel, leading from the cabin to the stairs, when a sound, as of the tolling for execution in some jail-yard, fell on his ears. It was the echo of the ship's flawed bell,

striking the hour, drearily reverberated in this subterranean vault. Instantly, by a fatality not to be withstood, his mind, responsive to the portent, swarmed with superstitious suspicions. He paused. In images far swifter than these sentences, the minutest details of all his former distrusts swept through him.

Hitherto, credulous good-nature had been too ready to furnish excuses for reasonable fears. Why was the Spaniard, so superfluously punctilious at times, now heedless of common propriety in not accompanying to the side his departing guest? Did indisposition forbid? Indisposition had not forbidden more irksome exertion that day. His last equivocal demeanor recurred. He had risen to his feet, grasped his guest's hand, motioned toward his hat; then, in an instant, all was eclipsed in sinister muteness and gloom. Did this imply one brief, repentant relenting at the final moment, from some iniquitous plot, followed by remorseless return to it? His last glance seemed to express a calamitous, yet acquiescent farewell to Captain Delano forever. Why decline the invitation to visit the sealer that evening? Or was the Spaniard less hardened than the Jew, who refrained not from supping at the board of him whom the same night he meant to betray? What imported all those day-long enigmas and contradictions, except they were intended to mystify, preliminary to some stealthy blow? Atufal, the pretended rebel, but punctual shadow, that moment lurked by the threshold without. He seemed a sentry, and more. Who, by his own confession, had stationed him there? Was the Negro now lying in wait?

The Spaniard behind—his creature before; to rush from darkness to light was the involuntary choice.

The next moment, with clenched jaw and hand, he passed Atufal, and stood unharmed in the light. As he saw his trim ship lying peacefully at her anchor, and almost within ordinary call; as he saw his household boat, with familiar faces in it, patiently rising and falling on the short waves by the San Dominick's side; and then, glancing about the decks where he stood, saw the oakum-pickers still gravely plying their fingers; and heard the low, buzzing whistle and industrious hum of the hatchet-polishers, still bestirring themselves over their endless occupation; and more than all, as he saw the benign aspect of nature, taking her innocent repose in the evening; the screened sun in the quiet camp of the west shining out like the mild light from Abraham's tent; as his charmed eye and ear took in all these, with the chained figure of the black, the clenched jaw and hand relaxed. Once again he smiled at the phantoms which had mocked him, and felt something like a tinge of remorse, that, by harbouring them even for a moment, he should, by implication, have betrayed an atheist doubt of the ever-watchful Providence above.

There was a few minutes' delay, while, in obedience to his orders, the boat was being hooked along to the gangway. During this interval, a sort of saddened satisfaction stole over Captain Delano, at thinking of the kindly offices he had that day discharged for a stranger. Ah, thought he, after good actions one's conscience is never ungrateful, however much so the benefited party may be.

Presently, his foot, in the first act of descent into the boat, pressed the first round of the side-ladder, his face presented inward upon the deck. In the same moment, he heard his name courteously sounded; and, to his pleased surprise, saw Don Benito advancing—an unwonted energy in his air, as if, at the last moment, intent upon making amends for his recent discourtesy. With instinctive good feeling, Captain Delano, withdrawing his foot, turned and reciprocally advanced. As he did so, the Spaniard's nervous eagerness increased, but his vital energy failed; so that, the better to support him, the servant, placing his master's hand on his naked shoulder, and gently holding it there, formed himself into a sort of crutch.

When the two captains met, the Spaniard again fervently took the hand of the American, at the same time casting an earnest glance into his eyes, but, as before, too much overcome to speak.

I have done him wrong, self-reproachfully thought Captain Delano; his apparent coldness has deceived me; in no instance has he meant to offend.

Meantime, as if fearful the continuance of the scene might too much unstring his master, the servant seemed anxious to terminate it. And so, still presenting himself as a crutch, and walking between the two captains, he advanced with them toward the gangway; while still, as if full of kindly contrition, Don Benito would not let go the hand of Captain Delano, but retained it in his, across the black's body.

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22 the Jew . . . betray, an allusion to Judas' betrayal of Jesus. See Matthew 26

Soon they were standing by the side, looking over into the boat, whose crew turned up their curious eyes. Waiting a moment for the Spaniard to relinquish his hold, the now embarrassed Captain Delano lifted his foot, to overstep the threshold of the open gangway; but still Don Benito would not let go his hand. And yet, with an agitated tone, he said, "I can go no further; here I must bid you adieu. Adieu, my dear, dear Don Amasa. Go—go!" suddenly tearing his hand loose, "go, and God guard you better than me, my best friend."

Not unaffected, Captain Delano would now have lingered; but catching the meekly admonitory eye of the servant, with a hasty farewell he descended into his boat, followed by the continual adieus of Don Benito, standing rooted in the gangway.

Seating himself in the stern, Captain Delano, making a last salute, ordered the boat shoved off. The crew had their oars on end. The bowsmen pushed the boat a sufficient distance for the oars to be lengthwise dropped. The instant that was done, Don Benito sprang over the bulwarks, falling at the feet of Captain Delano; at the same time, calling toward his ship, but in tones so frenzied, that none in the boat could understand him. But, as if not equally obtuse, three sailors, from three different and distant parts of the ship, splashed into the sea, swimming after their captain, as if intent upon his rescue.

The dismayed officer of the boat eagerly asked what this meant. To which Captain Delano, turning a disdainful smile upon the unaccountable Spaniard, answered that, for his part, he neither knew nor cared; but it seemed as if Don Benito had taken it into his head to produce the impression among his people that the boat wanted to kidnap him. "Or else—give way for your lives," he wildly added, starting at a clattering hubbub in the ship, above which rang the tocsin of the hatchet-polishers; and seizing Don Benito by the throat he added, "this plotting pirate means murder!" Here, in apparent verification of the words, the servant, a dagger in his hand, was seen on the rail overhead, poised, in the act of leaping, as if with desperate fidelity to befriend his master to the last; while, seemingly to aid the black, the three white sailors were trying to clamber into the hampered bow. Meantime, the whole host of Negroes, as if inflamed at the sight of their jeopardized captain, impended in one sooty avalanche over the bulwarks.

All this, with what preceded, and what followed, occurred with such involutions of rapidity, that past, present, and future seemed one.

Seeing the Negro coming, Captain Delano had flung the Spaniard aside, almost in the very act of clutching him and, by the unconscious recoil, shifting his place, with arms thrown up, so promptly grappled the servant in his descent, that with dagger presented at Captain Delano's heart, the black seemed of purpose to have leaped there as to his mark. But the weapon was wrenched away, and the assailant dashed down into the bottom of the boat, which now, with disentangled oars, began to speed through the sea.

At this juncture, the left hand of Captain Delano, on one side, again clutched the half-reclined Don Benito, heedless that he was in a speechless faint, while his right foot, on the other side, ground the prostrate Negro; and his right arm pressed for added speed on the after oar, his eye bent forward, encouraging his men to their utmost.

But here, the officer of the boat, who had at last succeeded in beating off the towing sailors, and was now, with face turned aft, assisting the bowsman at his oar, suddenly called to Captain Delano, to see what the black was about; while a Portuguese oarsman shouted to him to give heed to what the Spaniard was saying.

Glancing down at his feet, Captain Delano saw the freed hand of the servant aiming with a second dagger—a small one, before concealed in his wool—with this he was snakishly writhing up from the boat's bottom, at the heart of his master, his countenance lividly vindictive, expressing the centred purpose of his soul; while the Spaniard, half-choked, was vainly shrinking away, with husky words, incoherent to all but the Portuguese.

That moment, across the long-benighted mind of Captain Delano, a flash of revelation swept, illuminating in unanticipated clearness his host's whole mysterious demeanor, with every enigmatic event of the day, as well as the entire past voyage of the San Dominick. He smote Babo's hand down, but his own heart smote him harder. With infinite pity he withdrew his hold from Don Benito. Not Captain Delano, but Don Benito, the black, in leaping into the boat, had intended to stab.

Both the black's hands were held, as, glancing up towards the San Dominick, Captain Delano, now with the scales dropped from his eyes, saw the Negroes, not in misrule, not in tumult, not as if frantically concerned

for Don Benito, but with mask torn away, flourishing hatchets and knives, in ferocious piratical revolt. Like delirious black dervishes, the six Ashantees danced on the poop. Prevented by their foes from springing into the water, the Spanish boys were hurrying up to the topmost spars, while such of the few Spanish sailors, not already in the sea, less alert, were descried, helplessly mixed in, on deck, with the blacks.

Meantime Captain Delano hailed his own vessel, ordering the ports up, and the guns run out. But by this time the cable of the San Dominick had been cut; and the fag-end, in lashing out, whipped away the canvas shroud about the beak, suddenly revealing, as the bleached hull swung round toward the open ocean, death for the figurehead, in a human skeleton; chalky comment on the chalked words below, *"Follow your leader."*

At the sight, Don Benito, covering his face, wailed out: " 'Tis he, Aranda! my murdered, unburied friend!"

Upon reaching the sealer, calling for ropes, Captain Delano bound the Negro, who made no resistance, and had him hoisted to the deck. He would then have assisted the now almost helpless Don Benito up the side; but Don Benito, wan as he was, refused to move, or be moved, until the Negro should have been first put below out of view. When, presently assured that it was done, he no more shrank from the ascent.

The boat was immediately dispatched back to pick up the three swimming sailors. Meantime, the guns were in readiness, though, owing to the San Dominick having glided somewhat astern of the sealer, only the aftermost one could be brought to bear. With this, they fired six times; thinking to cripple the fugitive ship by bringing down her spars. But only a few inconsiderable ropes were shot away. Soon the ship was beyond the gun's range, steering broad out of the bay; the blacks thickly clustering round the bowsprit, one moment with taunting cries toward the whites, the next with upthrown gestures hailing the now dusky moors of ocean—cawing crows escaped from the hand of the fowler.

The first impulse was to slip the cables and give chase. But, upon second thoughts, to pursue with whale-boat and yawl seemed more promising.

Upon inquiring of Don Benito what firearms they had on board the San Dominick, Captain Delano was answered that they had none that could be used; because, in the earlier stages of the mutiny, a cabin-passenger, since dead, had secretly put out of order the locks of what few muskets there were. But with all his remaining strength, Don Benito entreated the American not to give chase, either with ship or boat; for the Negroes had already proved themselves such desperadoes, that, in case of a present assault, nothing but a total massacre of the whites could be looked for. But, regarding this warning as coming from one whose spirit had been crushed by misery, the American did not give up his design.

The boats were got ready and armed. Captain Delano ordered his men into them. He was going himself when Don Benito grasped his arm.

"What! have you saved my life, Señor, and are you now going to throw away your own?"

The officers also, for reasons connected with their interests and those of the voyage, and a duty owing to the owners, strongly objected against their commander's going. Weighing their remonstrances a moment, Captain Delano felt bound to remain; appointing his chief mate—an athletic and resolute man, who had been a privateer's-man—to head the party. The more to encourage the sailors, they were told, that the Spanish captain considered his ship as good as lost; that she and her cargo, including some gold and silver, were worth more than a thousand doubloons. Take her, and no small part should be theirs. The sailors replied with a shout.

The fugitives had now almost gained an offing. It was nearly night; but the moon was rising. After hard, prolonged pulling, the boats came up on the ship's quarters, at a suitable distance laying upon their oars to discharge their muskets. Having no bullets to return, the Negroes sent their yells. But upon the second volley, Indian-like, they hurtled their hatchets. One took off a sailor's fingers. Another struck the whale-boat's bow, cutting off the rope there, and remaining stuck in the gunwale like a woodman's axe. Snatching it, quivering from its lodgment, the mate hurled it back. The returned gauntlet now stuck in the ship's broken quarter-gallery, and so remained.

The Negroes giving too hot a reception, the whites kept a more respectful distance. Hovering now just out of reach of the hurtling hatchets, they, with a view to the

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73 **offing,** a good distance from the shore where there is deep water and no need of a pilot

close encounter which must soon come, sought to decoy the blacks into entirely disarming themselves of their most murderous weapons in a hand-to-hand fight, by foolishly flinging them, as missiles, short of the mark, into the sea. But ere long, perceiving the stratagem, the Negroes desisted, though not before many of them had to replace their lost hatchets with handspikes; an exchange which, as counted upon, proved, in the end, favorable to the assailants.

Meantime, with a strong wind, the ship still clove the water; the boats alternately falling behind, and pulling up, to discharge fresh volleys.

The fire was mostly directed toward the stern, since there, chiefly, the Negroes, at present, were clustering. But to kill or maim the Negroes was not the object. To take them, with the ship, was the object. To do it, the ship must be boarded; which could not be done by boats while she was sailing so fast.

A thought now struck the mate. Observing the Spanish boys still aloft, high as they could get, he called to them to descend to the yards, and cut adrift the sails. It was done. About this time, owing to causes hereafter to be shown, two Spaniards, in the dress of sailors, and conspicuously showing themselves, were killed; not by volleys, but by deliberate marksman's shots; while, as it afterward appeared, by one of the general discharges, Atufal, the black, and the Spaniard at the helm likewise were killed. What now, with the loss of the sails, and loss of leaders, the ship became unmanageable to the Negroes.

With creaking masts, she came heavily round to the wind; the prow slowly swinging into view of the boats, its skeleton gleaming in the horizontal moonlight, and casting a gigantic ribbed shadow upon the water. One extended arm of the ghost seemed beckoning the whites to avenge it.

"Follow your leader!" cried the mate; and, one on each bow, the boats boarded. Sealing-spears and cutlasses crossed hatchets and handspikes. Huddled upon the long-boat amidships, the Negresses raised a wailing chant, whose chorus was the clash of the steel.

For a time, the attack wavered; the Negroes wedging themselves to beat it back; the half-repelled sailors, as yet unable to gain a footing, fighting as troopers in the saddle, one leg sideways flung over the bulwarks, and one without, plying their cutlasses like carters' whips. But in vain. They were almost overborne, when rallying themselves into a squad as one man, with a huzza, they sprang inboard, where, entangled, they involuntarily separated again. For a few breaths' space there was a vague, muffled, inner sound, as of submerged sword-fish rushing hither and thither through shoals of black-fish. Soon, in a reunited band, and joined by the Spanish seamen, the whites came to the surface, irresistibly driving the Negroes toward the stern. But a barricade of casks and sacks from side to side, had been thrown up by the mainmast. Here the Negroes faced about, and though scorning peace or truce, yet fain would have had respite. But, without pause, overleaping the barrier, the unflagging sailors again closed. Exhausted, the blacks now fought in despair. Their red tongues lolled, wolf-like, from their black mouths. But the pale sailors' teeth were set; not a word was spoken; and, in five minutes more, the ship was won.

Nearly a score of the Negroes were killed. Exclusive of those by the balls, many were mangled; their wounds—mostly inflicted by the long-edged sealing-spears—resembling those shaven ones of the English at Preston Pans, made by the poled scythes of the Highlanders. On the other side, none were killed, though several were wounded; some severely, including the mate. The surviving Negroes were temporarily secured, and the ship towed back into the harbor at midnight, once more lay anchored.

Omitting the incidents and arrangements ensuing, suffice it that, after two days spent in refitting, the ships sailed in company for Conception in Chili, and thence for Lima in Peru; where, before the vice-regal courts, the whole affair, from the beginning, underwent investigation.

Though, midway on the passage, the ill-fated Spaniard, relaxed from constraint, showed some signs of regaining health with free-will; yet, agreeably to his own foreboding, shortly before arriving at Lima, he relapsed, finally becoming so reduced as to be carried ashore in arms. Hearing of his story and plight, one of the many religious institutions of the City of Kings opened an hospitable refuge to him, where both physician and priest were his nurses, and a member of the order volunteered to be his

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68 **Preston Pans.** At the battle of Prestonpans in 1745, the Scotch Highlanders supported the Young Pretender against the English

one special guardian and consoler, by night and by day.

The following extracts, translated from one of the official Spanish documents, will, it is hoped, shed light on the preceding narrative, as well as, in the first place, reveal the true port of departure and true history of the San Dominick's voyage, down to the time of her touching at the island of St. Maria.

But, ere the extracts come, it may be well to preface them with a remark.

The document selected, from among many others, for partial translation, contains the deposition of Benito Cereno; the first taken in the case. Some disclosures therein were, at the time, held dubious for both learned and natural reasons. The tribunal inclined to the opinion that the deponent, not undisturbed in his mind by recent events, raved of some things which could never have happened. But subsequent depositions of the surviving sailors, bearing out the revelations of their captain in several of the strangest particulars, gave credence to the rest. So that the tribunal, in its final decision, rested its capital sentences upon statements which, had they lacked confirmation, it would have deemed it but duty to reject.

I, DON JOSE DE ABOS AND PADILLA, His Majesty's Notary for the Royal Revenue, and Register of this Province, and Notary Public of the Holy Crusade of this Bishopric, etc.

Do certify and declare, as much as is requisite in law, that, in the criminal cause commenced the twenty-fourth of the month of September, in the year seventeen hundred and ninety-nine, against the Negroes of the ship San Dominick, the following declaration before me was made:

Declaration of the first witness, DON BENITO CERENO.

The same day, and month, and year, His Honor, Doctor Juan Martinez de Rozas, Councilor of the Royal Audience of this Kingdom, and learned in the law of this Intendency, ordered the captain of the ship San Dominick, Don Benito Cereno, to appear; which he did in his litter, attended by the monk Infelez; of whom he received the oath, which he took by God, our Lord, and a sign of the Cross; under which he promised to tell the truth of whatever he should know and should be asked;—and being interrogated agreeably to the tenor of the act commencing the process, he said, that on the twentieth of May last, he set sail with his ship from the port of Valparaiso, bound to that of Callao; loaded with the produce of the country besides thirty cases of hardware and one hundred and sixty blacks, of both sexes, mostly belonging to Don Alexandro Aranda, gentleman, of the city of Mendoza; that the crew of the ship consisted of thirty-six men, besides the persons who went as passengers; that the Negroes were in part as follows: . . .

[*Here, in the original, follows a list of some fifty names, descriptions, and ages, compiled from certain recovered documents of Aranda's, and also from recollections of the deponent, from which portions only are extracted.*]

—One, from about eighteen to nineteen years, named José, and this was the man that waited upon his master, Don Alexandro, and who speaks well the Spanish, having served him four or five years; . . . A mulatto, named Francesco, the cabin steward, of a good person and voice, having sung in the Valparaiso churches, native of the province of Buenos Ayres, aged about thirty-five years. A smart Negro, named Dago, who had been for many years a grave-digger among the Spaniards, aged forty-six years. . . . Four old Negroes, born in Africa, from sixty to seventy, but sound, caulkers by trade, whose names are as follows:—the first was named Muri, and he was killed (as was also his son named Diamelo); the second, Nacta; the third, Yola, likewise killed; the fourth, Ghofan; and six full-grown Negroes, aged from thirty to forty-five, all raw, and born among the Ashantees—Matiluqui, Yan, Lecbe, Mapenda, Yambaio, Akim; four of whom were killed; . . . a powerful Negro named Atufal, who being supposed to have been a chief in Africa, his owner set great store by him. . . . And a small Negro of Senegal, but some years among the Spaniards, aged about thirty, which Negro's name was Babo; . . . that he does not remember the names of the others, but that still expecting the residue of Don Alexandro's papers will be found, will then take due account of them all, and remit to the court; . . . and thirty-nine women and children of all ages.

[*The catalogue over, the deposition goes on:*]

. . . That all the Negroes slept upon deck, as is customary in this navigation, and none wore fetters, because the owner, his friend Aranda, told him that they were all tractable; . . . that on the seventh day after leaving port, at three o'clock in the morning, all the Spaniards being asleep except the two officers on the watch, who were the boatswain, Juan Robles, and the carpenter, Juan Bautista Gayete, and the helmsman and his boy, the Negroes revolted suddenly, wounded dangerously the boatswain and the carpenter, and

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52 **[Here . . . extracted.]** The brackets and bracketed material are Melville's throughout • 76 **Senegal,** a province in West Africa

successively killed eighteen men of those who were sleeping upon deck, some with hand-spikes and hatchets, and others by throwing them alive overboard, after tying them; that of the Spaniards upon deck, they left about seven, as he thinks, alive and tied, to manoeuvre the ship, and three or four more who hid themselves, remained also alive. Although in the act of revolt the Negroes made themselves masters of the hatchway, six or seven wounded went through it to the cockpit, without any hindrance on their part; that in the act of revolt, the mate and another person, whose name he does not recollect, attempted to come up through the hatchway, but being quickly wounded, were obliged to return to the cabin; that the deponent resolved at break of day to come up the companion-way, where the Negro Babo was, being the ringleader, and Atufal, who assisted him, and having spoken to them, exhorted them to cease committing such atrocities, asking them, at the same time, what they wanted and intended to do, offering, himself, to obey their commands; that, notwithstanding this, they threw, in his presence, three men, alive and tied, overboard; that they told the deponent to come up, and that they would not kill him; which having done, the Negro Babo asked him whether there were in those seas any Negro countries where they might be carried, and he answered them, No; that the Negro Babo afterward told him to carry them to Senegal, or to the neighbouring islands of St. Nicholas; and he answered, that this was impossible, on account of the great distance, the necessity involved of rounding Cape Horn, the bad condition of the vessel, the want of provisions, sails, and water; but that the Negro Babo replied to him he must carry them in any way; that they would do and conform themselves to everything the deponent should require as to eating and drinking; that after a long conference, being absolutely compelled to please them, for they threatened to kill all the whites if they were not, at all events, carried to Senegal, he told them that what was most wanting for the voyage was water; that they would go near the coast to take it and thence they would proceed on their course; that the Negro Babo agreed to it; and the deponent steered toward the intermediate ports, hoping to meet some Spanish or foreign vessel that would save them; that within ten or eleven days they saw the land, and continued their course by it in the vicinity of Nasca; that the deponent observed that the Negroes were now restless and mutinous, because he did not effect the taking in of water, the Negro Babo having required, with threats, that it should be done, without fail, the following day; he told him he saw plainly that the coast was steep, and the rivers designated in the maps were not to be found, with other reasons suitable to the circumstances; that the best way would be to go to the island of Santa Maria, where they might water easily, it being a solitary island, as the foreigners did; that the deponent did not go to Pisco, that was near, nor make any other port of the coast, because the Negro Babo had intimated to him several times, that he would kill all the whites the very moment he should perceive any city, town, or settlement of any kind on the shores to which they should be carried: that having determined to go to the island of Santa Maria, as the deponent had planned, for the purpose of trying whether, on the passage or near the island itself, they could find any vessel that should favor them, or whether he could escape from it in a boat to the neighbouring coast of Arruco, to adopt the necessary means he immediately changed his course, steering for the island; that the Negroes Babo and Atufal held daily conferences, in which they discussed what was necessary for their design of returning to Senegal, whether they were to kill all the Spaniards, and particularly the deponent; that eight days after parting with the coast of Nasca, the deponent being on the watch a little after day-break, and soon after the Negroes had their meeting, the Negro Babo came to the place where the deponent was, and told him that he had determined to kill his master, Don Alexandro Aranda, both because he and his companions could not otherwise be sure of their liberty, and that to keep the seamen in subjection, he wanted to prepare a warning of what road they should be made to take did they or any of them oppose him; and that, by means of the death of Don Alexandro, that warning would best be given; but, that what this last meant, the deponent did not at the time comprehend, nor could not, further than that the death of Don Alexandro was intended; and moreover the Negro Babo proposed to the deponent to call the mate Raneds, who was sleeping in the cabin, before the thing was done, for fear, as the deponent understood it, that the mate, who was a good navigator, should be killed with Don Alexandro and the rest; that the deponent, who was the friend, from youth of Don Alexandro, prayed and conjured, but all was useless; for the Negro Babo answered him that the thing could not be prevented, and that all the Spaniards risked their death if they should attempt to frustrate his will in this matter, or any other; that, in this conflict, the deponent called the mate, Raneds, who was forced to go apart, and immediately the Negro Babo commanded the Ashantee Matiluqui and the Ashantee Lecbe to go and commit the murder; that those two went down with hatchets to the berth of Don Alexandro; that, yet half alive and mangled, they dragged him on deck; that they were going to throw him overboard in that state, but the Negro Babo stopped them, bidding the murder be completed on the deck before him, which was done, when, by his orders, the body

was carried below, forward; that nothing more was seen of it by the deponent for three days; . . . that Don Alonzo Sidonia, an old man, long resident at Valparaiso, and lately appointed to a civil office in Peru, whither he had taken passage, was at the time sleeping in the berth opposite Don Alexandro's; that awakening at his cries, surprised by them, and at the sight of the Negroes with their bloody hatchets in their hands, he threw himself into the sea through a window which was near him and was drowned, without it being in the power of the deponent to assist or take him up; . . . that, a short time after killing Aranda, they brought upon deck his german-cousin, of middle-age, Don Francisco Masa, of Mendoza, and the young Don Joaquin, Marques de Aramboalaza, then lately from Spain, with his Spanish servant Ponce, and the three young clerks of Aranda, José Mozairi, Lorenzo Bargas, and Hermenegildo Gandix, all of Cadiz; that Don Joaquin and Hermenegildo Gandix, the Negro Babo, for purposes hereafter to appear, preserved alive; but Don Francisco Masa, José Mozairi, and Lorenzo Bargas, with Ponce the servant, besides the boatswain, Juan Robles, the boatswain's mates, Manuel Viscaya and Roderigo Hurta, and four of the sailors, the Negro Babo ordered to be thrown alive into the sea, although they made no resistance, nor begged for anything else but mercy; that the boatswain, Juan Robles, who knew how to swim, kept the longest above water, making acts of contrition, and, in the last words he uttered, charged this deponent to cause mass to be said for his soul to our Lady of Succour: . . . that, during the three days which followed, the deponent, uncertain what fate had befallen the remains of Don Alexandro, frequently asked the Negro Babo where they were, and, if still on board, whether they were to be preserved for interment ashore, entreating him so to order it; that the Negro Babo answered nothing till the fourth day, when at sunrise, the deponent coming on deck, the Negro Babo showed him a skeleton, which had been substituted for the ship's proper figurehead—the image of Christopher Colon, the discoverer of the New World; that the Negro Babo asked him whose skeleton that was, and whether, from its whiteness, he should not think it a white's; that, upon discovering his face, the Negro Babo, coming close, said words to this effect: "Keep faith with the blacks from here to Senegal, or you shall in spirit, as now in body, follow your leader," pointing to the prow; . . . that the same morning the Negro Babo took by succession each Spaniard forward, and asked him whose skeleton that was, and whether, from its whiteness, he should not think it a white's; that each Spaniard covered his face; that then to each the Negro Babo repeated the words in the first place said to the deponent; . . . that they (the Spaniards), being then assembled aft, the Negro Babo harangued them, saying that he had now done all; that the deponent (as navigator for the Negroes) might pursue his course, warning him and all of them that they should, soul and body, go the way of Don Alexandro, if he saw them (the Spaniards) speak or plot anything against them (the Negroes)—a threat which was repeated every day; that, before the events last mentioned, they had tied the cook to throw him overboard, for it is not known what thing they heard him speak, but finally the Negro Babo spared his life, at the request of the deponent; that a few days after, the deponent, endeavoring not to omit any means to preserve the lives of the remaining whites, spoke to the Negroes peace and tranquillity, and agreed to draw up a paper, signed by the deponent and the sailors who could write, as also by the Negro Babo, for himself and all the blacks, in which the deponent obliged himself to carry them to Senegal, and they not to kill any more, and he formally to make over to them the ship, with the cargo, with which they were for that time satisfied and quieted. . . . But the next day, the more surely to guard against the sailors' escape, the Negro Babo commanded all the boats to be destroyed but the long-boat, which was unseaworthy, and another, a cutter in good condition, which knowing it would yet be wanted for towing the water casks, he had it lowered down into the hold.

[*Various particulars of the prolonged and perplexed navigation ensuing here follow, with incidents of a calamitous calm, from which portion one passage is extracted, to wit:*]

—That on the fifth day of the calm, all on board suffering much from the heat, and want of water, and five having died in fits, and mad, the Negroes became irritable, and for a chance gesture, which they deemed suspicious—though it was harmless—made by the mate, Raneds, to the deponent in the act of handing a quadrant, they killed him; but that for this they were afterwards sorry, the mate being the only remaining navigator on board, except the deponent.

—That omitting other events, which daily happened, and which can only serve uselessly to recall past misfortunes and conflicts, after seventy-three days' navigation, reckoned from the time they sailed from Nasca, during which they navigated under a scanty allowance of water, and were afflicted with the calms before mentioned, they at last arrived at the island of Santa Maria, on the seventeenth of the month of August, at about six o'clock in the afternoon, at which hour they cast anchor very near the American ship, Bache-

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2 days; . . . The dots indicating omissions are Melville's throughout

lor's Delight, which lay in the same bay, commanded by the generous Captain Amasa Delano; but at six o'clock in the morning, they had already descried the port, and the Negroes became uneasy, as soon as at distance they saw the ship, not having expected to see one there; that the Negro Babo pacified them, assuring them that no fear need be had; that straightway he ordered the figure on the bow to be covered with canvas, as for repairs, and had the decks a little set in order; that for a time the Negro Babo and the Negro Atufal conferred; that the Negro Atufal was for sailing away, but the Negro Babo would not, and, by himself, cast about what to do; that at last he came to the deponent, proposing to him to say and do all that the deponent declares to have said and done to the American captain; . . . that the Negro Babo warned him that if he varied in the least, or uttered any word, or gave any look that should give the least intimation of the past events or present state, he would instantly kill him, with all his companions, showing a dagger, which he carried hid, saying something which, as he understood it, meant that that dagger would be alert as his eye; that the Negro Babo then announced the plan to all his companions, which pleased them; that he then, the better to disguise the truth, devised many expedients, in some of them uniting deceit and defense; that of this sort was the device of the six Ashantees before named, who were his bravoes; that them he stationed on the break of the poop, as if to clean certain hatchets (in cases, which were part of the cargo), but in reality to use them, and distribute them at need, and at a given word he told them; that, among other devices, was the device of presenting Atufal, his right hand man, as chained, though in a moment the chains could be dropped; that in every particular he informed the deponent what part he was expected to enact in every device, and what story he was to tell on every occasion, always threatening him with instant death if he varied in the least: that, conscious that many of the Negroes would be turbulent, the Negro Babo appointed the four aged Negroes, who were calkers, to keep what domestic order they could on the decks; that again and again he harangued the Spaniards and his companions, informing them of his intent, and of his devices, and of the invented story that this deponent was to tell; charging them lest any of them varied from that story; that these arrangements were made and matured during the interval of two or three hours, between their first sighting the ship and the arrival on board of Captain Amasa Delano; that this happened at about half-past seven o'clock in the morning, Captain Amasa Delano coming in his boat, and all gladly receiving him; that the deponent, as well as he could force himself, acting then the part of principal owner, and a free captain of the ship, told Captain Amasa Delano, when called upon, that he came from Buenos Ayres, bound to Lima, with three hundred Negroes; that off Cape Horn, and in a subsequent fever, many Negroes had died; that also, by similar casualties, all the sea officers and the greatest part of the crew had died.

[*And so the deposition goes on, circumstantially recounting the fictitious story dictated to the deponent by Babo, and through the deponent imposed upon Captain Delano; and also recounting the friendly offers of Captain Delano, with other things, but all of which is here omitted. After the fictitious story, etc., the deposition proceeds:*]

—that the generous Captain Amasa Delano remained on board all the day, till he left the ship anchored at six o'clock in the evening, deponent speaking to him always of his pretended misfortunes, under the forementioned principles, without having had it in his power to tell a single word, or give him the least hint, that he might know the truth and state of things; because the Negro Babo, performing the office of an officious servant with all the appearance of submission of the humble slave, did not leave the deponent one moment; that this was in order to observe the deponent's actions and words, for the Negro Babo understands well the Spanish; and besides, there were thereabouts some others who were constantly on the watch, and likewise understood the Spanish; . . . that upon one occasion, while deponent was standing on the deck conversing with Amasa Delano, by a secret sign the Negro Babo drew him (the deponent) aside, the act appearing as if originating with the deponent; that then, he being drawn aside, the Negro Babo proposed to him to gain from Amasa Delano full particulars about his ship, and crew, and arms; that the deponent asked "For what?" that the Negro Babo answered he might conceive; that, grieved at the prospect of what might overtake the generous Captain Amasa Delano, the deponent at first refused to ask the desired questions, and used every argument to induce the Negro Babo to give up this new design; that the Negro Babo showed the point of his dagger; that, after the information had been obtained the Negro Babo again drew him aside, telling him that that very night he (the deponent) would be captain of two ships instead of one, for that, great part of the American's ship's crew being to be absent fishing, the six Ashantees, without any one else, would easily take it; that at this time he said other things to the same purpose; that no entreaties availed; that before Amasa Delano's coming on board, no hint had been given

touching the capture of the American ship: that to prevent this project the deponent was powerless; . . . —that in some things his memory is confused, he cannot distinctly recall every event; . . . —that as soon as they had cast anchor at six of the clock in the evening, as has before been stated, the American Captain took leave, to return to his vessel; that upon a sudden impulse, which the deponent believes to have come from God and his angels, he, after the farewell had been said, followed the generous Captain Amasa Delano as far as the gunwale, where he stayed, under the pretense of taking leave, until Amasa Delano should have been seated in his boat; that on shoving off, the deponent sprang from the gunwale into the boat, and fell into it, he knows not how, God guarding him; that—

[*Here, in the original, follows the account of what further happened at the escape, and how the San Dominick was retaken, and of the passage to the coast; including in the recital many expressions of "eternal gratitude" to the "generous Captain Amasa Delano." The deposition then proceeds with recapitulatory remarks, and a partial renumeration of the Negroes, making record of their individual part in the past events, with a view to furnishing, according to command of the court, the data whereon to found the criminal sentences to be pronounced. From this portion is the following:*]

—That he believes that all the Negroes, though not in the first place knowing to the design of revolt, when it was accomplished, approved it. . . . That the Negro, José, eighteen years old, and in the personal service of Don Alexandro, was the one who communicated the information to the Negro Babo, about the state of things in the cabin, before the revolt; that this is known, because, in the preceding midnight, he used to come from his berth, which was under his master's, in the cabin, to the deck where the ringleader and his associates were, and had secret conversations with the Negro Babo, in which he was several times seen by the mate; that, one night, the mate drove him away twice; . . . that this same Negro José was the one who, without being commanded to do so by the Negro Babo, as Lecbe and Matiluqui were, stabbed his master, Don Alexandro, after he had been dragged half-lifeless to the deck; . . . that the mulatto steward, Francesco, was of the first band of revolters, that he was, in all things, the creature and tool of the Negro Babo; that, to make his court, he, just before a repast in the cabin, proposed, to the Negro Babo, poisoning a dish for the generous Captain Amasa Delano; this is known and believed, because the Negroes have said it; but that the Negro Babo, having another design, forbade Francesco; . . . that the Ashantee Lecbe was one of the worst of them; for that, on the day the ship was retaken, he assisted in the defense of her, with a hatchet in each hand, with one of which he wounded, in the breast, the chief mate of Amasa Delano, in the first act of boarding; this all knew; that, in sight of the deponent, Lecbe struck, with a hatchet, Don Francisco Masa when, by the Negro Babo's orders, he was carrying him to throw him overboard, alive; besides participating in the murder, before mentioned, of Don Alexandro Aranda, and others of the cabin-passengers; that, owing to the fury with which the Ashantees fought in the engagement with the boats, but this Lecbe and Yan survived; that Yan was bad as Lecbe; that Yan was the man who, by Babo's command, willingly prepared the skeleton of Don Alexandro, in a way the Negroes afterward told the deponent, but which he, so long as reason is left him, can never divulge; that Yan and Lecbe were the two who, in a calm by night, riveted the skeleton to the bow; this also the Negroes told him; that the Negro Babo was he who traced the inscription below it; that the Negro Babo was the plotter from first to last; he ordered every murder, and was the helm and keel of the revolt; that Atufal was his lieutenant in all; but Atufal, with his own hand, committed no murder; nor did the Negro Babo; . . . that Atufal was shot, being killed in the fight with the boats, ere boarding; . . . that the Negresses, of age, were knowing to the revolt, and testified themselves satisfied at the death of their master, Don Alexandro; that, had the Negroes not restrained them, they would have tortured to death, instead of simply killing, the Spaniards slain by command of the Negro Babo; that the Negresses used their utmost influence to have the deponent made away with; that, in the various acts of murder, they sang songs and danced—not gaily, but solemnly; and before the engagement with the boats, as well as during the action, they sang melancholy songs to the Negroes, and that this melancholy tone was more inflaming than a different one would have been, and was so intended; that all this is believed because the Negroes have said it.

—that of the thirty-six men of the crew, exclusive of the passengers (all of whom are now dead), which the deponent had knowledge of, six only remained alive, with four cabin-boys and ship-boys, not included with the crew; . . . —that the negroes broke an arm of one of the cabin-boys and gave him strokes with hatchets.

[*Then follow various random disclosures referring to various periods of time. The following are extracted:*]

—That during the presence of Captain Amasa Delano on board, some attempts were made by the sailors, and one by Hermenegildo Gandix, to convey hints to him of the true

state of affairs; but that these attempts were ineffectual, owing to fear of incurring death, and, furthermore, owing to the devices which offered contradictions to the true state of affairs, as well as owing to the generosity and piety of Amasa Delano, incapable of sounding such wickedness; . . . that Luys Galgo, a sailor about sixty years of age, and formerly of the king's navy, was one of those who sought to convey tokens to Captain Amasa Delano; but his intent, though undiscovered, being suspected, he was, on a pretense, made to retire out of sight, and at last into the hold, and there was made away with. This the negroes have since said; . . . that one of the ship-boys feeling, from Captain Amasa Delano's presence, some hopes of release, and not having enough prudence, dropped some chanceword respecting his expectations, which being overheard and understood by a slave-boy with whom he was eating at the time, the latter struck him on the head with a knife, inflicting a bad wound, but of which the boy is now healing; that likewise, not long before the ship was brought to anchor, one of the seamen, steering at the time, endangered himself by letting the blacks remark some expression in his countenance, arising from a cause similar to the above; but this sailor, by his heedful after conduct, escaped; . . . that these statements are made to show the court that from the beginning to the end of the revolt, it was impossible for the deponent and his men to act otherwise than they did; . . . —that the third clerk, Hermenegildo Gandix, who before had been forced to live among the seamen, wearing a seaman's habit, and in all respects appearing to be one for the time; he, Gandix, was killed by a musket ball fired through mistake from the boats before boarding, having in his fright run up the mizzen-rigging, calling to the boats—"don't board," lest upon their boarding the Negroes should kill him; that this inducing the Americans to believe he some way favored the cause of the Negroes, they fired two balls at him, so that he fell wounded from the rigging, and was drowned in the sea; . . . —that the young Don Joaquin, Marques de Aramboalaza, like Hermenegildo Gandix, the third clerk, was degraded to the office and appearance of a common seaman; that upon one occasion, when Don Joaquin shrank, the Negro Babo commanded the Ashantee Lecbe to take tar and heat it, and pour it upon Don Joaquin's hands; . . . —that Don Joaquin was killed owing to another mistake of the Americans, but one impossible to be avoided, as upon the approach of the boats, Don Joaquin, with a hatchet tied edge out and upright to his hand, was made by the Negroes to appear on the bulwarks; whereupon, seen with arms in his hands and in a questionable attitude, he was shot for a renegade seaman; . . . —that on the person of Don Joaquin was found secreted a jewel, which, by papers that were discovered, proved to have been meant for the shrine of our Lady of Mercy in Lima; a votive offering, beforehand prepared and guarded, to attest his gratitude, when he should have landed in Peru, his last destination, for the safe conclusion of his entire voyage from Spain; . . . —that the jewel, with the other effects of the late Don Joaquin, is in the custody of the brethren of the Hospital de Sacerdotes, awaiting the disposition of the honorable court; . . . —that, owing to the condition of the deponent, as well as the haste in which the boats departed for the attack, the Americans were not forewarned that there were, among the apparent crew, a passenger and one of the clerks, disguised by the Negro Babo; . . . —that, besides the Negroes killed in the action, some were killed after the capture and re-anchoring at night, when shackled to the ring-bolts on deck; that these deaths were committed by the sailors, ere they could be prevented. That so soon as informed of it, Captain Amasa Delano used all his authority, and, in particular with his own hand, struck down Martinez Gola, who, having found a razor in the pocket of an old jacket of his, which one of the shackled Negroes had on, was aiming it at the Negro's throat; that the noble Captain Amasa Delano also wrenched from the hand of Bartholomew Barlo, a dagger secreted at the time of the massacre of the whites, with which he was in the act of stabbing a shackled Negro, who, the same day, with another Negro, had thrown him down and jumped upon him; . . . —that, for all the events, befalling through so long a time, during which the ship was in the hands of the Negro Babo, he cannot here give account; but that, what he has said is the most substantial of what occurs to him at present, and is the truth under the oath which he has taken; which declaration he affirmed and ratified, after hearing it read to him.

He said that he is twenty-nine years of age, and broken in body and mind; that when finally dismissed by the court, he shall not return home to Chili, but betake himself to the monastery on Mount Agonia without; and signed with his honor, and crossed himself, and for the time, departed as he came, in his litter, with the monk Infelez, to the Hospital de Sacerdotes.

BENITO CERENO

DOCTOR ROZAS.

If the deposition have served as the key to fit into the lock of the complications which precede it, then, as a vault whose door has been flung back, the San Dominick's hull lies open to-day.

Hitherto the nature of this narrative besides rendering

the intricacies in the beginning unavoidable, has more or less required that many things, instead of being set down in the order of occurrence, should be retrospectively, or irregularly given; this last is the case with the following passages, which will conclude the account:

During the long, mild voyage to Lima, there was, as before hinted, a period during which the sufferer a little recovered his health, or, at least in some degree, his tranquillity. Ere the decided relapse which came, the two captains had many cordial conversations—their fraternal unreserve in singular contrast with former withdrawments.

Again and again, it was repeated, how hard it had been to enact the part forced on the Spaniard by Babo.

"Ah, my dear friend," Don Benito once said, "at those very times when you thought me so morose and ungrateful, nay when, as you now admit, you half thought me plotting your murder, at those very times my heart was frozen; I could not look at you, thinking of what, both on board this ship and your own, hung, from other hands, over my kind benefactor. And as God lives, Don Amasa, I know not whether desire for my own safety alone could have nerved me to that leap into your boat, had it not been for the thought that, did you, unenlightened, return to your ship, you, my best friend, with all who might be with you, stolen upon, that night, in your hammocks, would never in this world have wakened again. Do but think how you walked this deck, how you sat in this cabin, every inch of ground mined into honeycombs under you. Had I dropped the least hint, made the least advance toward an understanding between us, death, explosive death—yours as mine—would have ended the scene."

"True, true," cried Captain Delano, starting, "you saved my life, Don Benito, more than I yours; saved it, too, against my knowledge and will."

"Nay, my friend," rejoined the Spaniard, courteous even to the point of religion, "God charmed your life, but you saved mine. To think of some things you did—those smilings and chattings, rash pointings and gesturings. For less than these, they slew my mate, Raneds; but you had the Prince of Heaven's safe conduct through all ambuscades."

"Yes, all is owing to Providence, I know; but the temper of my mind that morning was more than commonly pleasant, while the sight of so much suffering, more apparent than real, added to my good-nature, compassion, and charity, happily interweaving the three. Had it been otherwise, doubtless, as you hint, some of my interferences might have ended unhappily enough. Besides, those feelings I spoke of enabled me to get the better of momentary distrust, at times when acuteness might have cost me my life, without saving another's. Only at the end did my suspicions get the better of me, and you know how wide of the mark they then proved."

"Wide indeed," said Don Benito, sadly; "you were with me, all day; stood with me, sat with me, talked with me, looked at me, ate with me, drank with me; and yet your last act was to clutch for a monster, not only an innocent man, but the most pitiable of all men. To such degree many malign machinations and deceptions impose. So far may even the best men err, in judging the conduct of one with the recesses of whose condition he is not acquainted. But you were forced to it; and you were in time undeceived. Would that, in both respects, it was so ever, and with all men."

"You generalize, Don Benito; and mournfully enough. But the past is passed; why moralize upon it? Forget it. See, yon bright sun has forgotten it all, and the blue sea, and the blue sky; these have turned over new leaves."

"Because they have no memory," he dejectedly replied; "because they are not human."

"But these mild trades that now fan your cheek, Don Benito, do they not come with a human-like healing to you? Warm friends, steadfast friends are the trades."

"With their steadfastness they but waft me to my tomb, Señor," was the foreboding response.

"You are saved," cried Captain Delano, more and more astonished and pained; "you are saved: what has cast such a shadow upon you?"

"The Negro."

There was silence, while the moody man sat, slowly and unconsciously gathering his mantle about him, as if it were a pall.

There was no more conversation that day.

But if the Spaniard's melancholy sometimes ended in muteness upon topics like the above, there were others upon which he never spoke at all; on which, indeed, all his old reserves were piled. Pass over the worst and, only to elucidate, let an item or two of these be cited. The dress so precise and costly, worn by him on the day whose events have been narrated, had not willingly been put on. And that silver-mounted sword, apparent symbol of des-

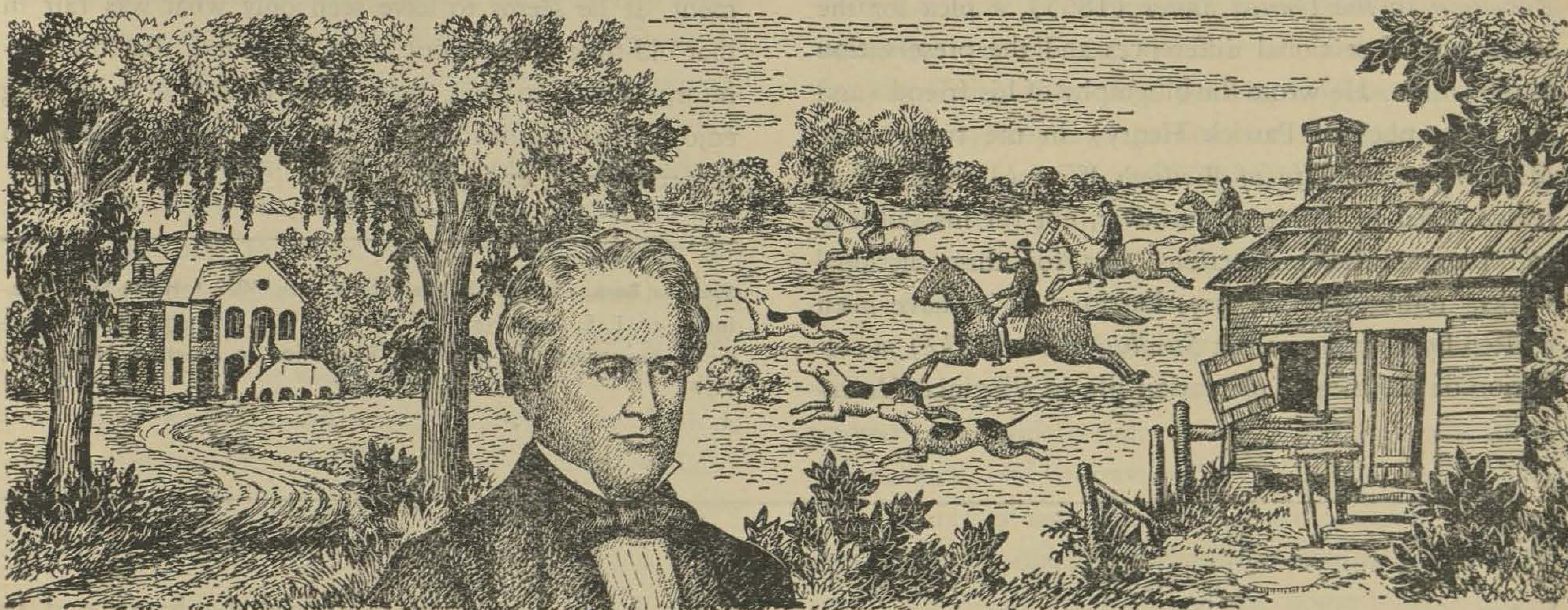
potic command, was not, indeed, a sword, but the ghost of one. The scabbard, artificially stiffened, was empty.

As for the black—whose brain, not body, had schemed and led the revolt, with the plot—his slight frame, inadequate to that which it held, had at once yielded to the superior muscular strength of his captor, in the boat. Seeing all was over, he uttered no sound, and could not be forced to. His aspect seemed to say, since I cannot do deeds, I will not speak words. Put in irons in the hold, with the rest, he was carried to Lima. During the passage, Don Benito did not visit him. Nor then, nor at any time after, would he look at him. Before the tribunal he refused. When pressed by the judges he fainted. On the testimony of the sailors alone rested the legal identity of Babo.

Some months after, dragged to the gibbet at the tail of a mule, the black met his voiceless end. The body was burned to ashes; but for many days, the head, that hive of subtlety, fixed on a pole in the Plaza, met, unabashed, the gaze of the whites; and across the Plaza looked towards St. Bartholomew's church, in whose vaults slept then, as now, the recovered bones of Aranda: and across the Rimac bridge looked toward the monastery, on Mount Agonia without; where, three months after being dismissed by the court, Benito Cereno, borne on the bier, did, indeed, follow his leader.

1856

NOVELISTS OF THE OLD SOUTH: Kennedy, Simms



Panel (l. to r.): Woodlands, Simms' South Carolina home • William Gilmore Simms • Southern fox-hunt • Slave quarters

John Pendleton Kennedy

1795 · 1870

Kennedy was a literary amateur; to him, as to William Byrd, writing was a gentlemanly accomplishment rather than a profession. His activities were many and varied. The son of well-to-do and socially prominent parents in Baltimore, he received his formal education in a private preparatory school and at Baltimore College. He participated briefly in the War of 1812 at the Battle of Bladensburg, studied law in Baltimore, and was elected to

the Maryland legislature. For three terms (1838-1844), he was a Whig member of Congress, where he staunchly advocated the benefits of internal improvements and of the protective tariff. He was appointed secretary of the Navy by President Fillmore, and had an active part in organizing Commodore Perry's expedition to Japan in 1852. In the meantime, as a result of his marriage to the daughter of a wealthy manufacturer in Baltimore, he had become more and more closely identified with the business life of that city. He was a public-spirited citizen and the recipient of many offices and honors.

It is surprising that, in the midst of such political, business, and social activity, Kennedy should have found time to write as much as he did. His writings, like his public activities, were extremely varied. He wrote several political works: *Annals of Quodlibet* (1840), a satire on Jacksonian democracy; *A Defense of the Whigs* (1843); and *Letters of Mr. Paul Ambrose on the Great Rebellion in the United States* (1865), a plea for the settlement of sectional differences and the preservation of the Union. He wrote the biography of his friend (and the biographer of Patrick Henry) in the two-volume *Memoirs of the Life of William Wirt* (1849). He is remembered in literature, however, not for his political and biographical productions, but for three fictional works, "unlike enough," says Parrington, "to have been written by different men": *Swallow Barn* (1832), a collection of sketches of plantation life in Virginia; *Horse-Shoe Robinson* (1835), a historical romance of South Carolina in the American Revolution; and *Rob of the Bowl* (1838), a romance of colonial Maryland.

Opinion may reasonably differ as to which of these three works is the best. Parrington preferred the "light and whimsical cavalier romance" of *Rob of the Bowl. Horse-Shoe Robinson* presents a more substantial action, culminating in the Battle of King's Mountain; it challenges comparison with Simms' *The Partisan,* which was published in the same year and deals with the same materials. *Swallow Barn* is a pleasant portrayal of social life and manners in the Virginia of the 1820's: a portrayal, in the words of the author's Preface, of "the mellow, bland, and sunny luxuriance of her old-time society." Kennedy was admirably qualified to paint such a picture: his mother was from Virginia and he himself had spent much of his youth in the Old Dominion; and his residence in Baltimore gave him just the right detachment. If he seems to have seen only what was fair in that old-time society, one must remember that the narrator, Mark Littleton, was honor-bound, after having enjoyed the bountiful hospitality of Swallow Barn, to report nothing except the good.

Swallow Barn, ed. J. B. Hubbell, New York, 1929 • **Horse-Shoe Robinson**, ed. E. E. Leisy, New York, 1927 • V. L. Parrington, "John Pendleton Kennedy," **The Romantic Revolution in America**, New York, 1927

From

Swallow Barn

Swallow Barn is an authentic, if somewhat romantic, account of life among the landed gentry of Virginia in the 1820's as observed and reported by Kennedy, who appears in the book as Mark Littleton, a guest at Swallow Barn.

The author begins by describing the house and its environs and introducing the dramatis personae, chief among whom is Frank Meriwether, "the Master of this lordly domain." Other persons at Swallow Barn include Lucretia, Meriwether's wife; their three children; Prudence Meriwether, Frank Meriwether's spinster sister; Ned Hazard, Mrs. Meriwether's brother, who had attended Princeton, where "he ran the usual wild and unprofitable career of college life"; Parson Chubb, the schoolmaster; old Carey, the Negro groom; and many others. Only a few miles away lived old Mr. Tracy, at the Brakes, with his son and his two charming daughters, Catherine and Bel. ("Charming" is the only word for the young ladies in Kennedy's book.) The Tracys had always been on friendly

terms with the Meriwethers; there was consequently a good deal of visiting back and forth. In fact, the action of the story, for the most part, shifts from Swallow Barn to the Brakes, and back again—such action as there is, for Swallow Barn has no plot to speak of. A tenuous thread of continuity is furnished by Ned Hazard's courtship of Bel Tracy, but the interest is held rather by episodes and detached scenes.

The episodes include a session of the County Court, in which Tolliver Hedges, Esq., attorney for the defense, figures amusingly; a possum hunt; a visit to the slave quarter, where Mark Littleton found an "air of contentment and good humour and kind family attachment"; the friendly lawsuit between Meriwether and Tracy; and the dinner to celebrate its happy settlement. The ostensible purpose of the lawsuit was to determine the ownership of a small tract of land which had formerly been the site of a milldam. The mill had been a failure, because of an insufficient amount of water in Apple-pie Branch, the stream on which it was situated. Meriwether's chief concern in the whole affair was not the land but the tender, and rather peculiar, feelings of old Mr. Tracy. The matter was submitted to the arbitration of two eminent lawyers, Singleton Swansdown and Philpot Wart, who, at Meriwether's instigation, gave a verdict favorable to Tracy. The latter was almost disappointed when the long-drawn-out litigation was brought to an end; he so much enjoyed studying the fine legal aspects of the case that when the question was settled, and in his favor, he felt that his occupation was gone. Such, in part, is the background of the dinner at Swallow Barn. Kennedy's chapter "The Dinner Table" is the classic treatment of its subject.

Chapter I

SWALLOW BARN

Swallow Barn is an aristocratical old edifice which sits, like a brooding hen, on the southern bank of the James River. It looks down upon a shady pocket or nook, formed by an indentation of the shore, from a gentle acclivity thinly sprinkled with oaks whose magnificent branches afford habitation to sundry friendly colonies of squirrels and woodpeckers.

This time-honored mansion was the residence of the family of Hazards. But in the present generation, the spells of love and mortgage have translated the possession to Frank Meriwether, who having married Lucretia, the eldest daughter of my late Uncle Walter Hazard, and lifted some gentlemanlike incumbrances which had been sleeping for years upon the domain, was thus inducted into the proprietary rights. The adjacency of his own estate gave a territorial feature to this alliance, of which the fruits were no less discernible in the multiplication of Negroes, cattle, and poultry, than in a flourishing clan of Meriwethers.

The main building is more than a century old. It is built with thick brick walls, but one story in height, and surmounted by a double-faced or hipped roof, which gives the idea of a ship bottom upwards. Later buildings have been added to this, as the wants or ambition of the family have expanded. These are all constructed of wood, and seem to have been built in defiance of all laws of congruity, just as convenience required. But they form altogether an agreeable picture of habitation, suggesting the idea of comfort in the ample space they fill, and in their conspicuous adaptation to domestic uses.

The hall door is an ancient piece of walnut, which has grown too heavy for its hinges, and by its daily travel has furrowed the floor in a quadrant, over which it has an uneasy journey. It is shaded by a narrow porch, with a carved pediment upheld by massive columns of wood, somewhat split by the sun. An ample court-yard, inclosed by a semicircular paling, extends in front of the whole pile, and is traversed by a gravel road leading from a rather ostentatious iron gate, which is swung between two pillars of brick surmounted by globes of cut stone. Between the gate and the house a large willow spreads its arched and pendent drapery over the grass. A bridle rack stands within the inclosure, and near it a ragged horse-nibbled plum-tree—the current belief being that a plum-tree thrives on ill usage—casts its skeleton shadow on the dust.

Some Lombardy poplars, springing above a mass of shrubbery, partially screen various supernumerary buildings at a short distance in the rear of the mansion. Amongst these is to be seen the gable end of a stable, with the date of its erection stiffly emblazoned in black bricks near the upper angle, in figures set in after the fashion of the work on a girl's sampler. In the same quarter a pigeon-box, reared on a post and resembling a huge

tee-totum, is visible, and about its several doors and windows a family of pragmatical pigeons are generally strutting, bridling, and bragging at each other from sunrise until dark.

Appendant to this homestead is an extensive tract of land which stretches some three or four miles along the river, presenting alternately abrupt promontories mantled with pine and dwarf oak, and small inlets terminating in swamps. Some sparse portions of forest vary the landscape, which, for the most part, exhibits a succession of fields clothed with Indian corn, some small patches of cotton or tobacco plants, with the usual varieties of stubble and fallow grounds. These are inclosed by worm fences of shrunken chestnut, where lizards and ground-squirrels are perpetually running races along the rails.

A few hundred steps from the mansion, a brook glides at a snail's pace towards the river, holding its course through a wilderness of laurel and alder, and creeping around islets covered with green mosses. Across this stream is thrown a rough bridge, which it would delight a painter to see; and not far below it an aged sycamore twists its roots into a grotesque framework to the pure mirror of a spring, which wells up its cool waters from a bed of gravel and runs gurgling to the brook. There it aids in furnishing a cruising ground to a squadron of ducks who, in defiance of all nautical propriety, are incessantly turning up their sterns to the skies. On the grass which skirts the margin of the spring, I observe the family linen is usually spread out by some three or four Negro women, who chant shrill music over their wash-tubs, and seem to live in ceaseless warfare with sundry little besmirched and bow-legged blacks, who are never tired of making somersets, and mischievously pushing each other on the clothes laid down to dry.

Beyond the bridge, at some distance, stands a prominent object in the perspective of this picture,—the most venerable appendage to the establishment—a huge barn with an immense roof hanging almost to the ground, and thatched a foot thick with sunburnt straw, which reaches below the eaves in ragged flakes. It has a singularly drowsy and decrepit aspect. The yard around it is strewed knee-deep with litter, from the midst of which arises a long rack resembling a chevaux de frise, which is ordinarily filled with fodder. This is the customary lounge of half a score of oxen and as many cows, who sustain an imperturbable companionship with a sickly wagon, whose parched tongue and drooping swingle-trees, as it stands in the sun, give it a most forlorn invalid character; whilst some sociable carts under the sheds, with their shafts perched against the walls, suggest the idea of a set of gossiping cronies taking their ease in a tavern porch. Now and then a clownish hobble-de-hoy colt, with long fetlocks and disordered mane, and a thousand burs in his tail, stalks through this company. But as it is forbidden ground to all his tribe, he is likely very soon to encounter a shower of corn-cobs from some of the Negro men; upon which contingency he makes a rapid retreat across the bars which imperfectly guard the entrance to the yard, and with an uncouth display of his heels bounds away towards the brook, where he stops and looks back with a saucy defiance; and after affecting to drink for a moment, gallops away with a braggart whinny to the fields.

Chapter II

A COUNTRY GENTLEMAN

The master of this lordly domain is Frank Meriwether. He is now in the meridian of life—somewhere about forty-five. Good cheer and an easy temper tell well upon him. The first has given him a comfortable, portly figure, and the latter a contemplative turn of mind, which inclines him to be lazy and philosophical.

He has some right to pride himself on his personal appearance, for he has a handsome face, with a dark blue eye and a fine intellectual brow. His head is growing scant of hair on the crown, which induces him to be somewhat particular in the management of his locks in that locality, and these are assuming a decided silvery hue.

It is pleasant to see him when he is going to ride to the Court House on business occasions. He is then apt to make his appearance in a coat of blue broadcloth, as-

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1 **tee-totum**, a child's toy, somewhat like a top, twirled by the fingers • 13 **worm fences**, fences made with rails in a zigzag pattern • 43 **chevaux de frise**. See note, p. 630 • 47 **swingle-tree**, or single-tree, is the pivoted bar to which the traces of a harnessed horse are fixed • 52 **hobble-de-hoy**, an awkward, gawky youth between boy and man

tonishingly glossy, and with an unusual amount of plaited ruffle strutting through the folds of a Marseilles waistcoat. A worshipful finish is given to this costume by a large straw hat, lined with green silk. There is a magisterial fulness in his garments which betokens condition in the world, and a heavy bunch of seals, suspended by a chain of gold, jingles as he moves, pronouncing him a man of superfluities.

It is considered rather extraordinary that he has never set up for Congress: but the truth is, he is an unambitious man, and has a great dislike to currying favor—as he calls it. And, besides, he is thoroughly convinced that there will always be men enough in Virginia willing to serve the people, and therefore does not see why he should trouble his head about it. Some years ago, however, there was really an impression that he meant to come out. By some sudden whim, he took it into his head to visit Washington during the session of Congress, and returned, after a fortnight, very seriously distempered with politics. He told curious anecdotes of certain secret intrigues which had been discovered in the affairs of the capital, gave a clear insight into the views of some deep-laid combinations, and became, all at once, painfully florid in his discourse, and dogmatical to a degree that made his wife stare. Fortunately, this orgasm soon subsided, and Frank relapsed into an indolent gentleman of the opposition; but it had the effect to give a much more decided cast to his studies, for he forthwith discarded the "Richmond Whig" from his newspaper subscription, and took to "The Enquirer," like a man who was not to be disturbed by doubts. And as it was morally impossible to believe all that was written on both sides, to prevent his mind from being abused, he from this time forward took a stand against the re-election of Mr. Adams to the Presidency, and resolved to give an implicit faith to all alleged facts which set against his administration. The consequence of this straightforward and confiding deportment was an unexpected complimentary notice of him by the Executive of the State. He was put into the commission of the peace, and having thus become a public man against his will, his opinions were observed to undergo some essential changes. He now thinks that a good citizen ought neither to solicit nor decline office; that the magistracy of Virginia is the sturdiest pillar which supports the fabric of the Constitution; and that the people, "though in their opinions they may be mistaken, in their sentiments they are never wrong;"—with some such other dogmas as, a few years ago, he did not hold in very good repute. In this temper, he has of late embarked on the millpond of county affairs, and notwithstanding his amiable character and his doctrinary republicanism, I am told he keeps the peace as if he commanded a garrison, and administers justice like a Cadi.

He has some claim to supremacy in this last department; for during three years he smoked segars in a lawyer's office in Richmond, which enabled him to obtain a bird's-eye view of Blackstone and the Revised Code. Besides this, he was a member of a Law Debating Society, which ate oysters once a week in a cellar; and he wore, in accordance with the usage of most promising law students of that day, six cravats, one over the other, and yellow-topped boots, by which he was recognized as a blood of the metropolis. Having in this way qualified himself to assert and maintain his rights, he came to his estate, upon his arrival at age, a very model of landed gentlemen. Since that time his avocations have had a certain literary tincture; for having settled himself down as a married man, and got rid of his superfluous foppery, he rambled with wonderful assiduity through a wilderness of romances, poems, and dissertations, which are now collected in his library, and, with their battered blue covers, present a lively type of an army of continentals at the close of the war, or a hospital of invalids. These have all, at last, given way to the newspapers—a miscellaneous study very attractive and engrossing to country gentlemen. This line of study has rendered Meriwether a most perilous antagonist in the matter of legislative proceedings.

A landed proprietor, with a good house and a host of servants, is naturally a hospitable man. A guest is one of his daily wants. A friendly face is a necessary of life, without which the heart is apt to starve, or a luxury without

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34 **Mr. Adams,** John Quincy Adams, sixth President of the United States (1825-1829) • 53 **Cadi,** a Mohammedan magistrate • 57 **Blackstone,** the famous **Commentaries** of Sir William Blackstone (1723-1780), English jurist. In his "Speech for Conciliation with the Colonies" (1775), Edmund Burke commented on the popularity of this work in America: "I hear that they have sold nearly as many of Blackstone's Commentaries in America as in England" • 63 **a blood,** a man of spirit and fashion • 72 **continentals,** American soldiers in the Revolutionary War

which it grows parsimonious. Men who are isolated from society by distance, feel these wants by an instinct, and are grateful for the opportunity to relieve them. In Meriwether, the sentiment goes beyond this. It has, besides, something dialectic in it. His house is open to every body, as freely almost as an inn. But to see him when he has had the good fortune to pick up an intelligent, educated gentleman,—and particularly one who listens well!—a respectable, assentatious stranger!—All the better if he has been in the Legislature, or better still, if in Congress. Such a person caught within the purlieus of Swallow Barn, may set down one week's entertainment as certain —inevitable, and as many more as he likes—the more the merrier. He will know something of the quality of Meriwether's rhetoric before he is gone.

Then again, it is very pleasant to see Frank's kind and considerate bearing towards his servants and dependents. His slaves appreciate this, and hold him in most affectionate reverence, and, therefore, are not only contented, but happy under his dominion.

Meriwether is not much of a traveller. He has never been in New England, and very seldom beyond the confines of Virginia. He makes now and then a winter excursion to Richmond, which, I rather think, he considers as the centre of civilization; and towards autumn, it is his custom to journey over the mountain to the Springs, which he is obliged to do to avoid the unhealthy season in the tide-water region. But the upper country is not much to his taste, and would not be endured by him if it were not for the crowds that resort there for the same reason which operates upon him; and I may add,—though he would not confess it—for the opportunity this concourse affords him for discussion of opinions.

He thinks lightly of the mercantile interest, and, in fact, undervalues the manners of the large cities generally. He believes that those who live in them are hollow-hearted and insincere, and wanting in that substantial intelligence and virtue, which he affirms to be characteristic of the country. He is an ardent admirer of the genius of Virginia, and is frequent in his commendation of a toast in which the state is compared to the mother of the Gracchi:—indeed, it is a familiar thing with him to speak of the aristocracy of talent as only inferior to that of the landed interest,—the idea of a freeholder inferring to his mind a certain constitutional pre-eminence in all the virtues of citizenship, as a matter of course.

The solitary elevation of a country gentleman, well to do in the world, begets some magnificent notions. He becomes as infallible as the Pope; gradually acquires a habit of making long speeches; is apt to be impatient of contradiction, and is always very touchy on the point of honor. There is nothing more conclusive than a rich man's logic any where, but in the country, amongst his dependents, it flows with the smooth and unresisted course of a full stream irrigating a meadow, and depositing its mud in fertilizing luxuriance. Meriwether's sayings, about Swallow Barn, import absolute verity. But I have discovered that they are not so current out of his jurisdiction. Indeed, every now and then, we have quite obstinate discussions when some of the neighboring potentates, who stand in the same sphere with Frank, come to the house; for these worthies have opinions of their own, and nothing can be more dogged than the conflict between them. They sometimes fire away at each other with a most amiable and unconvincable hardihood for a whole evening, bandying interjections, and making bows, and saying shrewd things with all the courtesy imaginable. But for unextinguishable pertinacity in argument, and utter impregnability of belief, there is no disputant like your country-gentleman who reads the newspapers. When one of these discussions fairly gets under weigh, it never comes to an anchor again of its own accord;—it is either blown out so far to sea as to be given up for lost, or puts into port for distress for want of documents,—or is upset by a call for the boot-jack and slippers—which is something like the previous question in Congress.

If my worthy cousin be somewhat over-argumentative as a politician, he restores the equilibrium of his character by a considerate coolness in religious matters. He piques himself upon being a high-churchman, but is not the most diligent frequenter of places of worship, and very seldom permits himself to get into a dispute upon points of faith. If Mr. Chub, the Presbyterian tutor in the family, ever succeeds in drawing him into this field, as he occasionally has the address to do, Meriwether is sure to fly the course; he gets puzzled with scripture names, and

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41 the Gracchi, brothers and reforming statesmen in Rome in the second century B.C. • 76 **the previous question,** in parliamentary practice, the question whether the main issue shall be voted on at once without further debate • 80 **high-churchman,** a member of the party of the Episcopal Church which attaches much importance to forms and ceremonies

makes some odd mistakes between Peter and Paul, and then generally turns the parson over to his wife, who, he says, has an astonishing memory.

He is somewhat distinguished as a breeder of blooded horses; and, ever since the celebrated race between Eclipse and Henry, has taken to this occupation with a renewed zeal, as a matter affecting the reputation of the state. It is delightful to hear him expatiate upon the value, importance, and patriotic bearing of this employment, and to listen to all his technical lore touching the mystery of horse-craft. He has some fine colts in training, which are committed to the care of a pragmatical old Negro, named Carey, who, in his reverence for the occupation, is the perfect shadow of his master. He and Frank hold grave and momentous consultations upon the affairs of the stable, in such a sagacious strain of equal debate, that it would puzzle a spectator to tell which was the leading member in the council. Carey thinks he knows a great deal more upon the subject than his master, and their frequent intercourse has begot a familiarity in the old Negro which is almost fatal to Meriwether's supremacy. The old man feels himself authorized to maintain his positions according to the freest parliamentary form, and sometimes with a violence of asseveration that compels his master to abandon his ground, purely out of faint-heartedness. Meriwether gets a little nettled by Carey's doggedness, but generally turns it off in a laugh. I was in the stable with him, a few mornings after my arrival, when he ventured to expostulate with the venerable groom upon a professional point, but the controversy terminated in its customary way. "Who sot you up, Master Frank, to tell me how to fodder that 'ere cretur, when I as good as nursed you on my knee?"

"Well, tie up your tongue, you old mastiff," replied Frank, as he walked out of the stable, "and cease growling, since you will have it your own way;"—and then, as we left the old man's presence, he added, with an affectionate chuckle—"a faithful old cur, too, that snaps at me out of pure honesty; he has not many years left, and it does no harm to humor him!"

Chapter XXXIII

THE DINNER TABLE

About half after three, Carey, with a solemn official air which was well set off by a singularly stiff costume,—assuming for the nonce the rank and station of head-waiter,—announced that dinner was on the table. The greater part of the company was collected in the drawing-room; some two or three loitered through the hall. At the summons, Mr. Tracy, with that alacrious motion which sometimes belongs to old men, sprang upon his feet and hastened to the opposite side of the room, where my cousin Lucretia was seated, took her hand, and, with a repetition of formal bows after a fashion in vogue in the last century, led her to the dining-room. Meriwether stood at the door beckoning to one after another of his guests, with that kind smile and unstudied grace which are natural to a benevolent temper; his tall figure somewhat constrained in its motion by an infusion of modesty, which is always discernible in him when placed in any conspicuous position. As soon as Mr. Tracy led the way, Swansdown, with some particularity, offered his arm to Bel. The other ladies found an escort among the more gallant of the gentlemen; and after them the rest of the party pressed forward pell-mell towards the dining-room, leaving Meriwether to bring up the rear, who, upon arriving at the table, with that considerateness which never forsakes him in the smallest matters, placed Mr. Wart, Mr. Chub, and one or two of his elder guests near his own seat.

I must not forget to mention, that before we had taken our chairs, Mistress Winkle, decked out in all the pomp of silk and muslin, sailed, as it were, with muffled oars into the room from a side door; and, with a prim and stealthy motion, deposited her time-worn person near to my cousin Lucretia. It is a custom of affectionate courtesy in the family, to accord to this venerable relic of the past generation the civility of a place at table. Mr. Tracy was aware of Meriwether's feelings towards the aged dame; and, prompted by his overflowing zeal on the present occasion to manifest his deference to his host, he no sooner observed her than he broke out into a jocose and gallant recognition:—

"Mistress Winkle! what, my old friend! It rejoices me to see you looking so well—and so youthful! The world goes merrily with you. Gad's-my life! if Colonel Tarleton were only alive again to make another visit to the James River, it would be hard to persuade him that time had

83 Tarleton, Sir Banastre Tarleton (1754-1833), English officer in America during the Revolutionary War

gained so small a victory over the romping girl whom he had the impertinence to chuckle under the chin so boldly. A saucy and stark trooper he was in those days, Mistress Winkle! But the gout, the gout, I warrant, did his business for him long ago! Ha, ha! You hav'nt forgot old times, Mistress Winkle, although they have well nigh forgotten you."

The housekeeper, during this outbreak, courtesied, hemmed and smiled; and, with much confusion, rustled her silken folds in her chair, with somewhat of the motion of a motherly hen in the process of incubation. Mr. Tracy had touched upon an incident which, for nearly half a century, had been a theme that warmed up all her self-complacency, and which owed its origin to one of the English partisan's forays upon the river side, during the Revolution, in which he was said to have made himself very much at home at Swallow Barn, and to have bestowed some complimental notice upon the then buxom and blooming dependant of the family.

The table was furnished with a profusion of the delicacies afforded by the country; and, notwithstanding it was much more ample than the accommodation of the guests required, it seemed to be stored rather with a reference to its own dimensions than to the number or wants of those who were collected around it. At the head, immediately under the eye of our hostess, in the customary pride of place, was deposited a goodly ham of bacon, rich in its own perfections, as well as in the endemic honors that belong to it in the Old Dominion. According to a usage worthy of imitation, it was clothed in its own dark skin, which the imaginative mistress of the kitchen had embellished by carving into some fanciful figures. The opposite end of the table smoked with a huge roasted saddle of mutton, which seemed, from its trim and spruce air, ready to gallop off the dish. Between these two extremes was scattered an enticing diversity of poultry, prepared with many savory adjuncts, and especially that topical luxury, which yet so slowly finds its way northward,—fried chickens,—sworn brother to the ham, and old Virginia's standard dish. The intervening spaces displayed a profusion of the products of the garden; nor were oysters and crabs wanting where room allowed; and, where nothing else could be deposited, as if scrupulous of showing a bare spot of the table-cloth, the bountiful forethought of Mistress Winkle had provided a choice selection of pickles of every color and kind. From the whole array of the board it was obvious, that abundance and variety were deemed no less essential to the entertainment, than the excellence of the viands.

A bevy of domestics, in every stage of training, attended upon the table, presenting a lively type of the progress of civilization, or the march of intellect; the veteran waiting-man being well-contrasted with the rude half-monkey, half-boy, who seemed to have been for the first time admitted to the parlor; whilst, between these two, were exhibited the successive degrees that mark the advance from the young savage to the sedate and sophisticated image of the old-fashioned negro nobility. It was equal to a gallery of caricatures, a sort of scenic satire upon man in his various stages, with his odd imitativeness illustrated in the broadest lines. Each had added some article of coxcombry to his dress; a pewter buckle fastened to the shirt for a breast-pin; a dingy parti-colored ribbon, ostentatiously displayed across the breast, with one end lodged in the waistcoat pocket; or a preposterous cravat girding up an exorbitantly starched shirt collar, that rivalled the driven snow, as it traversed cheeks as black as midnight, and fretted the lower cartilage of a pair of refractory, raven-hued ears. One, more conceited than the rest, had platted his wool (after a fashion common amongst the negroes) into five or six short cues both before and behind; whilst the visages of the whole group wore that grave, momentous elongation which is peculiar to the African face, and which is eminently adapted to express the official care and personal importance of the wearer.

As the more immediate, and what is universally conceded to be the more important, business of the dinner was discussed, to wit, the process of dulling the edge of appetite, the merriment of the company rose in proportion to the leisure afforded to its exercise; and the elder portion of the guests gently slid into the vivacity of the younger. Mr. Tracy did not lose for an instant that antiquated cavalier air which he had assumed on entering the room. As Harvey Riggs expressed it, "he was painfully polite and very precisely gay." The ladies, for a time, gave their tone to the table; and, under this influence, we found ourselves falling into detached circles, where each pursued its separate theme, sometimes in loud and rapid converse, mingled with frequent bursts of laughter that spread an undistinguishable din through the room; and sometimes in low and confidential mur-

murings, of which it was impossible to say whether they were grave or gay. Swansdown's voice was poured into Bel's ear in gentle and unremitting whispers, of which Ned Hazard alone, of all the guests—to judge by his intense and abstracted gaze—was able to unriddle the import. Prudence, equally abstracted, was unnaturally merry, and laughed much more than was necessary at Harvey's jokes. Catharine talked with singular sagacity, and listened, with still more singular earnestness, to Mr. Beverley, who was instructing her, with equal interest and eloquence, upon the wholesome effects he had found in the abundant use of flannel—which he described with unnecessary amplitude of details—in repelling the assaults of an ancient enemy, the rheumatism. Now and then a loud and rather obstreperous laugh, not altogether suited to the region he inhabited, and which some such consciousness seemed abruptly to arrest, was set up by Taliaferro Hedges. This worthy had already begun to occupy that questionable ground which a gentleman of loose habits and decaying reputation is pretty sure to arrive at in his descending career. Dissipation had lowered him somewhat in the world, and had already introduced him to a class of associates who had made a visible impression on his manners, a circumstance which very few men have so little shrewdness as not to perceive, nor so much hardihood as not to be ashamed of. In truth, Toll had imbibed some of the slang, and much of the boisterousness of the bar-room; but he had not yet given such unequivocal indications of the incurableness of his infirmity, as to induce his acquaintances (who for the most part upheld him on some family consideration) to exclude him from their houses. On the contrary, a certain strain of disorderly but generous companionship, breaking out and shining above the vices to which it was akin, still recommended him to the favor of those who were unwilling to desert him as long as his case was not absolutely hopeless. The course of intemperance, however, gravitates by a fatal law downwards: it is unfortunately of the most rare occurrence, that the mind which has once been debauched by a habit of intoxication, ever regains that poise of self-respect which preserves the purity of the individual. It was easy to perceive that Hedges labored under a perpetual struggle to constrain his deportment within even the broader boundaries that limit the indulgence of the class of gentlemen.

Amidst these diversified exhibitions, Mr. Wart ate like a man with a good appetite, and gave himself no trouble to talk, except in the intervals of serving his plate; for he remarked, "that he was not accustomed to these late hours, and thought them apt to make one surcharge his stomach;" whilst the parson, who sat opposite to him, wore a perpetual smile during the repast; sometimes looking as if he intended to say something, but more generally watching every word that fell from Mr. Wart's lips.

The courses disappeared; a rich dessert came and went: the spirits of the company rose still higher. The wine, iced almost to the freezing point, moved in a busy sphere; for the intense heat of the weather gave it an additional zest. We had made the usual libations to the ladies, and exchanged the frequent healths, according to the hackneyed and unmeaning custom which prevails unquestioned, I suppose, over Christendom, when the epoch arrived at which, by the arbitrary law of the feast, the womankind are expected to withdraw; that time which, if I were a sovereign in this dinner-party realm, should be blotted from the festive calendar. I should shame me to acknowledge that there was any moment in the social day when it was unseemly for the temperate sex to look upon or listen to the lord of creation in his pastimes; but I was neither monarch nor magician, and so we were left alone to pursue unreproved the frolic current upon which we had been lifted. Before us glittered the dark sea of the table, studded over with "carracks," "argosies," and "barks" freighted with the wealth of the Azores, Spain, Portugal and France; and with the lighters by which these precious bulks were unladen, and deposited in their proper receptacles. In sooth, the wine was very good.

Almost the first words that were spoken, after we had readjusted ourselves from the stir occasioned by the retreat of the ladies, came from Mr. Tracy. He had been waiting for a suitable opportunity to acquit himself of a grave and formal duty. The occasion of the dinner, he conceived, demanded of him a peculiar compliment to the host. His strict and refined sensitiveness to the requirements of gentle breeding would have forbidden him to sleep quietly in his bed with this task unperformed; and therefore, with a tremulous and fluttered motion,

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59 **libations to the ladies**, drinking their healths • 73 **carracks**, large ships formerly used by the Spaniards in the East India trade • 73 **argosies**, merchant vessels of the largest size • 75 **lighters**, boats used in unloading vessels not lying at wharves

like that of a young orator awe-struck at the thought of making a speech, he rose to command the attention of the table. A faint-hearted smile sat rigidly upon his visage, "like moonlight on a marble statue,"—his eye glassy, his cheek pale, and his gesture contrived to a faint and feeble counterfeit of mirth. It was evident the old gentleman was not accustomed to public speaking: and so he remarked, as he turned towards Meriwether, and continued an address somewhat in the following terms:—

"Since we have, my dear sir, so fortunately succeeded in putting an end to a vexatious question,—which, although it has resulted in throwing upon my hands a few barren and unprofitable acres, has given all the glory of the settlement to you;—(here his voice quavered considerably,) for it was indubitably, my very worthy and excellent friend, at your instance and suggestion, that we struck out the happy thought of leaving it to the arbitrement of our kind friends:—and to tell the truth, (at this point the old gentleman brightened up a little and looked jocular, although he still had the quaver,) I don't know but I would as lief have the lawsuit as the land,—seeing that it has been the occasion of many merry meetings:—I will take upon myself to propose to this good company of neighbors and friends, that we shall drink,—ha ha! (continued the veteran, waving his hand above his head, and inclining towards the table with a gay gesticulation,) that we shall drink, gentlemen, a bumper; (here he took the decanter in his hand, and filled his glass.) "Fill your glasses all around,—no flinching!"

"Fill up! fill up!" cried every one, anxious to help the old gentleman out of his difficulties, "Mr. Tracy's toast in a bumper!"

"Here," continued Mr. Tracy, holding his glass on high with a trembling hand, "here is to our admirable host, Mister Francis Meriwether of Swallow Barn!—a sensible and enlightened gentleman,—a considerate landlord,—a kind neighbor, an independent, upright, sensible,—enlightened—(here he became sadly puzzled for a word, and paused for a full half minute,) reasonable defender of right and justice; a man that is not headstrong (his perplexity still increasing) on the score of landmarks, or indeed on any score!—I say, gentlemen, here's wishing him success in all his aims, and long life to enjoy a great many such joyous meetings as the present; besides—"

"Health of our host, and many such meetings!" exclaimed Mr. Wart, interrupting the speaker, and thus cutting short a toast of which it was evident Mr. Tracy could not find the end.

"Health to our host,—joyous meetings!" cried out half a dozen voices.

And thus relieved from his floundering progress, the old gentleman took his seat in great glee, remarking to the person next to him, "that he was not much practised in making dinner speeches, but that he could get through very well when he was once pushed to it."

Meriwether sat out this adulatory and unexpected assault with painful emotions, sinking under the weight of his natural diffidence. The rest of the company awaited in silence the slow, drawling and distinct elocution of the speaker, with an amused and ludicrous suspense, until Mr. Wart's interruption, which was the signal for a shout of approbation; and in the uproar that ensued, the wine was quaffed; while Mr. Tracy chuckled at the eminent success of his essay, and Meriwether stood bowing and blushing with the bashfulness of a girl.

When the clamor subsided, Philly Wart remarked in a quiet tone—

"I think our friend Meriwether will scarcely escape a speech in reply to this compliment. The fashion is to return the broadside whenever it is given."

"I pray you," said Meriwether, with an emotion amounting almost to alarm, "do not ask me to say any thing. I have an insuperable aversion to such efforts: my nerves will not stand it. Mr. Tracy knows how kindly I take the expression of his regard."

Harvey Riggs, who observed Meriwether's real embarrassment, rose to divert the attention of the company to another quarter; and putting on an air of great solemnity, observed that he was unwilling to lose so favorable an opportunity of paying a tribute to two very worthy, and on the present occasion he might say, conspicuous persons; "I mean, gentlemen," said he, "Mr. Philpot Wart and Mr. Singleton Oglethorpe Swansdown. Replenish, gentlemen! Here's to the health of the pacificators! the men whose judgments could not be led astray by the decisions of courts, and whose energies could not be subdued by the formidable difficulties of the Apple-pie!"

"Bravo!" rang from every mouth.

"A speech from Mr. Swansdown!" exclaimed Ned Hazard.

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87 Apple-pie. See the introductory note, p. 1117

"A speech from Mr. Swansdown!" echoed from all quarters.

The gentleman called on rose from his chair. Harvey Riggs rapped upon the table to command silence; there followed a pause.

"I do not rise to make a speech," said Swansdown with great formality of manner.

"Hear him!" shouted Harvey.

"I do not rise, gentlemen," said the other, "to make a speech; but custom, in these innovating times, almost imperatively exacts that the festive, spontaneous and unmerited encomiums of the table,—that, I remark, the festive, spontaneous and unmerited encomiums of the table, generated in the heat of convivial zeal, should meet their response in the same hilarious spirit in which they find their origin. Gentlemen will understand me; it is not my purpose to rebuke a custom which may, and doubtless does, contribute to the embellishment of the social relations. It is merely my purpose, on the present occasion, as an humble, and, if I know myself, an unpretending individual, to respond to the free and unbidden expressions of the good-will of this company to myself, and my distinguished colleague, with whom my name has been associated. In his name therefore, and in my own, I desire to acknowledge the deep sense we entertain of the compliment conveyed in the toast of our worthy fellow-guest. (Philly Wart bowed and smiled.) It will be amongst the proudest topics of remembrance left to me, gentlemen, amidst the vicissitudes of a changeful life, that the personal sacrifices I have made and the toil I have bestowed, in the successful endeavor to define and establish the complex relations and rights of two estimable friends, have found a favorable and flattering approval in the good sense of this enlightened company. If it should further result, that the great principles developed, and, to a certain extent, promulgated in this endeavor, should hereafter redound to the advantage of the generation amongst which I have the honor to live, I need not say how sincerely I shall rejoice that neither my friend nor myself have lived in vain. I propose, gentlemen, in return,—'The freeholders of the Old Dominion; the prosperity of the Commonwealth reposes securely upon their intelligence!' "

"Amen!" said Hazard in an under tone, intended only for my ear, "and may they never fail to do honor to *unpretending* merit!"

"I suppose," said Mr. Wart, speaking in an unusually placid tone, as he rose with a face reefed into half its ordinary length with smiles, and, at the same time, expressing arch waggery, "I suppose it is necessary that I also should speak to this point. There are, if your honor pleases—Mr. President—ordinarily two different motives for proposing the health of an individual at table. The one is a *bonâ fide* purpose to exalt and honor the person proposed, by a public manifestation of the common feeling toward him, by reason of some certain act or deed by him performed, entitling him, in the estimation of the persons proposing, to applause. In this point of view, my worthy friend who has just spoken, seems to have considered the case in hand. The second motive for the act, may it please you,—Mr. Meriwether,—may be, and such I take it, a certain intent, *inter alia,* to promote and encourage cheerful companionship. With whatever gravity the *res gesta* may be conducted, I hold that it is to be looked upon *diverso intuitu,* according to the temper and condition of the company for the time being.

"Now, sir, I will not venture to say that my learned friend has not wisely considered the toast in the present instance, as intended and made in all gravity of purpose; but, seeing that this company did certainly manifest some levity on the occasion, I choose, sir, to stand on the sunny side of the question, as the safest, in the present emergency. *Vere sapit,* sir, *qui alieno periculo sapit;* I, therefore, sir, go for the joke. I have sometimes seen an old hound tongue upon a false scent; but then there is music made, and, I believe, that is pretty much all that is wanting on the present occasion.

"When a man is praised to his face, gentlemen of the jury," he continued, rising into an energetic key, and mistaking the tribunal he was addressing,—"I beg pardon, gentlemen, you see the ermine and the woolsack will stick to my tongue: *Omnibus hoc vitium cantoribus,* as an ancient author (I forget his name) very appropriately remarks. What is bred in the bone—you know the proverb. But when a man is praised to his face,"—here the

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62 **inter alia,** among other things • 64 **res gesta,** the business in hand • 65 **diverso intuitu,** in a different view • 73 **Vere . . . sapit.** He is truly wise who is wise from another's peril • 81 **ermine,** office of judge, whose robe is lined with ermine • 81 **woolsack,** the seat of the lord chancellor in the English House of Lords • 82 **Omnibus . . . cantoribus.** All poets have this vice. The "ancient author" is Horace, in *Satires,* I, iii

speaker stretched out his arm, and stood silent for a moment, as if endeavoring to recollect what he intended to say,—for he had lost the thread of his speech,—and during this pause his countenance grew so irresistibly comic that the whole company, who had from the first been collecting a storm of laughter, now broke out with concentrated violence.

"Poh, Ned Hazard! you put every thing I had to say out of my head with that horse-laugh," continued the orator, looking at Ned, who had thrown himself back in his chair, giving full vent to his merriment.

Philly patiently awaited the blowing over of this whirlwind, with an increased drollery of look; and then, as it subsided, he made a bow with his glass in his hand, saying, in an emphatic way, "your healths, gentlemen!" swallowed his wine, and took his seat, amidst renewed peals of mirth. At the same moment, from the depths of this tumult, was distinctly heard the voice of Mr. Chub, who cried out, with his eyes brimful of tears, and a half suffocated voice,—"A prodigious queer man, that Mister Philly Wart!"

Segars were now introduced, the decanters were filled for the second time, and the flush of social enjoyment reddened into a deeper hue. Some one or two additional guests had just arrived, and taken their seats at the table, a full octave lower in tone than their excited comrades of the board: it was like the mingling of a few flats too many in a lively overture; but the custom of the soil sanctions and invites these irregularities, and it was not long before this rear-guard hastened on to the van. The scene presented a fine picture of careless, unmethodized and unenthralled hospitality, where the guests enjoyed themselves according to their varying impulses, whether in grave argumentation or toppling merriment. Now and then, a song,—none of the best in execution,—was sung, and after that a boisterous catch was trolled, with some decisive thumpings on the table, by way of marking time, in which it might be perceived that even old Mr. Tracy was infected with the prevailing glee, for his eyes sparkled, and his head shook to the music, and his fist was brandished with a downward swing, almost in the style of a professed royster. In the intervals of the singing a story was told. Sometimes the conversation almost sank into a murmur; sometimes it mounted to a gale, its billow rolling in with a deep-toned, heavy, swelling roar, until it was spent in a general explosion. Not unfrequently, a collapse of the din surprised some single speaker in the high road of his narrative, and thus detected him recounting, in an upper key, some incident which he had perhaps addressed to one auditor, and which, not a little to his disconcertment, he found himself compelled to communicate to the whole circle. It was in such an interval as this, that Hedges was left struggling through the following colloquy with Ralph Tracy:—

"I made a narrow escape."

"How was that?" asked Ralph.

"Oh, a very serious accident, I assure you! I came within an ace of getting yoked that trip; married, sir, by all that's lovely!"

"No!" exclaimed Ralph, "you didn't, sure enough, Toll?"

"If I didn't," replied Toll, "I wish I may be——(here he slipped out a round, full and expressive malediction.) I'll tell you how it was. At the Sweet Springs I got acquainted with a preposterously rich old sugar planter from Louisiana. He had his wife and daughter with him, and a whole squad of servants. Forty thousand dollars a year! and the daughter as frenchified as a sunflower: not so particularly young neither, but looking as innocent as if she wa'nt worth one copper. I went in for grace, and began to show out a few of my ineffable pulchritudes,—and what do you think?—she was most horribly struck. I put her into an ecstasy with one of my pigeon-wings. She wanted to find out my name."

"Well, and what come of it?"

"*Thar* were only three things," said Toll, "in the way. If it had not been for them, I should have been planting sugar this day. First, the old one didn't take to it very kindly; and then, the mother began to rear a little at me too; but I shouldn't have considered that of much account, only the daughter herself seemed as much as to insinuate that the thing wouldn't do."

"Did you carry it so far as to put the question to her?"

"Not exactly so far as that. No, no, I was not such a fool as to come to the *ore tenus;* I went on the non-commital principle. She as much as signified to a friend of mine, that she didn't wish to make my acquaintance: and so, I took the hint and was off:—wa'nt that close grazing, Ralph?"

This concluding interrogatory was followed up by one

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73 pigeon-wing, a fancy step executed by jumping and striking the legs together • 85 ore tenus, by word of mouth

of Toll's loud cachinations, that might have been heard a hundred paces from the house, and which was, as usual, chopped short by his perceiving that it did not take effect so decidedly as he expected upon the company. Upon this, Hedges became rather silent for the next half hour.

The dining-room had for some time past been gradually assuming that soft, mellow, foggy tint which is said by the painters to spread such a charm over an Indian-summer landscape. The volumes of smoke rolled majestically across the table, and then rose into the upper air, where they spread themselves out into a rich, dun mass, and flung a certain hazy witchery over the scene. The busy riot of revelry seemed to echo through another Cimmerium, and the figures of the guests were clad in even a spectral obscurity. Motionless, exact and sombre as an Egyptian obelisk, old Carey's form was dimly seen relieved against the light of a window, near one end of the table; all the other domestics had fled, and the veteran body-guard alone remained on duty. The wine went round with the regularity of a city milk-cart, stopping at every door. A mine of wit was continually pouring out its recondite treasures: the guests were every moment growing less fastidious; and the banquet had already reached that stage when second-rate wit is as good as the best, if not better. The good humor of our friend Wart had attracted the waggery of Riggs and Hazard, and they were artfully soliciting and provoking him to a more conspicuous part in the farce of the evening. Like Munchausen's frozen horn, the counsellor was rapidly melting into a noisy temperature. He had volunteered some two or three stories, of which he seemed, somehow or other, to have lost the pith. In short, it was supposed, from some droll expression of the eye, and a slight faltering of the tongue, that Mr. Wart was growing gay.

Harvey Riggs, when matters were precisely in this condition, contrived, by signs and secret messages, to concentrate the attention of the company upon the old lawyer, just as he was setting out with the history of a famous campaign.

"You all remember the late war," said Philly, looking around, and finding the eyes of every one upon him.

This announcement was followed by a laugh of applause, indicating the interest that all took in the commencement of the narrative.

"There is certainly nothing particularly calculated to excite your risible faculties in that!" said he, as much amused as his auditory.—"I was honored by his Excellency the Governor of Virginia with a commission as captain of a troop of horse, having been previously elected to that station by a unanimous vote at a meeting of the corps."

"Explain the name of the troop," said Ned Hazard.

"The Invincible Blues," replied the other; "the uniform being a blue bobtail, and the corps having resolved that they would never be vanquished."

"I am told," interrupted Harvey Riggs, "that you furnished yourself with a new pair of yellow buckskin small-clothes on the occasion; and that with them and your blue bobtail you produced a sensation through the whole country."

"Faith!" said Mr. Chub, speaking across the table, "Mr. Riggs, I can assure you I don't think a horseman well mounted without leather small-clothes."

"I took prodigious pains," continued Philly, not heeding the interruption, "to infuse into my men the highest military discipline. There wasn't a man in the corps that couldn't carry his nag over any worm fence in the country,—throwing off the rider—"

"The rider of the fence, you mean," said Hazard dryly.

"To be sure I do!" replied Philly, with briskness, "you don't suppose I meant to say that my men were *ex equis dejecti*—exephippiated, if I may be allowed to coin a word? No, sir, while the horse kept his legs, every man was like a horse-fly."

"What system of discipline did you introduce?" inquired Harvey.

"The system of foxhunting," answered Mr. Wart; "the very best that ever was used for cavalry."

"Go on," said Harvey.

"We received intelligence, somewhere in the summer of eighteen hundred and thirteen, that old Admiral Warren was beginning to squint somewhat awfully at Norfolk, and rather taking liberties in Hampton Roads. *Ratione cujus*, as we lawyers say, it was thought prudent to call into immediate service some of the most efficient of the military force of the country; and, accordingly, up

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14 **Cimmerium**, the abode of the Cimmerians; described by Homer as a remote realm of mist and gloom • 28 **Munchausen's frozen horn.** In one of Munchausen's surprising adventures, the tunes played by the postilion were "frozen up in the horn" and did not come out until the horn was hung on a peg near the kitchen fire • 40 **the late war**, the War of 1812 • 71 **ex . . . dejecti**, thrown from their horses • 72 **exephippiated**, literally, removed from his saddle-cloth • 81 **Admiral Warren**, Sir John Borlase Warren (1752-1822), English admiral • 84 **Ratione cujus**, by reason of which

came an order addressed to me, commanding me to repair with my men, as speedily as possible, to the neighborhood of Craney Island. This summons operated like an electric shock. It was the first real flavor of gunpowder that the troop had ever snuffed. I never saw men behave better. It became my duty to take instant measures to meet the emergency. In the first place, I ordered a meeting of the troop at the Court House;—for I was resolved to do things coolly."

"You are mistaken, Mr. Wart," said Harvey, "in the order of your movements; the first thing that you did was to put on your new buskin breeches."

"Nonsense!" said the counsellor; "I called the meeting at the Court House, directing every man to be there in full equipment."

"And you sent forthwith to Richmond," interrupted Hazard, "for a white plume three feet long."

"Now, gentlemen!" said Philly, imploringly, "one at a time! if you wish to hear me out, let me go on. Well, sir, the men met in complete order. Harry Davenport, (you remember him, Mr. Meriwether, a devil-may-care sort of a fellow, a perfect walking nuisance in time of peace, an indictable offence going at large!) he was my orderly, and the very best, I suppose, in Virginia. I furnished Harry (it was entirely a thought of my own) with a halbert, the shaft twelve feet long, and pointed with a foot of polished iron. As soon as I put this into his hands, the fellow set up one of his horse-laughs, and galloped about the square like a wild Cossack."

"I should think," said Meriwether, "that one of our countrymen would scarcely know what to do with a pole twelve feet long, after he had got into his saddle: however, I take it for granted you had good reason for what you did."

"The Polish lancers," replied Philly, "produced a terrible impression with a weapon somewhat similar."

"No matter," said Ned, "about the Polish lancers; let us get upon our campaign."

"Well," continued Mr. Wart, "I thought it would not be amiss, before we started, to animate and encourage my fellows with a speech. So, I drew them up in a hollow square, and gave them a flourish that set them half crazy."

"That was just the way with Tyrtæus before Ithome!" exclaimed Mr. Chub, with great exultation, from the opposite side of the table. "I should like to have heard Mr. Wart exhorting his men!"

"I will tell you exactly what he said, for I was there at the time," said Ned Hazard; "Follow me, my brave boys! the eyes of the world are upon you; keep yours upon my white plume, and let that be your rallying point!"

"Pish!" cried Philly, turning round and showing his black teeth with a good-natured, half-tipsy grin, "I said no such thing. I told them, what it was my duty to tell them, that we had joined issue with the British Government, and had come to the *ultima ratio:* and that we must now make up our minds to die on the field of our country's honor, rather than see her soil polluted with the footsteps of an invader; that an enemy was at our door, threatening our firesides."

"You told them," interrupted Hazard again, "that the next morning's sun might find them stark and stiff and gory, on the dew-besprinkled sod. I can remember those expressions as well as if it were yesterday."

"I might have said something like that," replied Philly, "by way of encouragement to the men. However, this you recollect well enough, Ned, that there was not a man in the corps whose mind was not as perfectly made up to die as to eat his dinner."

"All, except old Shakebag, the tavernkeeper," said Ned, "and he was short-winded and pursy, and might be excused for preferring his dinner."

"I except him," replied Mr. Wart, and then proceeded with his narrative. "As soon as I had finished my address, I dissolved the square, and instantly took up the line of march."

"You should say rather that you took up the charge," said Ned, "for you went out of the village in line, at full speed, with swords brandishing above your heads. You led the way, with Harry Davenport close at your heels, thrusting his long lance right at the seat of your yellow buckskins, and shouting like a savage."

"What was that for?" I asked with some astonishment.

"Ned puts a coloring on it," replied the counsellor; "I did go out from the court house at a charge, but there was no brandishing of swords; we carry our swords, Mr. Littleton, in the charge, at arm's length, the blade being extended horizontally exactly parallel with the line of the eyes. I did this to give the men courage."

"How near was the enemy at this time?" I inquired.

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43 **Tyrtæus,** a lyric poet of Greece in the seventh century B.C. • 55 **ultima ratio,** the last argument

They had not landed," answered Ned gravely, "but were expected to land at Craney Island, about one hundred miles off."

Here was a shout of applause from the table.

"I can tell you what," said Mr. Wart, for he was too much flustered to take any thing in joke that passed, "there is no time so important in a campaign as when an army first breaks ground. If you can keep your men in heart at the starting point, you may make them do what you please afterwards."

"That's true!" said Mr. Chub, who had evinced great interest in Philly's narrative from the beginning, and was even more impervious than the lawyer himself to the waggery of the table. "Cyrus would never have persuaded the Greeks to march with him to Babylon, if he had not made them believe that they were going only against the Pisidians. Such stratagems are considered lawful in war. It was a masterly thing in my opinion, this device of Mr. Wart's."

"Had you severe service?" asked Meriwether.

"Tolerably severe," replied Philly, "while it lasted. It rained upon us nearly the whole way from here to Norfolk, and there was a good deal of ague and fever in the country at that time, which we ran great risk of taking, because we were obliged to keep up a guard night and day."

"You had an engagement I think I have heard?" said I.

"Pretty nearly the same thing," answered Mr. Wart. "The enemy never landed whilst I remained, except, I believe, to get some pigs and fowls on Craney Island: but we had frequent alarms, and several times were drawn up in a line of battle, which is more trying to men, Mr. Littleton, than actual fighting. It gave me a good opportunity to see what my fellows were made of. Harry Davenport was a perfect powder-magazine. The rascal wanted us one night to swim our horses over to the Island. Gad, I believe he would have gone by himself if I hadn't forbidden him!"

"Your campaign lasted some time?" said I.

"About a week," replied Philly. "No, I am mistaken, it was rather more, for it took us three days to return home. And such a set of madcaps as we had all the way back to the court house! Nothing but scrub races the whole distance!"

"Now," said Harry Riggs, looking at Mr. Wart with a face of sly raillery, "now that you have got through this celebrated campaign, tell us how many men you had."

"Seven rank and file," said Ned, answering for him.

"Fiddle-de-dee!" exclaimed Mr. Wart. "I had twenty!"

"On your honor, as a trooper?" cried Ned.

"On my *voir dire*," said Philly, hesitating.—"I had nine in uniform, and I forget how many were not in uniform, —because I didn't allow these fellows to go with us; but they had very good hearts for it. Nine men, bless your soul, sir, on horseback, strung out in Indian file, make a very formidable display!"

"Well, it was a very gallant thing, take it altogether," said Harvey. "So, gentlemen, fill your glasses. Here's to Captain Wart of the Invincible Blues, the genuine representative of the chivalry of the Old Dominion!"

As the feast drew to a close, the graver members of the party stole off to the drawing-room, leaving behind them that happy remnant which may be called the sifted wheat of the stack. There sat Harvey Riggs, with his broad, laughing face mellowed by wine and good cheer, and with an eye rendered kindly by long shining on merry meetings, lolling over two chairs, whilst he urged the potations like a seasoned man, and a thirsty. And there sat Meriwether, abstemious but mirthful, with a face and heart brimful of benevolence; beside him, the inimitable original Philly Wart. And there, too, was seen the jolly parson, priestlike even over his cups, filled with wonder and joy to see the tide of mirth run so in the flood; ever and anon turning, with bewildered eagerness, from one to another of his compotators, in doubt as to which pleased him most. And there, too, above all, was Ned Hazard, an imp of laughter, with his left arm dangling over the back of his chair, and his right lifting up his replenished glass on high, to catch its sparkling beams in the light; his head tossed negligently back upon his shoulder; and from his mouth forth issuing, with an elongated puff, that richer essence than incense of Araby: his dog Wilful, too, privileged as himself, with his faithful face recumbent between his master's knees.

Such are the images that gladden the old-fashioned wassail of Virginia.

1832

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14 Cyrus, king of Persia in the sixth century B.C. • 51 voir dire, an oath requiring the witness to speak the truth

William Gilmore Simms

1806 · 1870

"By far the most virile and interesting figure of the Old South" is Parrington's just estimate of William Gilmore Simms. Though born in the most aristocratic of Southern cities, Charleston, South Carolina, Simms did not belong to the aristocracy. The death of his mother and his father's removal to Mississippi left the boy to the care of an impoverished grandmother. His schooling was irregular; for a time, he was apprenticed to a druggist. At the age of eighteen, he visited his father in Mississippi, where he saw the mixed life of the frontier. His observations were to serve him well in his writings. After his return to Charleston, he first experimented in poetry and journalism and then turned to the writing of fiction, his first novel appearing in 1833. Two years later he achieved a popular success with *The Yemassee.* For a good while his works were more favorably received in the North than in his native city, where an eighteenth-century classical taste in literature persisted longer than almost anywhere else. By marriage in 1836 he connected himself with the planter aristocracy and acquired the country estate, midway between Charleston and Augusta, known as "The Woodlands." Here Simms wrote his books and entertained his friends.

In the 1850's he became the leader of a group of younger writers in Charleston, which included the poets Paul Hamilton Hayne and Henry Timrod; he was instrumental, together with the other members of the group, in founding the distinguished though short-lived *Russell's Magazine* (1857-1860). In the 1850's, also, he became an active opponent of abolitionism and contributed to the Southern manifesto, *The Pro-Slavery Argument* (Charleston, 1853). The Northern invasion of South Carolina inflicted severe personal hardships on Simms, among them, the burning of his house and the loss of a fine library.

Simms was a prolific writer: Trent's "partial bibliography" lists eighty separate publications, thirty-five of which are classified as "romances, novelettes, and collected stories." His best writing includes three kinds of fiction: (1) the "border romance," of which *Guy Rivers* (1834), *Richard Hurdis* (1838), and *The Border Beagles* (1840) are examples; (2) the romance of Indian warfare, of which *The Yemassee* (1835) is the best illustration; and (3) the romance of the American Revolution, the kind in which he was most prolific and most successful. From the many titles in the last category, the following may be selected: *The Partisan* (1835), *Mellichampe* (1836), and *Katharine Walton* (1851), which form a trilogy; and *Woodcraft* (1854) and *The Forayers* (1855), which present Simms' best comic character, Captain Porgy.

Simms' books are vigorous tales of adventure in wilderness and swamp. He has often been regarded as a lesser Cooper, but this is an uncritical view because Simms' materials and methods were his own. He appropriated two rich literary provinces, the frontier of the old Southwest and South Carolina during the American Revolution, and he handled his materials with vividness and realistic force. Parrington compares Simms with the early English novelists, Henry Fielding and Tobias Smollett,

and notes the element of the picaresque as particularly distinguishing his work from Cooper's.

Simms has not been much read in the present century, but there is reason to believe that with the better study of American literature his worth will be increasingly recognized. The late Professor Trent, in our only full-length biography of Simms, summarized his merits as follows: "The romances of Simms deal with an eventful period, when a young people was struggling for its rights. They show how high and low, rich and poor, were animated by a common patriotism, how they suffered for the cause they espoused, how they triumphed through their bravery and faith. They make the reader familiar with great characters like Marion, and with historic events of no little importance to a nation destined to greatness. Moreover, they are full of the freshness of swamp and forest, of the languorous charm of Southern climate and scenery. They are full of the heroic deeds of common, unlettered men. . . . No one will ever do the same work as well, and it was worth doing."

The Yemassee, ed. Alexander Cowie, New York, 1937 (The other romances are out of print) • William P. Trent, **William Gilmore Simms**, Boston, 1892 • V. L. Parrington, "William Gilmore Simms," **The Romantic Revolution in America**, New York, 1927

From

The Forayers

The time of **The Forayers** is the summer of 1781; the place, the vicinity of Orangeburg, about one hundred miles northwest of Charleston, in South Carolina. Simms' book portrays vividly the chaotic conditions in the colony. Many citizens were Loyalists; many others were cautiously neutral. The British and American armies met in minor skirmishes but avoided a decisive engagement. The "partisans," Marion's gallant troop of cavalry, harassed the enemy at every turn, embarrassing his movements. In the general confusion which prevailed, bands of outlaws plundered the countryside.

Against this background, Simms tells a vigorous and enormously complicated story of adventures in love and battle. The action centers upon the changing fortunes of his hero, Willie Sinclair, who is a major in Marion's troop. He is the almost superhuman hero of romance, scouting the enemy, fighting the outlaws, and, of course, making love to the heroine. Sinclair's father is a Loyalist who bitterly resents his son's support of the Patriot cause. A picturesque outlaw, Hell-Fire Dick, and a capable villain, Inglehardt, add appreciably to the hero's difficulties. Simms' story, unfinished at the end of the book (the heroine has just been mysteriously abducted), is continued and completed in **Eutaw: a Sequel to the Forayers** (1856).

The selection given here is an interlude which has only a slight connection with the main action of the novel. The British army under Lord Rawdon has just entered Orangeburg; the American forces commanded by General Nathanael Greene have taken a position a few miles away. During this brief respite from fighting, the Falstaffian Captain Porgy, of Marion's men, entertains at dinner a distinguished company: John Rutledge, Patriot governor of South Carolina, Greene, "Light-Horse Harry" Lee of Virginia, Marion, William Washington (a kinsman of George Washington), and other military chieftains. Our hero is not an invited guest, though he intrudes at the end of the banquet with a private message for General Marion. The account of Porgy's hospitality shows us Simms in one of his most zestful moods.

Chapter XLIII

THE FROG CONCERT AND CAMPAIGN

The army of Greene were taking rest for the first time for several days, at the close of that which witnessed their insulting demonstrations before the garrison of

Orangeburg. We have seen that their camp lay only four miles from that village:—a mellow sunset overspread the scene, and gentle breezes from the west cooled off sweetly the heat of a day, the ardency of which had severely tried all parties. The utmost languor for a while pervaded the encampment. The troops lay about upon the grass, under the trees, with half-shut eyes, enjoying that dreamy sensation which supervenes after fatigue, and before recuperation—mind and body in concert, as it were, for mutual restoration. But few of the groups visible in our foreground, were capable of exertion, and but few, indeed, of those whom we do not see, were any more equal to it than those immediately before our eyes. Here and there, some important adjutant, ensign, or corporal, might be found, restlessly employed, giving orders about the use of moonshine. Troopers who had thrown their chief burdens on the loins of their horses, were, perhaps, the most lively; and groups of these were to be seen, busy in consuming the last drops of sunshine and Jamaica at command, while flirting the cards at "old sledge" from well-thumbed and greasy packs of "pictures," pitching quoits, or grooming horses. We confess that Marion's men were the chief sinners after this fashion; his boys of Santee, Pedee, Waccamaw, and the parish country generally, having a sort of natural calling for the fine arts, were busy with cards and coppers at every rest: Cards and dice constituted so many fine arts in their hands. It was the boast of some of them that they could extract all sorts of music, fun, and philosophy, from the four aces.

To this general rest and languor of the army, there were, however, some striking exceptions. The command of Marion stretched toward the Caw-caw. In the woods of this region, an hour before sunset, there might be seen a squad of twenty troopers, dark, bronzed, half-naked young savages, following with some interest, the speech and movements of a large, broad-shouldered, and great-bellied personage, wearing the uniform—somewhat doubtful, indeed, because of rents, stains, and deficiencies—of a captain of dragoons. He was on foot, and by no means active of movement, though taking his steps with the confidence of a war-horse, and the solid firmness of an elephant. He was a fine-looking fellow, in spite of the too great obtrusion upon the sight of his abdominal territory, a region which he, nevertheless, endeavored to circumscribe within reasonable bounds by a girthing of leather, only half covered with a crimson sash, which no doubt had the desired effect in some degree, though at some sacrifice of the wearer's comforts. His face was full almost as the moon at full, of a ruddy brown, his head massive, chin large and prominent eyes, bright but small, and mouth eager with animation. His nose was decidedly intellectual. At his elbow stood a Negro, jacket off, and arms akimbo, who followed the motions of his superior with a mixed air of deference and assurance. Around these two the troopers were gathered. Before the group, slaughtered and skinned, hanging from a tree, was one of the lean beeves of the country—a poor skinny beast, weighing some two hundred pounds, gross, bone, meat, skin, offal! Near at hand stood a small, rickety, covered wagon, the contents of which we may conjecture. It was one of Marion's recent captures from the convoy of Stewart; and contained, no doubt, some resources, the value of which may be guessed from the mysterious looks which were, every now and then, cast upon it by passing groups of thirsty dragoons, the very glances of whom are apt to burst locks, and consume stores.

Our captain was busy with the commissariat of the brigade—not as the head of it, by no means, but as premier—head-counsellor, and legal and moral adviser.

"I tell you, Fickling, it will never do. Tell me there were no better beeves to be had! You have just taken what they please to give you. You are too modest. It is the infirmity of your family, whenever the interest is not absolutely and directly your own. We do this business of foraging for all the army, yet it seems that the meanest share is always to fall to us. Tell me nothing of Colonel Lee. He has an independent legion; let him pick up his own beeves. As for the field-officers, I do not see that their official position confers upon them any right to better tastes and appetites than a poor captain of partisan cavalry. I thank my stars that I have tastes which are as well cultivated as any brigadier or colonel in the army. And shall my tastes be defrauded, because these epauletted buffalos are greedy, and you are mealy-mouthed? Why the devil don't you assert yourself, man, and assist

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20 **Jamaica**, rum from Jamaica in the West Indies • 20 **old sledge**, card game better known as "seven-up" • 24 **Santee . . . Waccamaw**, rivers in South Carolina • 82 **partisan**, pertaining to a detached body of troops engaged in making forays and harassing an enemy

us, as you should, when the distribution of the beef takes place? You are a fool, Fickling, for your submission! Colonel Lee's man steps before you, and says, 'Colonel Lee;' and Colonel Washington's man starts up, and says, 'Colonel Washington'—and these, and a score of others, even while they speak, clap hands on the best pieces, and choose the fattest flanks; and when all are served, you steal up, with finger in your mouth, and murmur, 'Is anything left for General Marion?' Is that the way to do business? I tell you, 'No, sir!' Your true way is to take the best that offers—lay bold hands on it—nay, thrust it through with your naked sabre, and say, 'Marion's brand!' Do the thing as you should, with the proper look and manner, and not a rapscallion in the army, representing no matter what division, dare lay hands on it after that! If they do, let me be at your elbow next time, with two or three fellows of my choosing!"

"But, Captain Porgy—"

"But me no buts, Mr. Fickling. I'll have you out of your office, if you do not but against this sort of distribution. You are to provide us; and, if you do not comprehend that our soldiers are just as deserving of good food as any continentals in the service, you are not fit for our service, and I'll have you out of it. General Marion himself submits quite too much to this sort of treatment. If there is a fine horse in the brigade, it is immediately wanted for some one of Lee's dragoons—some d—d henchman or bugleman—and off the colonel goes to Greene and tells him that his legion wants horses, and that Marion has enough and to spare, and we are called upon to dismount, and provide other people. Yet are we kept day and night on the trot—off to-day for the Pon-pon and Savannah, to-morrow for the Pedee—now running down tories, now cattle; seeking information, scouting, spying, called out at all hours; and how is this to be done, if we are to give up our horses. The brigade has covered all this low country, from the Pedee to the Savannah, for three years and more, and the best that is got in the forays that we alone make, are served out to these hungry feeders. I won't submit to it. They shall neither have my horses nor my cattle; and if you take any more such beef as this, Fickling, when better is to be had, we'll turn you, neck and heels, out of your department."

"But, Captain Porgy—"

"See to it!"

"But—"

"See to it! That's all! I say no more—to you!—Tom!"

"Sah!"

"Get our share of that carrion! See what you can do with it. We must have soup, I suppose. Make a pilaw. We have plenty of pepper now. You can hardly get a decent steak from the beast. But do what you can. I must see after something more. We are to have company to-night. I have asked the great men, the big-wigs, the governor, Generals Marion and Sumter, the colonels of the brigade, Maham, Singleton, and a few others. Have everything ready by ten o'clock. Did you succeed in getting any melons?"

"I empty one patch, maussa."

"Whose?"

"I dunn know quite 'zackly, but he's a fiel' jes' yer on de back ob de village. De melons is quite 'spectable."

"Ripe?"

"As de sunshine kin make 'em."

"Good! Do as much stealing in an honest way as you can! D—n the patriotism that can't eat stolen fruits!"

"Wha' else you guine hab, maussa."

"Who knows what I can get? I must look. There ought to be frogs here in abundance, and of good size. Not such as we can find in a rice reserve, Tom, but passable in war-time, and delicate enough for hot weather. I shall look out for a young alligator or two."

"Dat'll do! Gi' me two young alligator tail, and de frog, and I gi' you fus' rate tuttle soup and ball, and steak."

"Must have a ragout, Tom. Have you seen no pigs about, Tom!"

"Nebber yer de fus' squeak, maussa."

"Well"—with a grunt—"we must do as we can. Come, boys, are you ready?"

"Ay, ay, captain!" from a score of voices; and a dozen active young fellows presented themselves, armed with wooden spears and knives.

"Where's George Dennison?"

A voice answered from the foot of a tree.

"Come along, George; don't be lazy. What you shall see this evening will enable you to beat Homer in a

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19 **But . . . buts.** Compare Romeo and Juliet, Act III, Scene v, l. 153: "Thank me no thankings nor proud me no prouds" • 51 **pilaw,** rice boiled with meat

new epic, in which cranes and frogs shall figure to posterity."

And, following the corpulent captain, the whole party pushed down to the swamp.

"There's a battalion for you, George Dennison. Not a rascal under six feet—half a dozen nearer seven. I chose them specially for the expedition. They are our cranes, and are all eager for the war."

"And the frogs are sounding for the conflict. Hear their tongues, already. The concert for the evening is begun. Hear the chirruping overture:—

"'Fry bacon—tea-table!
Coyong! coyong! coyong!
Supper on table—supper on table,
Eat if you're able!
Blood an' 'ounds—blood an' 'ounds.'

"By the way, captain, a frog concert, would not be a bad speculation in the great cities of Europe. How a score or two of musical fellows, who had once or twice slept in our swamps, or lingered after sunset along our rice-fields, would make capital out of it! And such a sensation. What a hurly-burly, subdued to order, they could make of it."

"No doubt! The notes and tones occupy every note of the *gamut!* It is a rare original music. But the secret would lie in making the music tributary to satire. The frogs should furnish a running commentary on the follies and vices of society as in Aristophanes, only adapted to our times. It would task art admirably to work out of it an opera—the Loves of the Frogs! Little Squeaka, the dreaming sentimental damsel, just emerging into society —coming out; in her train some half a dozen Jockos— minnows of fashion, that sing in a love-lisp always— Therubina! ah! Therubina! Oh the rich fun of such a farcical! Of what a delightful variety would the affair admit! The lover, the villain, the priest, the mother—all the usual varieties, not forgetting Arlecchino. Of course, the frogs are not less fortunate than their betters. They have a Jack Pudding among them. The squirrels have I know."

"Don't forget the duenna! Hear her falsetto, squeaking through a score of crevices in her broken teeth:—

"'On your knees, O,
Not a sneeze, O,
Don't you hear your mother coming?
'To be kissed, O,
By the priest, O,
Is the saintliest sort of mumming

"'O, alack, O,
Such a smack, O,
Makes the very echoes jealous;'
'But it proves, O,
Holy loves, O,
Most particularly zealous.'

"'Hark that drumming!'
'Mother coming!'
'And that pother?'
''Tis your father!'
'Awful sounds, O!'
'Blood and 'ounds, O!'—

"In full fresco swells the chorus,
From the motley group before us;
Sighing, swelling,
Barking, belling—
Such a moaning, such intoning,
So much groaning, honing, droning,
Calling, falling, bawling, drawling,
Speaking, shrieking, squeezing, squeaking,

"All subsiding to a quiver,
And a shiver,
Only to ascend, in thunder,
Rolling up and roaring under—
Blood and 'ounds, O! blood and 'ounds, O!
Awful sounds, breaking bounds,
Setting all the woods a-shaking,
Setting all the bog a-quaking,
All the swampy empire waking,
With the eternal blood and 'ounds, O

"Rending, raging,
Battle waging,
'Yond all musical assuaging—

28 **Aristophanes.** The reference is to *The Frogs*, a satirical comedy by Aristophanes (448-330 B.C.) • 37 **Arlecchino,** a blundering servant in Italian masked comedy

O'er all mortal sounds uproarious,
O'er all mortal sense victorious,
Like the diapason glorious,—
That through pipes and stops,
Shrieks, and bounds, and hops,
Foams, and frisks, and frolics,
Rolls and rages, rocks and rollicks,
Feeding every mortal stopper, ah!
Of the grand Italian opera!"

Thus it was that the rustic poet of the partisans, gave forth extempore an embodiment of the music of the frog-pondians.

"Hurrah!" cried Porgy, "hurrah, Geordie—why, man, you are native, to frog manor born, with all the pipes and bellows of the swamp in your own wind-bags; or to requite you in your own coin:—

"Worthy venison,
Geordie Dennison,
You will soon require a stopper, O,
Scaring off with greater clamor,
Every leap-frog from his amour,
Turning every mother's son of 'em
Making fun of 'em,—
To a hopper off, from a hopper, O!"

And thus doggrelizing as they went, the two led their laughing cohort down into the swamp.

The Caw-caw was in full concert. Bull and bell, squeak and shriek, moan and groan. All the artistes were in exercise, engaged, no doubt, in some rehearsal, preparatory to some great ceremonial—the bridal, possibly, of the young princess of the pondians.

Porgy and his corps, with their pointed spears of wood, wooden forks, baskets, and knives, stole down into the lagunes. What a picture for the stage! What an action for the burlesque drama! But the matter was a serious one enough for one of the parties. Long will the frogs of that ilk remember with wailing the raid of the cranes of that day. Could you have seen those long, gaunt backwoodsmen, each with shaft, prong, or trident, striding hither and thither in the bog, and lake, striding right and left, poised above their great-eyed enemies, and plunging forward to grapple the wounded and squalling victim before he should sheer off, or, as George Dennison said afterward, describing the affair in sonorous heroics:—

"Could you have seen that theatre of frogs,
As each in due delight and bog immersed,
Sprawled out, at length, in slime and sandy bed;
Great legs of green or brown outstretching wide;
Great arms thrown out as if embracing heaven;
With eyes dilating, big as Bullace grapes,
Upturned, and gloating as with rapturous rage;
Great flattened jaws, that, ever and anon,
Distending with voluminous harmonies,
Sent forth their correspondences of sound,
In due obedience to the choragus,
Who still, at proper intervals, pour'd out
The grand refrain—sonorous, swelling still,
Till, at the last, the apex diapason
Was caught, was won, in glorious 'Blood and 'ounds!' "

It was a war of shallow waters. Habitual croakers are only justified when they perish. They have nothing to complain of. They always seem to anticipate their fate, and this seems to prove it only just execution after judgment—which, of course, is legal and becoming. Our partisans had grown expert in this sort of warfare. The Caw-caw swamp was a region in which the frogs held populous communities and cities, and—you know the proverb—"Thick grass is easier cut than thin." It was a massacre! Every spearman could count his score or two of slain, and, really, a very pretty spectacle they made when, emerging from the swamp, each carried his victims aloft, transfixed upon a sharp and slender rod, run through at the neck, eyes wider than ever, and legs and arms spread about in all directions. Nor was this all. No less than three young alligators and three times as many terrapins were surprised and captured, almost without a struggle, and borne off in triumph to the camp! The wailing in the Caw-caw that night was not greatly lessened by the loss of so many sonorous voices, since we may reasonably suppose that maternal suffering sent up such extra clamors for the absence of precious young ones, as more than atoned for the diminished forces of the community.

"On your lives, boys, not a word of what we have been doing," said Captain Porgy. They all swore to keep faith.

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34 lagunes, lagoons • 50 Bullace, a kind of plum

"There are thousands of clever people in the world," he added, "who require to be surprised into happiness. Some of my guests, to-night, are probably of this description. I shall teach them a new pleasure—nay, a new moral in a new pleasure—teach them how absurd it is to despise any of the gifts of Providence."

And, following out this policy, it was with great secrecy that the spoils of the frog campaign were conveyed to his quarters, and delivered over to the custody of Tom, his cook. Tom, we may add, like every sensible cook, made a sufficient mystery of his art to keep prying curiosity away from the kitchen whenever he was engaged in any of his culinary combinations. Let us leave these for other parties, and for proceedings of more imposing consequence if less attractive performance. We shall seek to be present when supper is on the table.

Chapter XLV

DOINGS IN THE APOLLO CHAMBER

Our partisan division of the army, with their horses, occupied no small extent of territory. Our Captain Porgy, himself, with his little personal equipage, demanded considerable space. He was the person always to secure that "ample room and verge enough," which, as he himself said, were essential to his individual girth. "My breadth of belt," he was wont to say, "implies a fair field; and, having that, I ask no favors." Besides being of social habits, his mess was always a large one. Among his immediate associates, retainers rather, he kept not only his cook, but his poet; the one almost as necessary as the other. Then, he never was without a guest, and whenever his commissariat was particularly well supplied, he was sure to have a full table. Such an idea as a good table, without an adequate number of guests to enjoy it, seemed to him a thing vile, unreasonable, inhuman, and utterly unchristian. We have seen that, particularly fortunate in his foray among the green-jacketed denizens of the Caw-caw, he had made arrangements for a larger circle than usual. His own tastes and purposes requiring it, Captain Porgy usually chose his own ground whenever tents were to be pitched. He had a great eye to proper localities.

"The open woods, on the south and west," was his rule. "Let the swamp and thicket cover my back on the east. That east wind has been of evil tendency from the earliest periods of time. The Bible speaks of it. A bad-tempered person, soured and surly, growling always, and insufferable from bile and conceit, is said to fill his bowels with the east wind. It has a bad effect on the best bowels. Give me just opening enough on the east for the purposes of draught, but let your tent be open to the full pressure of the winds from south and west. You need, in our climate, an eastern opening at the dinner-hour, dining at three, or thereabout; but beware of it after the sun has set. Don't sleep with the east wind blowing upon you. If you do, face it—let your feet receive it first. Every wind that blows has a specific quality. The east, northeast, and southeast, are all or more or less pernicious, muddy, insidious, hateful. Our natural winds in midsummer are from the south and west. The south persuades you to languor, pleasantly relaxes, discourages the exertion which would be too exhaustive for the season. The west is the agitator, the thunder-storm wind, that purges and purifies; the northwest is the cleaning wind, that sweeps up the sky, and brushes off all its cobwebs. Each wind having thus a specific mission, it is wonderful that men who build know so little of the means of ventilation. Now, you see, I choose my ground with an open pine-forest in front, that is south and west and northwest. I take care that the land slopes down from me in all these directions. If there be hill, swamp, or dense thicket, I put them, with the devil, behind me. I have here chosen the very pleasantest spot in the whole encampment. There is not one of these continental officers who knows anything of the subject. Yet, to the health of an army, a difference of fifty yards in the location of a camp, is very frequently all the difference between life and death!"

And, in that broad, terrace-like spread of wood and thicket, he had chosen the most agreeable region. The pine-woods opened at his feet, and spread away almost interminably, giving the necessary degree of shade, yet leaving free passage for the wind.

"Free circulation, Geordie Dennison," said he, as with hands outspread he seemed to welcome the gentle play of the breezes reeking up from the southwest—"that is the secret of health—free circulation for the winds, the

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Apollo Chamber. An Elizabethan reminiscence: Ben Jonson used to meet his followers in the Apollo Room at the Devil Tavern • 17 **partisan division,** Marion's men • 21 **ample . . . enough,** from Thomas Gray's "The Bard," l. 51

waters, and the blood. It is stagnation that is death. This is the reason why a pine-forest is more healthy than any other. It is the only forest that suffers free play to the winds. Hence you hear the music in a pine-forest which you hear in no other. The breezes pour through, and swell up, until all the tree-tops become so many organ-pipes. The vulgar notion is that there is some virtue in the odor of the pines to neutralize malaria. But this is all nonsense. Pine-woods that have a dense undergrowth, are not more healthy than any other. It is the shape of the tree, a tall column, without lateral branches, naked a hundred feet high, and arching above, umbrella fashion, into a grand ceiling, which shuts out the intense heat of the sun, and suffers free exercise to the breeze. Here it plays with delight and impunity. In the dense thickets it trickles only, and finally stagnates; and hence the fevers of uncleared lands. Bays, swamps, ponds, are unhealthy, not because of the water which they contain, but because of the dense thickets which they nurture. The hottest place in the world in midsummer, is a deep forest or thicket, with a close undergrowth. Fools talk of decaying vegetation as the secret of disease; yet when our fevers are raging most, vegetation has not begun to decay. Gardens, fields, forests, are never more fresh and beautiful, never more vigorous and verdant, than when death seems lurking under every flower, like some venomous reptile watching for and creeping to the ear of the unconscious sleeper. But, Geordie Dennison, boy, once suppose that the air is stagnant in any locality, and you need not suppose the necessity for its impregnation by any deleterious agent. A stagnant atmosphere is, *per se,* malaria. And that fact that we can assign a distinct locality for the disease—that we can say with confidence, to sleep here is death, while you may sleep with safety within half a mile—establishes the fact conclusively that the atmosphere is localized—no matter by what cause—though even that is a matter which I have considered also—and once let the atmosphere be fixed, and it is only in degree that it differs from that of an old sink or well. It is putrid, and to inhale it is a danger. You can not impregnate with miasma any region, where the winds are allowed to penetrate freely from three points of the compass, and where they do penetrate. When we are very sickly, you will always find a pressure of winds, daily from a single quarter, for a long-continued period of time. The atmosphere loses its equilibrium, as it were; the winds lack their *balance;* and running one course only, they run into a *cul de sac,* as water that can not escape, rises to a level with its source, becomes a pond, and stagnates. A thunder-storm purifies, not from its electricity, as some contend, but because it is a storm. All storms purify because they agitate. They disperse the local atmosphere over a thousand miles of space, and restore its equilibrium."

"But, Captain Porgy, were it not better that you should be thinking of your supper and company, instead of philosophizing here about the atmosphere?"

"It is because I am thinking of my company and supper, Master Geordie, that I do philosophize about the atmosphere. A wholesome atmosphere is half of a good supper. We can eschew the water. We need not drink that, if we can find any other liquor; but make what wry faces we will, the atmosphere we must drink, even though we know it to be impregnated with poison. Better drink the vilest ditch-water a thousand times. That may disorder the stomach, but the other must vitiate the lungs and so directly disease the blood and the heart. I am trying to teach you, sir, that in giving a good supper or dinner to your friends, you are to serve it up in properly-ventilated apartments."

"Well, we have it airy enough here."

"True; but had it been left to anybody else, ten to one you would have had our tents pitched in a villanous thicket where we never could have got a breath of air. Look, now, at the Legion encamped on the left; they are in a bottom, the breeze passing clean over their heads. Their camp-master had no idea of what was the duty to be done, beyond the simply getting room enough for the horses and wagons of some three hundred men. Sir, the partisan cavalry have never been so healthy as when I have been permitted to select the ground for their bivouac."

"That's true!"

"To be sure it's true; and you see the fruits of it in the pleasant sleeps that we enjoy, and the hardy elasticity with which we travel. There never was any people so exposed as ours have been, night and day, in all weathers, and the most wearisome marches, that have ever enjoyed such admirable health. And they owe it to me, sir—to me,

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48 **cul de sac**, literally, bottom of a bag; a passage with only one outlet

Geordie Dennison—yet, d—n 'em, they are not half so grateful for this blessing as for my soups and suppers. They would readily compound to drink any quantity of malaria, if they could swallow a pint of my rum-punch after it."

"Ah, they regard the rum-punch as the antidote, and there is nothing unreasonable, therefore, in their practice. But, captain, the hour latens."

"*Latens!* By what right do you use that word?"

"It's a good word, captain."

"So it is; but I never heard it used before."

"Very likely; but would you permit that argument to be used against any new dish that Tom should put on the table to-night!"

"No, sir; no, Geordie, you are right. You could not have answered me better if you had argued a thousand years. And I will remember the word;—so, as the hour *latens,* Geordie, get up and help me with these tables. I must summon Frampton and Millhouse. We shall need their knives and hatchets. I have invited thirty-one guests, Geordie, not counting you and Lance; we three will make the number thirty-four. There's no such table to be spread in camp to-night. Think of it;—a simple captain of militia giving a supper to thirty guests, and upon such short commons as are allowed us. Half of the poor devils in camp think it monstrous impudent of me to give a supper at all—and to thirty persons——"

"They can't guess how it's to be done."

"No! indeed! the blockheads! But their vexation increases when they find my guests all outranking myself. The envious rascals! Beware of envy, Geordie—it is the dirtiest, sneakingest, meanest little passion in the world, the younger brother of vanity, furnishing all the venom to its sleek-skinned and painted senior."

"And you are to have the governor, captain?"

"Ay, he accepts. John Rutledge is a great fellow, without affectation, Geordie—no pretender—one of the few men who really do *think.* The greater number, even when they greatly rank, only repeat each other—they do not think. Thought, George Dennison, is really confined to a very few. Men, as a race, are not thinking animals. They are gregarious and imitative. They go in droves and follow a leader, whom they contrive after a while to mimic after a monkey fashion. Thought is always an individual. But—where is that boy Frampton? Sound your whistle, George."

The whistle was sounded.

"Now help me with these poles. There are forty cut. We must have crotch-sticks—two, four, six, eight, ten, twelve—it will require twenty-four; we must make our tables solid."

Lance Frampton now appeared, followed by half a dozen young troopers, bearing slim green poles upon their shoulders, forked sticks, and all the appliances necessary to the construction of the rustic tables and seats of the company. Long practice had made all of them familiar with the rude sort of manufacture which was required. The crotch-sticks were soon driven upright into the ground, in frequent parallels; cross pieces were laid in the crotchets of these, and the poles were stretched along, forming a crossed table with four ends, for so many dignitaries, and capable to accommodate forty guests with ease. Of a similar, but stouter fashion, were the seats for the guests. It was surprising how soon the area was filled—how soon the mechanical preparations for the feast were fashioned. The amphitheatre beneath the pines was ample. Porgy, as he boasted, had the proper eye for locality. When reared and steadied, stanchioned and strengthened, the tables were covered with great oak-leaves, green, looking very clean, nice, and fresh—a verdant tablecloth.

"Now, see that you have torches, Lance; for, though we have a glorious moon, we need torches for the dark corners. Many of the guests will bring their Negroes to wait. But we shall need some waiters besides. Engage some of these young chaps. They shall sweep the platters clean. Forget nothing, boy. We are to have big wigs to supper, remember. Geordie, come with me to *our* wagon. I think we shall astonish these epauleted gentry to-night."

And the two turned off to another part of the wood where stood the little wagon already described—a sort of covered box—a thing which one man might have rolled, but to which a couple of stout hackneys were harnessed, when taken.

"Little," said Porgy, as he unlocked the cover of the vehicle, "little did stuttering Pete dream what he lost and we gained when we cut off the four wagons of Stewart. His eyes opened only upon the big wagons. He never gave a look at the one little one upon which I fastened—as if the most precious commodities were not always packed in the smallest compass! Yet, look there, Geordie."

The poet looked in:—

"Lemons, captain."

"Ay, lemons and white sugar, and nutmegs, and cloves, and spices of all sorts, and an anchor of Geneva, and a box of cocoa, and a bag of coffee, and a good supply of old Jamaica, and, see you that keg?—tongues, beef-tongues, English beef-tongues. Now please you to read the name on the cover; ay! Lord Rawdon's own prog, by the pipers, specially selected for his table and palate. We shall astonish these wooden-headed continentals to-night, Geordie! won't we? You thought me mad, didn't you, when I invited so many? But I knew what I was about. They shall stare, they shall sup, though they lament for ever, after the acquisition of such a taste as their vulgar fortunes can never hereafter satisfy. But mum! Not a word in anticipation."

And Porgy closed the wagon with haste and locked it, as half a dozen troopers lounged carelessly by, looking, with some curiosity as they passed, to the proceedings of the two.

"Stay here, Geordie, and keep watch till I return. I must put Millhouse on duty over this wagon, or there will be a Flemish account of its contents when supper's called. The morals of the dragoon service, imply theft as a necessity. A good scout has all the capabilities of a good pickpocket."

And, moralizing as he went, Porgy hurried off for succor. Dennison was relieved by Millhouse, a one-armed trooper of iron aspect, and as stubborn of purpose as a mule. The wagon was safe in his keeping as long as his left arm could lift sabre or pistol—and he was duly armed with both.

The next visit of our host was to Tom, the cook, who had a precinct of his own, some twenty-five yards from the spot where the tables had been spread. The terrapin soup was discussed, the *ragout;* the stew; the boiled tongues; nothing escaped attention. Then, a survey was taken of the crockery; the bowls, plates, dishes; the knives and forks; the spoons of iron, the drinking vessels of delph, tin, or calabash. These commodities were too frail of character, not to need the greatest care and attention; and every feast given by our captain, mortified him with the slenderness of his resources. But there was no remedy. If half a dozen good bowls of delph, and platters of tin, could be provided for the more distinguished guests, the rest might surely be satisfied with clean calabashes. We will suppose our captain satisfied in respect to these things. He was in the midst of the examination, however, venting his annoyances at his limited resources, in uneasy exclamations, when a messenger from Rutledge brought him the note from that personage apprizing him that Greene and Lee would appear among his guests. The governor wrote:—

"I shall take the liberty, my dear Captain Porgy, of bringing with me a couple of additional guests, in General Greene and Colonel Lee, knowing that your provision will not only be ample, but that the taste which usually presides over your banquets will give to our friends from Rhode Island and Virginia such a notion of the tastes of Apicius and Lucullus, as certainly never yet dawned upon them in their own half-civilized regions. Your own courtesy will do the rest and will, I trust, sufficiently justify the confidence with which I have insisted upon their coming. "Yours,

"JOHN RUTLEDGE."

"Humph!" exclaimed Porgy, "I should not have ventured to ask General Greene, not that I stand in awe of his epaulettes, but it is so rare to find a *parvenu* who would not hold such an invitation from a poor captain of militia, to be a piece of impertinence and presumption. Our own folks know me too well to exhibit any such *gaucherie.* As for Lee, he is a popinjay! I should never ask him myself; but have no objection that he should occasionally appear among gentlemen who can teach him, by example, how gentlemen can be good fellows without any loss of dignity.—Geordie—your pen and a scrap of paper. I hope I diminish none of your verses by consuming your foolscap."

The pen and paper were had, and our captain wrote:—

"Governor Rutledge can take no liberty for the propriety of which his name is not a sufficient guaranty. Captain Porgy will be most happy to welcome any guests whom he may think proper to bring."

This written, he handed it to the messenger. It was

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4 **anchor of Geneva,** ten gallon container of Holland gin • 23 **Flemish account,** an account showing a loss or deficit • 36 **ragout,** a highly seasoned dish made of pieces of meat stewed with vegetables • 60 **Apicius** (d. 37 A.D.), notorious Roman epicure under Tiberius • 60 **Lucullus** (d. 57 B.C.), wealthy Roman general famous for his banquets • 68 **parvenu,** one newly risen to position, an upstart • 72 **gaucherie,** clumsiness

then that Greene's cook uncovered a small tumbril or box in a wheelbarrow, containing the uncooked provisions which had been destined for his own table. Porgy looked at the bloody and livid meats with unqualified disgust.

"But," said he *sotto voce,* "we can't reject them. Here, Tom."

The cook appeared, apron in front and knife in hand.

"Tom, take charge of these provisions. They are sent by the general—General Greene, do you hear? Use them. Cook them. Turn them into soup, hash, steak, what you will!" then, as the messengers of Rutledge and Greene disappeared—"but d—m you, boy, don't let them show themselves upon my table. The meat is villanously butchered. That alone should condemn it. Make it up for some of these young fellows that have been working for us. And—Tom—"

"Well, maussa—talk quick."

"Don't forget the balls. Let there be a plenty in the soup."

"Psho, maussa, enty I know."

"Enough! Begone!"

The active mind of our corpulent captain began to grow restless. He had seen to everything that he could think of, and grew peevish from nothing to do. Suddenly he stuck his fingers into his hair.

"No! the vessels for the punch; Geordie. By heavens, I had almost forgotten. Let us after the punchbowls, and then for the manufacture. *You* are good at that; a poet should be. Curious problem, Geordie—the affinity between poetry and the bottle."

"Not at all. It only implies the ardency of the poet. It is so with the orator. You never saw poet or orator yet, that was not ardent and fond of the juices of the grape."

"Not the didactic orders, surely. But how is it, then, that Bacchus is not your deity instead of Apollo?"

"Because Apollo, with virtues of his own, includes those of Bacchus. He is a ripener of Bacchus, and loves not the wine less, nor is less the true god of it, because he employs a vintner. I see no difficulty in the matter."

"And, perhaps, there is none. Yet what would Apollo say, or Bacchus even, to such a punchbowl as ours."

And he pointed to an enormous calabash, holding a couple of gallons at the least, that, duly valued and taken care of, had survived all the vicissitudes of the campaign.

"They would, either of them, feel that there was wholesome propriety in the vessel. It is one which Ceres has presented for the occasion, to a kindred deity. Boon nature has provided where vulgar art has failed. It would be much more staggering to either of the ancient gods to try them with the Jamaica, instead of the blood of Tuscany."

"Ah! they never got such liquor on Olympus. Their nectar was a poor wishy-washy sort of stuff, of not more body than some of those thin vaporing French and German liquors, of which we have had a taste occasionally. Their wine of Tuscany, nay, the Falernian of Horace, would not take rank now-a-days with the juices of the common corn, prepared according to our process. Drinking whiskey or Jamaica, Nero might have been a fool, a wretch, a murderer—might fire his city or butcher his mother—might have committed any crime, but cowardice! Whiskey or Jamaica might have saved Rome from Gaul and Vandal. The barbarians, be sure, drank the most potent beverages."

"A notion deserving of study. We drink deep now-a-days. Will our descendants beat us? Will they laugh at our potations, which rarely leave a gentleman on his legs after midnight?"

"Ah! say nothing of our progeny. Do not build upon the degenerates. It may be that the milksops will fancy it bad taste, nay, even immoral, on the part of their ancestors, to have swallowed Jamaica or whiskey at all. In proportion as their heads are weak, will they pronounce ours vicious; and just because we have a certain amount of strength in our virtue—a certain quality of brawn and blood and muscle, to keep our sentiment from etherealizing—growing into mere thin air—will they presume to stroke their beards in self-complaisant satisfaction, thanking God that such poor *publicans,* have given way to a more saintly race of sinners. I am half inclined to thank my stars that, when I disappear, the race of Porgy will not be continued in the person of one who prides himself upon having no head—for a bottle!"

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49 **Ceres,** Roman goddess of growing vegetation • 58 **Falernian,** Italian sweet wine • 81 **publicans . . . sinners,** an allusion to the parable of the Pharisee and the publican. See Luke 18:9-14

"Yes! save us from all degenerate children. But, captain, will this *one* calabash of punch suffice for forty? Impossible! Two gallons among forty! Never in the world! Why, sir, there are three generals, and one governor, a score of colonels, and others of inferior rank, who are emulous of great men's virtues. Two gallons to forty such persons."

"Oh! don't stop to calculate. Luckily there are two calabashes."

And the little wagon yielded up the desired article.

"Make it rich, Geordie."

"Captain Porgy, when they drink of this liquor, each man will feel that his will has been made. He will feel that he has no more care in life—will fold his robes about him for flight."

"Or fall! Well, give us a taste. I profess to be a very competent judge of what a good Jamaica punch should be."

Smacks his lips.

"The proportions are good: the acid has yielded to the embrace of the sugar with the recognition of a perfect faith, and both succumb to the spirit, as with the recognition of a perfect deity. Next to poetry, Geordie, you are an adept at punch."

Geordie somewhat proudly:—

"Yes, captain, on this score I feel safe. I am not always certain of my verses. I sometimes feel that they lack the sweet and the ardent—but I am never doubtful of the perfect harmony that prevails among all the elements when I manufacture punch."

Porgy quaffs off the contents of the *dipper*.

"Geordie, you are a benefactor. When this war ceases, you shall partake my fortunes. You shall live with me; and, between punch and poetry, we will make the latter end of life a felicitous *finale* to a very exciting drama. By the way, Geordie, talking of poetry and punch reminds me. You must be prepared with something good to-night. I shall have you out. You shall give us some heroic ballad. I know you have not been drowsing in that thicket for nothing. Have you got anything ready?"

"I *have* been doing a trifle, but—"

"None of your buts. Get aside, and memorize it. These two vessels of punch, meanwhile, we will put under lock and key, and yield to the guardianship of Sergeant Millhouse."

HOW PORGY FEASTED THE CAPTAINS

With vulgar people, a dinner party is the occasion of much fuss and fidgeting. The vulgar egotism is always on the *qui vive* lest something should go wrong—lest something should be wanting to the proper effect—lest, in brief, some luckless excess or deficiency should certainly convey to the guest the secret of those deficiencies, in taste, manners, experiences, and resources, which would, if known, be fatal to the claims of good breeding and high ton which the host is most anxious to establish. Those, on the contrary, who feel assured on such points are apt to take the events of a dinner-table coolly and with comparative indifference. A blunder or a deficiency of steward or servant, occasions little or no concern; is never allowed to disturb the equilibrium of the master, who takes for granted that such small matters will be ascribed, by every sensible guest, to the right cause; and for the opinion of all other persons he cares not a button.

The result of this equanimity is to enable him to keep *his mind "in hand"* for the entertainment of his company. He is able to observe and to minister with promptness and full resource, as his wits are not disordered by any feverish workings of his *amour propre.* He sees what is wanting at a glance; supplies the deficiency with a nod; his servants are duly taught in the value of his nod and glance; and the skill of the host, by which the guests are diverted, enables Jack and Gill to wipe up the water which they have spilt so awkwardly, in their uphill progress, without attracting any notice—without filling the scene with most admired disorder.

Our host *knows* his company, and conjures up the special topic which appeals directly to the tastes or the fancies of each. He is vigilant even while he seems most at ease; when his indifference is most apparent, it is made to cover a becoming solicitude for the comfort of the humblest person present. He provides himself with the proper cue to all your prejudices and affections, as by a divine instinct, so that he steers clear of the one,

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48 on . . . vive, on the alert • 54 high ton, fashion or style • 68 amour propre, self-esteem

and shapes his course directly for the other; and when the waters are unluckily ruffled, by some bull-headed companion, who treads on his neighbor's toes without even suspecting that he has corns, our host is at hand to pour oil upon the troubled waters, and soothe to calm the temper which is ruffled. He contrives, at the same time, that the offender shall be taught the nature of his offence, without being brought up to the halberds and set in pillory,

"Pour encourager les autres."

There was nothing doubtful about the *aplomb* of Captain Porgy. Having prepared his feast according to the full extent of his resources; drilled his awkward squad to the utmost of his capacity and their susceptibilities; seen that they were in sufficient numbers for proper attendance; and made, in brief, all his preparations, he gave himself no further concern, but prepared to receive his guests, with the easy good nature, the frank politeness, the smiling grace, of an old-school gentleman. And it is quite an error to talk, as we are apt to do, of the formality of the old-school gentleman. The gentleman of two hundred or one hundred years ago, differed very slightly in his bearing from the same class at the present day. In due degree as his ceremonials ran into formalities, did he lose the character of the gentleman. In no period was mere form and buckram ever confounded, by sensible people, with politeness and refinement.

Never was gentleman more perfectly at ease in crowded assembly, yet more solicitous of the claims of all about him, than our corpulent captain. His shrewd good sense, nice tastes, playful humors, and frank spirit, all harmonizing happily, enabled him to play the host generally to the equal satisfaction of all his company. He had the proper welcome for each as he drew nigh; the proper word, which set each person at his ease, and prepared him for the development of all his conversational resources.

Among the first of his guests to appear were Governor Rutledge and General Greene. "The really great," said Porgy to Lance Frampton who stood behind him, "never keep the table waiting."

The approach to the scene was through a great natural avenue of lofty green pines, through which the moon was peeping curiously with a bright smile, a disinterested spectator of the proceedings. Music timed the approaches of the guests, the army band having been secured for the evening. Porgy welcomed his guests at the entrance of the area in which his tables had been spread.

"General Greene, Captain Porgy," said Rutledge. Greene took the outstretched hand of the host, saying:—

"What I have heard of you, Captain Porgy, makes me trespass without fear of the consequences."

"And what I know of General Greene enables me to welcome him with every hope of the consequences. I am very grateful to Governor Rutledge for doing that which, as a poor captain of militia, I should scarcely have ventured to do myself."

"I knew my customers both, my dear captain," said Rutledge, "and knew how little was necessary to render the regular and volunteer service grateful to each other."

"Be seated, gentlemen," said Porgy, "while I put myself on duty for a while;" and he resumed his place at the opening of the avenue, while Sumter, Marion, and the rest severally presented themselves, were welcomed and conducted to the interior by young Frampton, who did the duties of an aid. Colonel Lee was among the latest to appear.

"My dear Porgy," said he condescendingly—"I am late; but the cavalry of the legion is on vigilant duty to-night, and a good officer you know—eh!"

And he left it to our host to conceive the rest.

"Col. Lee may be forgiven, if late among his friends, when we know that his enemies rarely reproach him for a like remissness."

The grace of Porgy's manner happily blended with the grave dignity of his address. Lee smiled at the compliment:—

"Always ready, Porgy—never to be outdone in the play of compliment, or the retort courteous;" and while speaking he was ushered in with other visitors.

The company was at length assembled. The music ceased. A single bugle sounded from the amphitheatre, and the guests disposed themselves without confusion under the whispered suggestions of Lieutenant Framp-

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8 **halberds,** a frame made with halberds (a long-handled, pointed weapon in use in the sixteenth century) to which soldiers were tied to be flogged • 10 **Pour . . . autres,** to encourage the others. The quotation is from Voltaire's **Candide** (1759): "Dans ce pays-ci il est bon de tuer de temps en temps un amiral pour encourager les autres" (In this country it is well to kill an admiral now and then to encourage the others)

ton. Porgy took his place at the head of the table, standing, till all were seated.

"Gentlemen," said he, "be pleased to find places at the board. Colonel Singleton, you are my *vis-a-vis*. Governor Rutledge will you honor me by sitting at my right. General Greene, I have presumed to assign you the seat at my left."

Right and left of Singleton, Marion and Sumter were placed. At one end of the table crossing the centre of the board, Colonel Lee was seated, Colonel Maham occupied the other. Carrington, Horry, Mellichampe, St. Julien, and others found places between these several termini. Scarcely had they been seated when four great calabash tureens were placed severally at the extremities, the odorous vapors from which appealed gratefully to every nostril in company.

"Turtle soup!" was the delighted murmur.

"And lemons!"

And as the smoking vessels were set before the governor and General Greene, the former exclaimed:—

"Faith, Captain Porgy, your last voyage to the West Indies seems to have been a highly prosperous adventure."

"In truth," said Greene, "I am half inclined to think that there must have been some such enterprise, of which General Marion has forgotten to apprize me."

"I begin seriously to suspect him," said Rutledge. "The fact is that General Marion is so fond of secret enterprises, and audacious ones—does things with so much despatch, and thinks it so easy to do the impossible, that I half believe he has made a three nights' run for the Havana, or sent off a favorite squad on a sortie in that direction. Say, general, is it not so? Let us know the truth of it. You found, among your captures at Georgetown, some ready-rigged sloop or schooner, and sent her out on a cruise in anticipation of this very occasion."

"Nay, governor, the merits of the enterprise, such as it was and the fruits thereof, are due entirely to our host. It was his adventure wholly, though we share the spoils."

"But, where—where—where—" began Peter Horry, stuttering, "where the devil did he—did he—get 'em—turtles and lemons! I don't—don't—understand it—at all."

"Better not press the inquiry, Horry," said Singleton with a sly smile upon the company—"the discovery will hardly add to your own laurels."

"How—my laurels! What—what—I want to—to know—have my laurels—to do—to do—with the matter?"

"Let's have it, Colonel Singleton," said Rutledge eagerly. "Out with the story. Colonel Horry is so seldom to be caught napping that I shall rejoice to have one story at his expense."

"Ay, ay, the story, Singleton," from a dozen voices around the board.

"Tell—tell—tell, if you will," stuttered Horry—"only be sure, and tell—the—the—truth, and shame—you know who."

"The adventure illustrates the military character of the two gentlemen most admirably," said Singleton. "Colonel Horry is a gentleman of large eyes and grapples with objects of magnitude always. It is Captain Porgy's pleasure to be discriminating and select. The lemons and a variety of other edibles are furnished, unwillingly, I grant you, by Lord Rawdon himself. They form a part of the supplies brought up by Colonel Stewart. In dashing at Stewart's convoy, Horry passed a mean little wagon in the rear, as quite unworthy his regards. He swept off as you know three or four others of considerable value to the army. But the very littleness of this wagon which Horry had despised, fixed the regards of our host. He quietly possessed himself of it, and was rewarded with the private stores designed for Lord Rawdon himself." The story produced a laugh at the expense of Horry.

"Who—who—who—the devil," said he, "would have thought—of—of—anything good in—that rickety concern? I'd like to know, Captain Porgy, what you got besides the lemons?"

"White sugars, coffee, tea, spices, Spanish sweetmeats, preserved ginger, three kegs of Jamaica, and a goodly variety besides!"

"The d—l!—and—and—I to miss 'em all."

"But you got loads of bacon and flour, Horry."

"Several bales of blankets."

"Ay, and a bathing-tub and complete set of chamber crockery!"

"What," said Rutledge, "was there a bathing-tub and chamber crockery?"

"Yes, indeed."

"Who could have wanted that, I wonder?"

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4 vis-a-vis, one who sits opposite, face to face

"Some young ensign of the buffs or blues," said Porgy, "whose mother was duly considerate of the young man's skin in a warm climate. You should have discovered Colonel Horry's visage when that wagon was burst open and the contents revealed. The bathing-tub and furniture filled the wagon."

"What did he say, Porgy? Tell us that!"

"Say! Ah! What was it, colonel? Deliver it yourself: nobody can repeat it half so well."

"Re—re—peat it yourself, if you can!" said Horry stuttering and dipping up his soup with increased rapidity.

"Out with it, Captain Porgy. Horry's speech."

Porgy nodded to Singleton, who answered:—

"I heard it, and as Horry permits will deliver it. He said, stamping his feet in a rage: 'Throw out the d——d basins, and break up the blasted tub. Who would have thought of any fellow being such a bloody booby as to bring a bathing-tub and chamber crockery into a pond and bush country?"

And slightly imitating the stammer of Horry so as to give a lively idea of his manner, Singleton set the table in a roar. When the laugh had subsided:—

"But did he break up the crockery, Porgy?"

"Every bowl and basin. He was merciless. You never saw such havoc. His broadsword played elephant in the crockery shop to perfection, and the dragoons, delighted with the humors of their colonel, went into the work of demolition with a rush."

"I had—no—no—no use for the d——d—d——d—d——d things," said Horry; "and I was—de—de—de—termined to give the d——d puppy that owned them a lesson."

"Ha! ha! ha!"

"But where did the turtles come from?"

"From the genius of my cook, Tom," said Porgy. "The turtle are terrapin from the Caw-caw."

"Not the alligator terrapin, captain, I hope," said Sumter. "I could never bring myself to eat any of that order."

"You have done it on this occasion," said Porgy.

"And very effectually too, general," said Singleton, "since I have helped you to a second supply, and you seem in a fair way to need a third."

Sumter looked a little blank.

"Do not be discomfited, general," said Porgy, "since I took the precaution to have all their tails cut off before they were hashed up for the soup."

"But what did you do with the tails?"

"Ah! they were made into balls, with a due proportion of beef and bacon."

"You have caught me beyond escape, captain, since I confess to have done as much execution on the balls as on the soup."

"And you are surprised into a wisdom, general, that has cured you of the prejudices of twenty years! What we call the alligator terrapin is the best of the tribe—the fattest, richest, best flavored. It requires only that skill in the dressing which my man Tom supplies."

The bugle sounded. Sergeant Millhouse marshalled the waiters to their stations, and the emptied vessels were removed. With another blast of the bugle, new dishes were set on the table.

"A noble-looking fish," said Greene. "What fish is this, Captain Porgy?"

"The greatest delicacy of a fresh-water river, this is the Edisto blue cat—for very nice people a most discouraging name.—Gentlemen, look to yourselves. Here is boiled fish, such as George the Third can not procure; dressed in a style which would not discredit the table of our great ally, the king of France. Men of *goût* will of course prefer the boiled—for the undeveloped taste, the fry is abundant. There are perch and trout in those several dishes. They are all fresh from the Edisto within five hours."

"Your troopers have been busy, captain."

"Ay, sir, and my cook. He was fortunate in his search along the river this morning, to come upon three or four fish-traps, which he emptied without leave. Governor, the melted butter is beside you. By-the-way, those naval biscuit are also from the stores of my Lord Rawdon.—General, do not dream of defiling that fish with vinegar. It is an abomination in this case. The fish only entreats the butter, and the dressing is complete."

The eye of Porgy swept the table. The guests discussed the fish with the relish of starving men. There was a cessation. The finger of Porgy was lifted. Millhouse's bugle gave tongue, and the fish was superseded with a variety of dishes.

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65 **Edisto**, river in South Carolina • 69 *goût*, taste • 83 **discussed**, tried the quality of, by consuming. Compare Scott, in **Guy Mannering** (1815): "A tall, stout, country-looking man was busy discussing huge slices of cold boiled beef"

"General Greene—Governor Rutledge—suffer me to persuade you both to the ragout which is before me."

"What is it, captain?"

"Try it, general. It is the alerta—the green alerta—a sort of chicken you will find it, but far superior. The stew is of the *lagarta,* according to the Spaniards, and a dish quite as rare as exquisite on table. Gentlemen, interspersed with these dishes you will find more familiar, but inferior ones. There are hams and tongues, both from the stores of Lord Rawdon, and, in fact, most of this course will be found of foreign character. You will please ask me for no more revelations touching my mode of procuring supplies, as I have no wish to expose the breaking of any more crockery. It is not every one of our partisans who can bear, with so much equanimity as Colonel Horry, the story of his own acquisitions, and how made."

"This—what do you call it?" said Greene.

"Alerta!"

"Is delicious!"

"And nothing could be more savory than this stew, Captain Porgy."

"Yes, indeed, governor—the Spaniards have the merit of the discovery. But gentlemen, with this course, it is time to spiritualize the feast."

The speaker's finger was uplifted, and two enormous bowls of punch were set down at the two ends of the table.

"Gentlemen, we owe a great deal to the providence of Lord Rawdon."

"And the improvidence of Horry," whispered Rutledge, "for, of a verity, had he captured these spoils, he would never have made the same use of them as our host has done."

"Sir," said Porgy with solemnity, "he would have wasted them—naked, upon his dragoons.—Gentlemen, you will please fill for a sentiment. Colonel Singleton, see that your end of the table charges duly."

"We are ready, captain."

Porgy rising:—

"Gentlemen, our first regular sentiment: 'The cause of Liberty—the cause of the American continent—the cause of all continents wherever man has a living soul!' "

"Music." And the bands struck up.

"Captain Porgy," said Lee, "send me, if you please, a second supply of that dish which you call the alerta. I don't know what sort of bird it is, but the savor is that of young pigeons. It is wonderfully nice."

"I agree with you, Lee," said Colonel Williams, "though I have no more idea what the bird is than of the mansions of the moon. Let me trouble you also, Captain Porgy."

"I must also trespass, captain," said Carrington. "Ordinarily, I seldom suffer myself to eat of dishes of which I know nothing; but these foreign meats come to us under good guaranties, though half the time without a name at all."

"Unless French, which is so much Greek to me," said Maham. "Captain, that *lagarta* stew is princely."

"No crowned head in Europe enjoys the like. Shall I help you, Colonel Maham?"

"Thank you, yes. But I thought you called it foreign."

"So it is—in one sense; but this is not imported. It is wholly domestic."

"Well, foreign or domestic, it is first rate," said Greene. "I will try a little more of it, Captain Porgy."

"Ah! general,"—with a smile—"suffer me to say that it is only in the militia service, after all, that the taste properly refines. Governor, shall I serve you?"

"Thank you, I will mince a little of your *lagarta,* captain," and a sly glance of Rutledge apprized the captain of his suspicions. But the face of Porgy made no revelations.

"Gentlemen," said Singleton, at the other end of the table, "fill your glasses."

"Ready, all," said Porgy.

Singleton rose, and gave:—

"South Carolina—almost freed from the footsteps of the foreign tyrant, and rising to the full assertion of her own sovereignty!"

A brilliant burst from John Rutledge, brief, but like a fiery tongue speaking to the soul, followed this sentiment; and the music rose into a triumphant peal as his voice died away upon the echoes. Other sentiments succeeded other speeches; Rutledge, Greene, Marion, Sumter, Lee, were all duly honored with toasts, and all responded, each after his own fashion, all unaffectedly, simply, and with the proper earnestness of soldiers. And the punch

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4 alerta, Spanish word meaning "on the alert"; here used for "frog" • **6 lagarta,** alligator

flowed anew into fresh goblets, and the merriment grew high, and some of the grave barons began to sing in snatches, and the volunteer toasts filled up the pauses in the conversation. Meanwhile, a score of melons were placed upon the board, and the preserved fruits from the West Indies, guava and ginger, were crowded upon the board, and provoked new merriment at the expense of Rawdon, who lost, and Horry who refused to find the prize.

And while they gashed deeply the purple centres of the melons, Rutledge suddenly said to Porgy:—

"And now, captain, that you have had your triumph, that all present have borne testimony in the least equivocal manner to the merits of your feast, I would fain know of what those foreign dishes were compounded, of which, knowing nothing, all have partaken so freely. Hams and tongues, fresh from Britain, designed for my Lord Rawdon's own table, have been sent away from yours uncut—proof of homage, the most profound, to yet preferable meats. Pray tell us, then, what were the elements of your *lagarta* and your *alerta*—your *ragouts* and stews."

"Ay, ay," seconded the company, "let us know. What were the birds?"

"I should really be pleased to know, Captain Porgy," said General Greene, bowing, "touching those birds."

"There need be no mystery in it now, general, since, as Governor Rutledge says, the feast has triumphed. But I am afraid I shall too greatly confound you, when I state that the dishes contained no birds at all. The stew of *alerta* was compounded chiefly of the race which helped Homer in the construction of an epic—a race which Milton describes as the—

"'Small infantry
Warred on by cranes.'"

"You surely do not mean *frogs*, Captain Porgy?" cried Lee, with affected horror in his accents.

"Your guess is a sagacious one, and worthy of the legion, Colonel Lee."

"Good heavens! and is it come to this, that the soldiers of liberty should be reduced to the necessity of frog-eating?"

"Necessity, Colonel Lee!" exclaimed Rutledge. "By heavens, sir, it should be matter of taste and preference, sir, if only in due deference to our great Gallic ally; but, of a truth, sir, after to-day's feast, it should be a new argument in behalf of liberty, that she has brought us to such rare fine feeding and such improved tastes."

"And the other dish, Captain Porgy," demanded Sumter, "the stew with the Spanish name?"

"The name speaks for itself—*lagarta.* It is of the great lizard family—the cayman—in vulgar speech, the alligator. But the specimens employed, gentlemen, were mere juveniles; young vagabonds, whose affectionate parents had hardly suffered them out of sight before. They had probably never fed on larger prey than their neighbors of the alerta family."

"One question, Captain Porgy," said Carrington; "be so good as to inform me, if, among your several unfamiliar dishes, I have had the happiness to eat of the rattlesnake, the viper, the moccasin, or the boa-constrictor?"

"Alas! colonel, I grieve to say that you have not. I should have been pleased to have got a couple of young chicken-snakes, but I was not fortunate in the search. We got glimpse of a few runners [black-snakes], but they were quite too swift of foot for the hunters. The chicken-snake is of unexceptionable tenderness; the runner is a little too muscular, if not previously well sodden; but, unless near a hencoop, or a corncrib, it is not easy to find the chicken-snake. I repeat my regrets that I could not secure this delicacy for my table. But another time, Colonel Carrington, should you sup with me, I will make a special effort in your behalf."

"I thank you, sir; do not suffer your regrets to disturb you. For that matter, I am half doubtful whether your *alerta* and *lagarta,* of which I have, in my ignorance, partaken somewhat too freely, will continue to lie lightly on my soul or stomach."

"Have no fears, sir; and the better to secure their repose, do me the honor, sir, of a bowl of punch with me. Gentlemen, I entreat the whole table to our companionship."

And the vessels were filled and emptied.

"And now, gentlemen," continued the host, "I give you—The poets, who minister at once to Apollo, to Bacchus, and to Mars, and beg to introduce you to the

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32 Homer. See Iliad, Bk. III, l. 6 • 33 Milton. The quotation is from Paradise Lost, Bk. I, ll. 575-576 • 45 Gallic ally, France • 66 [black-snakes], Simms' brackets

only representative of the faculty in our squadron, Mr. George Dennison, my ensign. If I mistake not, he has been this day as busy with the muse, as I with my cook; and, if we will suffer him, he will bring us gifts from Parnassus not unworthy of those which we have enjoyed from the provision-wagon of Lord Rawdon."

"In which Horry, going from Dan to Beersheba, could see nothing."

"Having a taste for baths, warming-pans, and chamber-furniture."

"'Nough of that—that—Singleton! I—I—I'm a sinner be—be—beyond salvation, if I ever pass a little mean-looking wagon again, without seeing what's in it."

"But—Mr. Dennison," said Rutledge.

"George! Geordie!" said Porgy, good-humoredly. The poet, hitherto the only silent person at table, now rose—a tall, slender person, of bright, lively eye, mouth full of expression, Grecian nose, and great forehead rising up like a tower. His cheeks were flushed, his frame trembled, and there was an evident quivering of the lip which was discernible to every eye about him. Dennison sang the verses, which he wrote, in a clear, military voice, shrill like a clarion. There was, perhaps, no great deal of music in his composition, but enough for the present purpose, and of the kind best suited, perhaps, for a military gathering—bold, free, eager and full of animation. His ballad had been the work of that very afternoon.

He had no prefaces. But, waiting till the music hushed, and the voices, he then began:—

THE BATTLE FEAST

To the dark and bloody feast,
Haste ye battle vultures, haste;
There is banquet, man and beast,
For your savage taste:
Never on such costly wassail
Did ye flesh your beaks before;
Come, ye slaves of Hesse Cassel,
To be sold no more!

Small your cost to George of Britain,
One and sixpences sterling down
Yet for this, ye sorry chapmen,
Each will lose his crown;
Freedom knows no price for valor,
Yours is measured by the groat,
Britain pays in gold and silver,
We in steel and shot.

Recreants, ye from Scottish Highlands,
Lately rebels to the throne
Of that brutal foreign despot,
Now, whose sway ye own;
Ye are welcome to the banquet,
Which is spread for all who come,
Where the eater is the eaten,
And the deathsman goes to doom.

And ye braggart sons of Erin,
Loathing still the sway ye bear,
Groaning in the very fetters,
Ye would make us wear;
Ever writhing, ever raging,
'Neath the bonds ye can not break—
Here the bloody banquet woos ye,
Gather and partake!

Stoop, ye vultures, to the issue,
It will be ere set of sun!
Mark whose valor bides the longest,
Blood of price or blood of none.
Comes the Tartan of Glenorchy,
Comes the sullen Saxon boor,
Comes the light-heeled German yager
Crowding to the shore!

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7 **from . . . Beersheba,** throughout the whole region, Dan and Beersheba being, respectively, the northern and southern limits of Palestine in early Old Testament times • 36 **slaves of Hesse Cassel.** "The Hessians, hired at so much per head to the crown of Britain, for the war in America, formed no small portion of the British army."—Simms • 39 **One . . . down.** "We are not sure that Master George Dennison is altogether right in this statement of the hire of the Hessian per head, but the difference is immaterial, whether in poetry or history."—Simms • 40 **chapmen,** merchants, traders • 46 **Recreants . . . Highlands.** "The exiled rebels of '45, when settled in America, almost wholly proved adherents of that monarch whom, as followers of the Stuarts, they opposed to the knife. The disasters of '45 cured them of all propensity to rebellion. Even the Macdonalds, the famous Hector—Flora who saved the Pretender—all became loyal to George the Third in America, and fought against the patriots."—Simms • 66 **Tartan of Glenorchy,** Scotch Highlander. "Tartan" is Scotch plaid • 68 **yager,** or jäger, a German rifleman, originally a hunter

Who shall meet them by the water
  On the mountain, in the vale,
Meet them with the stroke of slaughter
  Till the right arm fail?
Wherefore ask? Yon pealing summons
  Finds fit answer, sharp and soon,
Answer fit for peers and commons,
  Yager and dragoon.

Lo! the soul that makes a nation,
  Which, from out the ranks of toil,
Upward springs in day of peril,
  Soul to save the soil!
Comes a high and mighty aspect,
  From the shores of Powhatan;—
Lo! in him the nation's hero,
  Glorious perfect man!

Follows, rugged as his mountains,
  Daring man from Bennington;
Blacksmith stout from Narraganset,
  Good where deeds are done:
Comes the keen-eyed Santee rifle,
  Sleepless still and swift as flame,
Rowel rashing, bullet winging
  Man of deadly aim.

Stoop, ye vultures, to the issue,
  Stoop, and scour the bloody plain
Flesh your beaks where fat the carnage,
  Mountains up the slain:
Whose the skull your talon rendeth
  Eye, within your dripping beak,
Speechless tongue that loosely lolleth
  On divided cheek!

In the tartan of Glenorchy,
  Scarlet of the Saxon boor,
Gray frock of the Hessian yager
  Strewn from mount to shore,
Read the fate of hireling valor,
  Read the doom of foreign foe,
Know that he who smites for freedom,
  Ever strikes the deadly blow!

It was in the midst of the compliments of the party to the poet, that Willie Sinclair stole in to the table, and plucked the sleeve of Marion, who rose quickly and quietly, and went out with him in silence. The company sat at the table some time longer.

"Why your poet seems a genuine Birserker, Captain Porgy. This chant was worthy to be sung in the hall of Odin. Does he fight as bravely as he sings."

"Every bit, sir, and he goes into battle with the same convulsive sort of tremor with which he begins to sing or to recite. But that passes off in a few moments, and then he fairly rages. In fact, sir, it is not easy for him to arrest himself, and he sometimes shows himself rather too savage in strife—with rather too great an appetite for blood."

"You are as fortunate, Captain Porgy, in your poet as your cook; I would I could persuade them from you!—Who?—Do you say?"

These last words were spoken to Lieutenant Frampton, who had whispered something into Rutledge's ear.

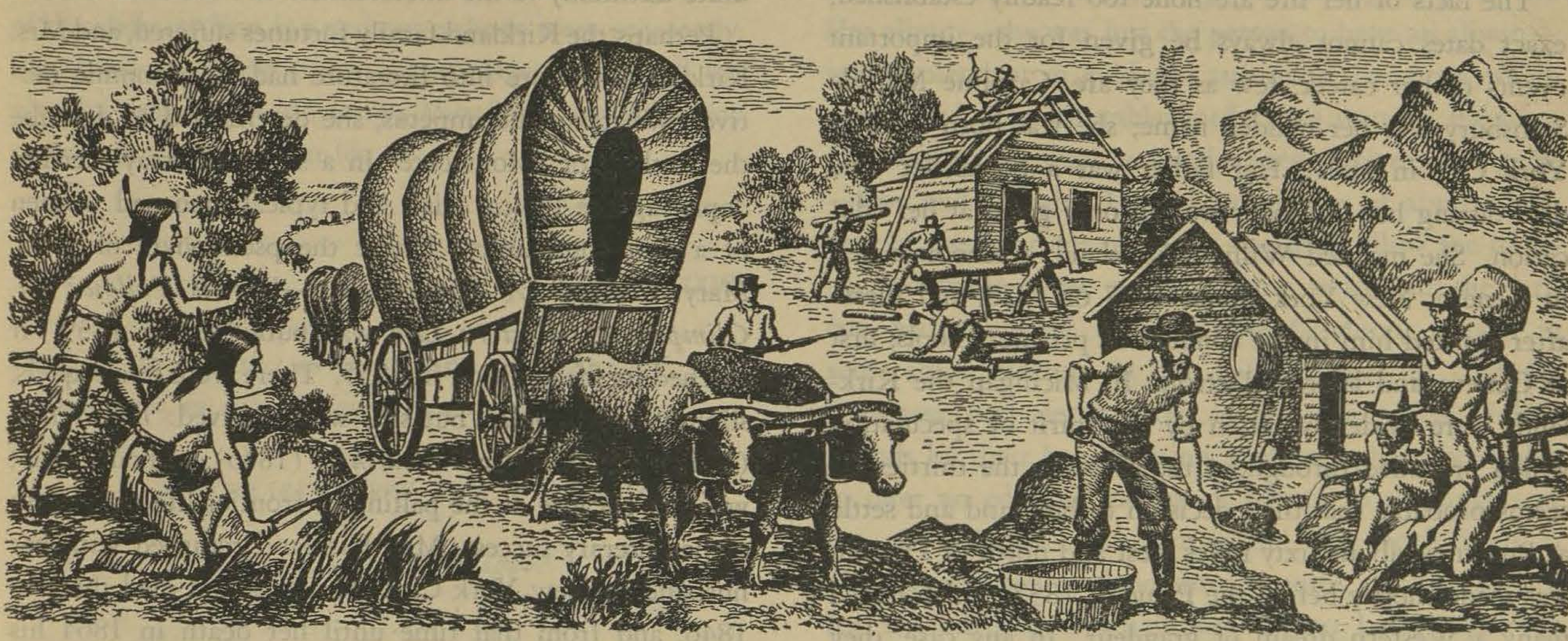
"Colonel Sinclair, your excellency. He waits you without, along with General Marion."

"Instantly"—and, watching his opportunity, while beakers were filling, Rutledge stole away. Greene followed his example, so did Sumter and the elder officers; the young ones remained, and soon Captain Porgy, his veneration no longer active, was in full flight, keeping the table in a roar, with merry jest, jibe, and story, till the hours grew something smaller than the stars, and the moon had a hooded, downcast looking visage, as if she had seen or heard something to shock her modesty. Let us leave the revellers while they make a final onslaught upon the punchbowls.

1855

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14 **shores of Powhatan**, eastern Virginia, where Powhatan, an Indian chief, flourished in the early seventeenth century. The "glorious perfect man" of the passage is, of course, George Washington • 18 **Bennington**, in Vermont. The reference is to John Stark, American Revolutionary general • 19 **Narranganset**, in Rhode Island. The reference is to Nathanael Greene • 23 **Rowel**, a small wheel attached to spurs, with radiating sharp points • 23 **rashing**, cutting • 24 **Man . . . aim**, an allusion to the American Revolutionary generals, Thomas Sumter and Francis Marion • 42 **Willie Sinclair**. The hero of the book makes this brief appearance at Captain Porgy's banquet. See introductory note, p. 1131



Caroline Matilda Kirkland

1801 · 1864

In the decade before the Civil War the Middle West provided the materials for literature more successfully than it produced literature itself. Daniel Boone, Johnny Appleseed, Mike Fink, and Davy Crockett now loom large in the folklore of a region which has appropriately glorified the pioneer and the riverman, and later generations of writers have made much capital of the bustling energy which almost overnight peopled the Great Lakes and Mississippi Valley states. Only the literary historian, however, is now much concerned with the literary activity of the West prior to 1860. The reasons are fairly clear: the early Western writers were few in number and provincial in spirit, more anxious usually to emulate the cultural fashions of the East than to deal freshly with the folk among whom they found themselves. Some of them worked hard to establish Western magazines and literary centers—a group at Cincinnati in the thirties is especially worth remark—but they found little support among their own people. The rare pioneer who had money or time or taste for literature was likely to prefer the imported to the native varieties.

Of those writers who might be chosen to illustrate the condition of belles-lettres in the West at this period, Mrs. Caroline Matilda Kirkland is probably the most interesting. She, at least, was willing to look at the life around her, to find her themes close at hand rather than in Indian legend or the thin traditions of the French *voyageurs*. She was, in short, something of a realist in an age in which the prevailing taste was for heavy sentiment and romance. To her everlasting credit it may be said that she

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Panel (l. to r.): Conestoga wagons, moving westward • A house-raising in the new territory • Forty-Niners

succeeded in making her unassuming pictures of frontier life mildly popular.

The facts of her life are none too readily established; exact dates cannot always be given for the important events of her career, few as they are. Caroline Matilda Stansbury was her maiden name; she was born in New York City in 1801. Her father was a bookseller who died during her girlhood; we can only guess at her education. She married William Kirkland, a schoolteacher, in Geneva, New York, about 1827 or 1828, and thereafter assisted him in the conduct of private schools, first at Geneva and later at Detroit. In Michigan the Kirklands were evidently bitten by the spirit of speculation which prevailed throughout the West in the thirties. It seems probable that their decision to buy land and settle at Pinckney, about sixty miles west and north of Detroit, was made shortly before the Panic of 1837, which ended many a Western dream of grandeur. In any case, they found themselves in the late thirties in a typical new settlement, where a few log cabins had sprung up around a sawmill. Town-lots and a public square were laid out; houses were built (eventually in the dignified style of the Classical revival); gardens were planted; small businesses were begun; a school was established; and the amenities of civilized life were gradually brought in. The pattern differed little from that which Cooper described in *The Pioneers* (see p. 586) except that the wealthy landlord was uncommon in the Middle West. Some of the settlements thus begun have now become great cities; others, surrounded by prosperous farms, are now thriving towns; and a great many, Pinckney among them, have remained villages, their timeworn houses and vacant stores mute testimony to the uncertainties of American life.

Perhaps the Kirkland family fortunes suffered, and Mrs. Kirkland's venture into literature had an economic motive. Whatever the impetus, she determined to describe the settling of "Montacute" in a series of essay-sketches depicting the typical trials and typical men and women of a new community. Under the pseudonym of "Mrs. Mary Clavers" *A New Home—Who'll Follow? or, Glimpses of Western Life* was published in 1839. It reached its fifth edition in 1855. There were two sequels, slightly less popular, but still well received: *Forest Life* (1842) and *Western Clearings* (1845). About 1843, whether because of the palling of frontier life or because of her literary success, Mrs. Kirkland returned with her husband to New York City. Mr. Kirkland died there in 1846, and from that time until her death in 1864 his widow was busy writing and editing. None of her later work has the interest of the three books about Michigan. A son, Joseph Kirkland, followed his mother into the writing of fiction; his *Zury, The Meanest Man in Spring County* (1887) holds an honorable place in the development of realism.

E. A. Poe, **The Literati**, New York, 1850 • Edna M. Twamly, "The Western Sketches of Carolina Mathilda (Stansbury) Kirkland," **Michigan Historical Collections**, 1915, XXXIX, 89-124 • Dorothy A. Dondore, **The Prairie and the Making of Middle America**, Cedar Rapids, Iowa, 1926 • Dorothy A. Dondore, "Caroline Matilda Stansbury Kirkland," **Dictionary of American Biography**, 1933, X, 430-431

From

A New Home—Who'll Follow?

or, Glimpses of Western Life

A New Home—Who'll Follow? was described in Mrs. Kirkland's Preface as "straggling and cloudy crayon sketches of life and manners in the remoter parts of Michigan," for which she claimed only "the merit of general truth of outline." It was nearly but not entirely, she continued, "a veritable history; an unimpeachable transcript of reality; a rough picture, in detached parts, but pentegraphed from the life; a sort of 'Emigrant's Guide.' " She acknowledged, furthermore, that the form had been suggested by **Our Village, Sketches of Rural Life, Character, and Scenery** (1824-1832) by the popular English author, Mary Russell Mitford (1787-1855). The method is roughly chronological, with interspersed character sketches and story sketches. The flavor is decidedly literary—Mrs. Kirkland was writing for the folks back East—but unpretentiousness and good humor go far to redeem the bookish-

ness. Moreover, as the following chapter will suggest, Mrs. Kirkland was able to satirize "literary ladies" of the era of the annuals and gift-books, not so vigorously as Mark Twain did in the well-known Emmeline Grangerford of Huckleberry Finn but perhaps a shade more accurately. She wrote at a time when "sweet singers" were all too plentiful and young ladies like Miss Eloise Fidler far too conspicuous in American life.

Chapter XXVII

Smelling so sweetly, all musk, and so rushling, I warrant you, in silk and gold; and in such alligant terms.

SHAKSPEARE—MERRY WIVES OF WINDSOR

Art thou not Romeo, and a Montague?

SHAKSPEARE

My brain's in a fever, my pulses beat quick;
I shall die, or at least be exceedingly sick!
O, what do you think! after all my romancing
My visions of glory, my sighing, my glancing—

MISS BIDDY FUDGE

In addition to our Montacute first circle had lately appeared in the person of Miss Eloise Fidler, an elder sister of Mrs. Rivers, who was to spend some months 'in this peaceful retreat,'—to borrow one of her favorite expressions.

This young lady was not as handsome as she would fain have been, if I may judge by the cataracts of ash-colored ringlets which shaded her cheeks, and the exceeding straitness of the stays which restrained her somewhat exuberant proportions. Her age was at a stand; but I could never discover exactly where, for this point proved an exception to the general communicativeness of her disposition. I guessed it at eight and twenty; but perhaps she would have judged this uncharitable; so I will not insist. Certain it is that it must have taken a good while to read as many novels and commit to memory as much poetry, as lined the head and exalted the sensibilities of our fair visitant.

Her dress was in the height of fashion, and all her accoutrements *point de vice.* A gold pencil-case of the most delicate proportions was suspended by a kindred chain round a neck which might be called whity-brown; and a note-book of lady-like-ness was peeping from the pocket of her highly-useful apron of blue silk—ever ready to secure a passing thought or an elegant quotation. Her album—she was just the person to have an album—was resplendent in gold and satin, and the verses which meandered over its emblazoned pages were of the most unexceptionable quality, overlaid with flowers and gems—love and despair. To find any degree of appropriateness in these various offerings, one must allow the fortunate possessor of the purple volume, at least all the various perfections of an admirable Crichton, allayed in some small measure by the trifling faults of coldness, fickleness, and deceit; and, to judge of Miss Fidler's friends by their hand-writing, they must have been able to offer an edifying variety of bumps to the fingers of the phrenologist. But here is the very book itself at my elbow, waiting these three months, I blush to say, for a contribution which has yet to be pumped up from my unwilling brains; and I have a mind to steal a few specimens from its already loaded pages, for the benefit of the distressed, who may, like myself, be at their wit's end for something to put in just such a book.

The first page, rich with embossed lilies, bears the invocation, written in a great black spattering hand, and wearing the air of a defiance. It runs thus:—

If among the names of the stainless few,
  Thine own hath maintained a place,
Come dip thy pen in the sable dew,
  And with it this volume grace.

But oh! if thy soul e'er encourag'd a thought
  Which purity's self might blame,
Close quickly the volume, and venture not
  To sully its snows with thy name.

Text: the fourth edition, New York, 1850 • **Shakspeare.** See **The Merry Wives of Windsor,** Act II, Scene ii • **Shakspeare.** See **Romeo and Juliet,** Act II, Scene ii • 20 **point de vice,** very correct • 33 **an admirable Crichton,** an allusion to the precocious learning of the Scottish poet-adventurer James Crichton (1560-1585?), probably known to Mrs. Kirkland through the **Crichton** (1837) of William Harrison Ainsworth (1805-1882), popular English writer of historical fiction • 38 **phrenologist.** Both phrenology and the analysis of character from handwriting were popular fads of the thirties. The founder of phrenology, J. K. Spurzheim (see p. 1067), lectured in Boston just before his death; a series of articles by Poe was entitled "Autography"

Then we come to a wreath of flowers of gorgeous hues, within whose circle appears in a *miminee piminee* hand, evidently a young lady's—

THE WREATH OF SLEEP

O let me twine this glowing wreath,
Amid those rings of golden hair,
'Twill soothe thee with its odorous breath
To sweet forgetfulness of care.

'Tis form'd of every scented flower
That flings its fragrance o'er the night;
And gifted with a fairy power
To fill thy dreams with forms of light.

'Twas braided by an angel boy
When fresh from Paradise he came
To fill our earth-born hearts with joy—
Ah! need I tell the cherub's name!

This contributor I have settled in my own mind to be a descendant of Anna Matilda, the high-priestess of the Della Cruscan order. The next blazon is an interesting view of a young lady, combing her hair. As she seems not to have been long out of bed, the lines which follow are rather appropriate, though I feel quite sure they come from the expert fingers of a merchant's clerk—from the finished elegance, and very sweeping tails of the chirography.

MORNING

Awake! arise! art thou slumbering still?
When the sun is above the mapled hill,
And the shadows are flitting fast away,
And the dews are diamond beneath his ray,
And every bird in our vine-roofed bower
Is waked into song by the joyous hour:
Come, banish sleep from thy gentle eyes,
Sister! sweet sister! awake! arise!

Yet I love to gaze on thy lids of pearl,
And to mark the wave of the single curl,
That shades in its beauty thy brow of snow,
And the cheek that lies like a rose below;
And to list to the murmuring notes that fall
From thy lips, like music in fairy hall.
But it must not be—the sweet morning flies
Ere thou hast enjoyed it; awake! arise!

There is balm on the wings of this freshen'd air!
'Twill make thine eyes brighter, thy brow more fair,
And a deep, deep rose on thy cheek shall be
The meed of an early walk with me.
We will seek the shade by the green hill side,
Or follow the clear brook's whispering tide;
And brush the dew from the violet's eyes—
Sister! sweet sister! awake! arise!

This I transcribe for the good advice which it contains. And what have we here? It is tastefully headed by an engraving of Hero and Ursula in the 'pleached bower,' and Beatrice running 'like a lap-wing' in the background. It begins ominously.

TO ——— ———

Oh, look upon this pallid brow!
Say, canst thou there discern one trace
Of that proud soul, which oft ere now
Thou'st sworn shed radiance o'er my face?
Chill'd is that soul—its darling themes,
Thy manly honour, virtue, truth,
Prove now to be but fleeting dreams,
Like other lovely thoughts of youth.

Meet, if thy coward spirit dare,
This sunken eye; say, dost thou see
The rays thou saidst were sparkling there
When first its gaze was turn'd on thee?
That eye's young light is quench'd forever;
No change its radiance can repair:
Will Joy's keen touch relume it? Never!
It gleams the watch-light of Despair.

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2 miminee piminee, usually "niminy-piminy," ridiculously affected • **17 Anna Matilda,** the fictitious name adopted by Mrs. Hannah Cowley (1743-1809) for her poetical correspondence with "Della Crusca" (Robert Merry, 1755-1798), originally published in the London **World** in 1787-1789. The elaborate and affected metaphors of the "Della Cruscans" were briefly popular before their castigation by the English critic William Gifford (1756-1826) in the **Baviad** (1794) and **Maeviad** (1795) • **51 Hero and Ursula . . . and Beatrice,** female characters in Shakespeare's **Much Ado about Nothing.** The engraving depicts the opening of Act III

I find myself growing hoarse by sympathy, and I shall venture only a single extract more, and this because Miss Fidler declares it, without exception, the sweetest thing she ever read. It is written with a crow-quill, and has other marks of femininity. Its vignette is a little girl and boy playing at battledoor.

BALLAD

The deadly strife was over, and across the field of fame,
With anguish in his haughty eye, the Moor Almanzor came;
He prick'd his fiery courses on among the scatter'd dead,
Till he came at last to what he sought, a sever'd human head.

It might have seem'd a maiden's, so pale it was, and fair;
But the lip and chin were shaded till they match'd the raven hair.
There lingered yet upon the brow a spirit bold and high,
And the stroke of death had scarcely closed the piercing eagle eye.

Almanzor grasp'd the flowing locks, and he staid not in his flight,
Till he reach'd a lonely castle's gate where stood a lady bright.
'Inez! behold thy paramour!' he loud and sternly cried,
And threw his ghastly burden down, close at the lady's side.

'I sought thy bower at even-tide, thou syren, false as fair!
'And, would that I had rather died! I found yon stripling there.
'I turn'd me from the hated spot, but I swore by yon dread Heaven,
'To know no rest until my sword the traitor's life had riven.'

The lady stood like stone until he turn'd to ride away,
And then she oped her marble lips, and wildly thus did say:
'Alas, alas! thou cruel Moor, what is it thou hast done!
'This was my brother Rodriguez, my father's only son.'
And then before his frenzied eyes, like a crush'd lily bell,
Lifeless upon the bleeding head, the gentle Inez fell.
He drew his glittering ataghan—he sheath'd it in his side—
And for his Spanish ladye-love the Moor Almanzor died.

This is not a very novel incident, but young ladies like stories of love and murder, and Miss Fidler's tastes were peculiarly young-lady-like. She praised Ainsworth and James, but thought Bulwer's works 'very immoral,' though I could never discover that she had more than skimmed the story from any of them. Cooper she found 'pretty;' Miss Sedgwick 'pretty well, only her characters are such common sort of people.'

Miss Fidler wrote her own poetry, so that she had ample employment for her time while with us in the woods. It was unfortunate that she could not walk out much on account of her shoes. She was obliged to make out with diluted inspiration. The nearest approach she usually made to the study of Nature was to sit on the wood-pile, under a girdled tree, and there, with her gold pencil in hand, and her 'eyne, grey as glass,' rolled upwards, poefy by the hour. Several people, and especially one marriageable lady of a certain age, felt afraid Miss Fidler was 'kind o' crazy.'

And, standing marvel of Montacute, no guest at morning or night ever found the fair Eloise ungloved. Think of it! In the very wilds to be always like a cat in nutshells, alone useless where all are so busy! I do not wonder our good neighbors thought the damsel a little touched. And then her shoes! 'Saint Crispin Crispianus' never had so self-sacrificing a votary. No shoemaker this side of New York could make a sole papery enough; no tannery out of France could produce materials for this piece of exquisite feminine foppery. Eternal imprisonment within doors, except in the warmest and driest

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33 Ainsworth . . . Miss Sedgwick, historical novelists. Ainsworth (see note, p. 1151) is perhaps known best for **Rookwood** (1834); G. P. R. James (1799-1860) for **Richelieu** (1829), though he is said to have written more than a hundred novels; E. G. E. L. Bulwer-Lytton (1803-1873) for **Pelham** (1828). Cooper was, of course, the best-known American novelist at this period and Catherine Maria Sedgwick (1789-1867), author of **The Linwoods** (1835) and many other books, was his chief woman rival • 55 **'Saint Crispin Crispianus.'** Crispin and Crispinian, two brothers of Rome supposed to have been put to death in the reign of Maximianus (286-305), became, from about the eighth century, the patron saints of shoemaking

weather, was indeed somewhat of a price to pay, but it was ungrudged. The sofa and its footstool, finery and novels, *would* have made a delicious world for Miss Eloise Fidler, *if*—

But, alas! 'all this availeth me nothing' has been ever the song of poor human nature. The mention of that unfortunate name includes the only real, personal, pungent distress which had as yet shaded the lot of my interesting heroine. Fidler! In the mortification adhering to so unpoetical, so unromantic, so inelegant a surname—a name irredeemable even by the highly classical elegance of the Eloise, or as the fair lady herself pronounced it, 'Elovees;' in this lay all her wo; and the grand study of her life had been to sink this hated cognomen in one more congenial to her taste. Perhaps this very anxiety had defeated itself; at any rate, here she was at — I did not mean to touch on the ungrateful guess again, but at least at mateable years; neither married, nor particularly likely to be married.

Mrs. Rivers was the object of absolute envy to the pining Eloise. 'Anna had been so fortunate,' she said; 'Rivers was the sweetest name! and Harley was such an elegant fellow!'

We thought poor Anna had been any thing but fortunate. She might better have been Fidler or Fiddlestring all her life than to have taken the name of an indifferent and dissipated husband. But not so thought Miss Fidler. It was not long after the arrival of the elegant Eloise, that the Montacute Lyceum held its first meeting in Mr. Simeon Jenkins's shop, lighted by three candles, supported by candelabra of scooped potatoes; Mr. Jenkins himself sitting on the head of a barrel, as president. At first the debates of the institute were held with closed doors; but after the youthful or less practised speakers had tried their powers for a few evenings, the Lyceum was thrown open to the world every Tuesday evening, at six o'clock. The list of members was not very select as to age, character, or standing; and it soon included the entire gentility of the town, and some who scarce claimed rank elsewhere. The attendance of the ladies was particularly requested; and the whole fair sex of Montacute made a point of showing occasionally the interest they undoubtedly felt in the gallant knights who tilted in this field of honor.

But I must not be too diffuse—I was speaking of Miss Fidler. One evening—I hope that beginning prepares the reader for something highly interesting—one evening the question to be debated was the equally novel and striking one which regards the comparative mental capacity of the sexes; and as it was expected that some of the best speakers on both sides would be drawn out by the interesting nature of the subject, every body was anxious to attend.

Among the rest was Miss Fidler, much to the surprise of her sister and myself, who had hitherto been so unfashionable as to deny ourselves this gratification.

'What new whim possesses you, Eloise?' said Mrs. Rivers; 'you who never go out in the day-time.'

'O, just *per passy le tong,*' said the young lady, who was a great French scholar; and go she would, and did.

The debate was interesting to absolute breathlessness, both of speakers and hearers, and was gallantly decided in favor of the fair by a youthful member who occupied the barrel as president for the evening. He gave it as his decided opinion, that if the natural and social disadvantages under which women labored and must ever continue to labor, could be removed; if their education could be entirely different, and their position in society the reverse of what it is at present, they would be very nearly, if not quite equal to the nobler sex, in all but strength of mind, in which very useful quality it was his opinion that man would still have the advantage, especially in those communities whose energies were developed by the aid of debating societies.

This decision was hailed with acclamations, and as soon as the question for the ensuing debate, 'which is the more useful animal, the ox or the ass?' was announced, Miss Eloise Fidler returned home to rave of the elegant young man who sat on the barrel, whom she had decided to be one of 'Nature's aristocracy,' and whom she had discovered to bear the splendid appellative of Dacre. 'Edward Dacre,' said she, 'for I hear the rude creature Jenkins call him Ed.'

The next morning witnessed another departure from Miss Fidler's usual habits. She proposed a walk; and observed that she had never yet bought an article at the store, and really felt as if she ought to purchase some-

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29 **Lyceum,** the name given to the chief agency of adult education in Mrs. Kirkland's time. The Lyceum movement is usually said to have begun in 1826. Debating was only one of the activities of the local Lyceums which covered the northern United States; many libraries and lecture associations grew out of them • 58 **per . . . tong,** Eloise's version of **pour passer le temps,** to pass the time

thing. Mrs. Rivers chancing to be somewhat occupied, Miss Fidler did me the honor of a call, as she could not think of walking without a chaperon.

Behind the counter at Skinner's I saw for the first time a spruce clerk, a really well-looking young man, who made his very best bow to Miss Fidler, and served us with much assiduity. The young lady's purchases occupied some time, and I was obliged gently to hint home-affairs before she could decide between two pieces of muslin, which she declared to be so nearly alike, that it was almost impossible to say which was the best.

When we were at length upon our return, I was closely questioned as to my knowledge of 'that gentleman,' and on my observing that he seemed to be a very decent young man, Miss Fidler warmly justified him from any such opinion, and after a glowing eulogium on his fine countenance, his elegant manners, and his grace as a debater, concluded by informing me, as if to cap the climax, that his name was Edward Dacre.

I had thought no more of the matter for some time, though I knew Mr. Dacre had become a frequent visitor at Mr. Rivers', when Mrs. Rivers came to me one morning with a perplexed brow, and confided to me her sisterly fears that Eloise was about to make a fool of herself, as she had done more than once before.

'My father,' she said, 'hoped in this remote corner of creation Eloise might forget her nonsense and act like other people; but I verily believe she is bent upon encouraging this low fellow, whose principal charm in her bewildered eyes is his name.'

'His name?' said I, 'pray explain;' for I had not then learned all the boundless absurdity of this new Cherubina's fancies.

'Edward Dacre!' said my friend, 'this is what enchants my sister, who is absolutely mad on the subject of her own homely appellation.'

'O, is that all?' said I, 'send her to me, then; and I engage to dismiss her cured.'

And Miss Fidler came to spend the day. We talked of all novels without exception, and all poetry of all magazines, and Miss Fidler asked me if I had read the 'Young Duke.' Upon my confessing as much, she asked my opinion of the heroine, and then if I had ever heard so sweet a name. 'May Dacre—May Dacre,' she repeated, as if to solace her delighted ears.

'Only think how such names are murdered in this country,' said I, tossing carelessly before her an account of Mr. Skinner, which bore 'Edkins Daker' below the receipt. I never saw a change equal to that which seemed to 'come o'er the spirit of her dream.' I went on with my citations of murdered names, telling how Rodgers was turned into Rudgers, Conway into Coniway, and Montague into Montaig, but poor Miss Fidler was no longer in talking mood; and long before the day was out, she complained of a head-ache and returned to her sister's. Mr. Daker found her 'not at home' that evening; and when I called next morning, the young lady was in bed, steeping her long ringlets in tears, real tears.



To hasten to the catastrophe: it was discovered ere long that Mr. Edkin's Daker's handsome face and really pleasant manners, had fairly vanquished Miss Fidler's romance, and she had responded to his professions of attachment with a truth and sincerity, which, while it vexed her family inexpressibly, seemed to me to atone for all her follies. Mr. Daker's prospects were by no means despicable, since a small capital employed in merchandize in Michigan, is very apt to confer upon the industrious and fortunate possessor that crowning charm, without which handsome faces, and even handsome names, are quite worthless in our Western eyes.

Some little disparity of age existed between Miss Fidler and her adorer; but this was conceded by all to be abundantly made up by the superabounding gentility of the lady; and when Mr. Daker returned from New York with his new stock of goods and his stylish bride, I thought I had seldom seen a happier or better mated couple. And at this present writing, I do not believe Eloise, with all her whims, would exchange her very nice Edkins for the proudest Dacre of the British Peerage.

1839?-1839

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41 'Young Duke,' a novel by Benjamin Disraeli (1804-1881), later prime minister of Great Britain. Its heroine was named May Dacre

Singers of the West

In the new country being opened up by the emigrants, new songs were made which caught the spirit of the times in various ways. The four which follow show something of their variety: one was made for a political campaign, one was written by a composer of popular songs who was just starting his career in Cincinnati, two were the works of forgotten movers or settlers. All were ballads or ballad-like songs, and all, with the possible exception of "The Wolverine's Song," had widespread oral currency.

The Wolverine's Song

Most memorable, perhaps, of all Presidential campaigns before 1860 was the one of 1840, in which Harrison and Tyler, "Tippecanoe and Tyler, too," were elected. To the utmost, this campaign exploited the American enthusiasm about the frontier and the democratic spirit which flourished there.

A chance remark gave the campaign its cue. The Whig party, after having done badly in the local elections of 1839, met in December of that year and managed to nominate William Henry Harrison, hero of the battle of Tippecanoe, for the Presidency and John Tyler as his running mate. For several months Harrison's chances seemed hopeless even to the most enthusiastic Whigs. Then an opposition newspaper in Baltimore printed an attack on Harrison which hooted at his boorishness: "Give him a barrel of hard cider and a pension of two thousand a year, and, our word for it, he will sit the remainder of his days in a log cabin by the side of a sea coat fire and study moral philosophy."

Harrison was well-to-do and well-educated, but instead of pointing this out, his supporters made the remarks about his ignorance the basis of a campaign playing up Harrison as a Western Indian fighter and log-cabin settler. The General discarded his high silk hat for a broad-brimmed one, and all the publicity about him made him the symbol of the log-cabin, hard-cider West. In every corner of the land there were log-cabin meetings, log-cabin floats in political processions, **Log Cabin** newspapers, **Log Cabin Almanacs,** and log-cabin songs. Whig leaders also hit on the device of making Harrison's opponent, Martin Van Buren, a symbol of the moneyed aristocracy—one who dressed like a dandy, "strutted and swaggered like a crow in a gutter," "laced up in corsets, such as women in town wear," perfumed his whiskers, and dined with gold spoons. The electoral vote: Harrison, 234; Van Buren, 60.

"The chief means of popular excitement," said a Harrison campaigner, "were the glee clubs, which never before or since have been so effectively used." Said a Van Buren supporter: "Songs rang in my ears wherever I went, morning, noon, and night. . . . Men, women, and children did nothing but sing. It worried, annoyed, dumfounded, crushed the Democrats, but there was no use trying to escape." One of the hundreds of such pieces, the song which follows, taken from **The Log Cabin Minstrel,** appeals to the "Wolverines"—the Michigan men.

Ye hard fisted, log cabin, Wolverine boys,
Whom slander and ridicule never annoys,
Now come up to the scratch, for your country demands
The prayers of your hearts and the work of your hands;
For a race of vile "soap-locks" and ruffle-gay knaves
Have seized on our birthrights, and made us all slaves!
Come, then, to the rescue—be fearless and true,
And we'll put them to flight with Old Tippecanoe!
        Make way for Tippecanoe!
He's death on a Tory, that Tippecanoe!

They call him a Granny—they say he is poor,
And lives in a Cabin befitting a boor!
And they say that he never drinks Port or Champagne,
But Cider as hard as his dwelling is plain!—
Well, what if he does? Still, his table is spread
With such as his purse will afford; and a bed—
Though coarser than Martin Van Buren's, 'tis true,
Is kept for the stranger by Tippecanoe!
        Huzza for Tippecanoe!
He's death on a Tory, that Tippecanoe!

We know that Van Buren can ride in his coach,
With servants, forbidding the vulgar's approach,
We know that his fortune such things will allow,
And we know that our candidate follows the plough;
But what if he does? Who was bolder to fight
In his country's defence on that perilous night
When nought save his valor sufficed to subdue
Our foes at the battle of Tippecanoe?
        Huzza for Tippecanoe!
He dropped the red Locos at Tippecanoe!

They call him a coward, the dastardly slaves!
Whose courage preserved them from infantile graves,
  And gave them that life which they ignobly spend
Traducing their own and their Country's best friend.
But slander and ridicule ne'er can efface
That long-settled, well-settled, deep-settled trace
Of gratitude, marked on the heart that is true!
He's after you, Matty, that Tippecanoe!
        Make way for Tippecanoe!
He's death on a Tory, that Tippecanoe!

1840

5 **soap-locks,** hair made shiny and curly with the aid of soap • 8 **Tippecanoe,** a two-hour battle in November 1811, during which the force of eleven hundred men under Harrison defeated the Indians led by Tecumseh. Harrison thus won his nickname • 30 **Locos,** abbreviation for Locofoco, a nickname of a wing of the anti-Whig Democratic party, 1835-1837 • 32 **Whose . . . graves.** The inspired poet exaggerated somewhat the results of Harrison's victory over the Indians

Oh! Susanna

Stephen Collins Foster   1826 • 1864

"My Old Kentucky Home," "Swanee River," "Jeanie with the Light Brown Hair," "Beautiful Dreamer," "Old Black Joe"—these were only a few of the songs by Stephen Collins Foster, the most popular song writer in American history. Foster was born of Scotch-Irish parents in Pittsburgh, July 4, 1826. Though he was scantily educated, he discovered in the late 1840's his extraordinary gifts as a composer. Introduced, as a rule, by singers in minstrel shows, Foster's ballad-like compositions often became nationally famous, and many are still remembered and sung. Despite his popularity, Foster was abjectly poor when he died in 1864.

Foster was living in Cincinnati when his song "Oh! Susanna" was introduced in 1847 by singers in Andrew's Eagle Ice Cream Saloon in Pittsburgh. Within less than two years at least twenty editions had been published by various publishers, and several minstrel troupes were singing it wherever they stopped. It traveled across the ocean, and was translated into French, German, Italian, and modern Greek. Bayard Taylor, an American tourist, heard it sung in Delhi.

The song was becoming tremendously popular in January 1848, when gold was discovered in California. For the great throng of Forty-Niners who crossed the continent westward, this was the favorite song. The nonsense rhymes had no relevance whatever to the gold rush, but the amusing words and the jaunty tune made the song unforgettable.

I come from Alabama
Wid my banjo on my knee.
I'm gwan to Louisiana,
My true love for to see.
It rain'd all night the day I left,
The weather it was dry,
The sun so hot I froze to death,
Susanna, don't you cry.

Chorus

Oh! Susanna Oh! don't you cry for me,
I've come from Alabama wid my banjo on my knee.

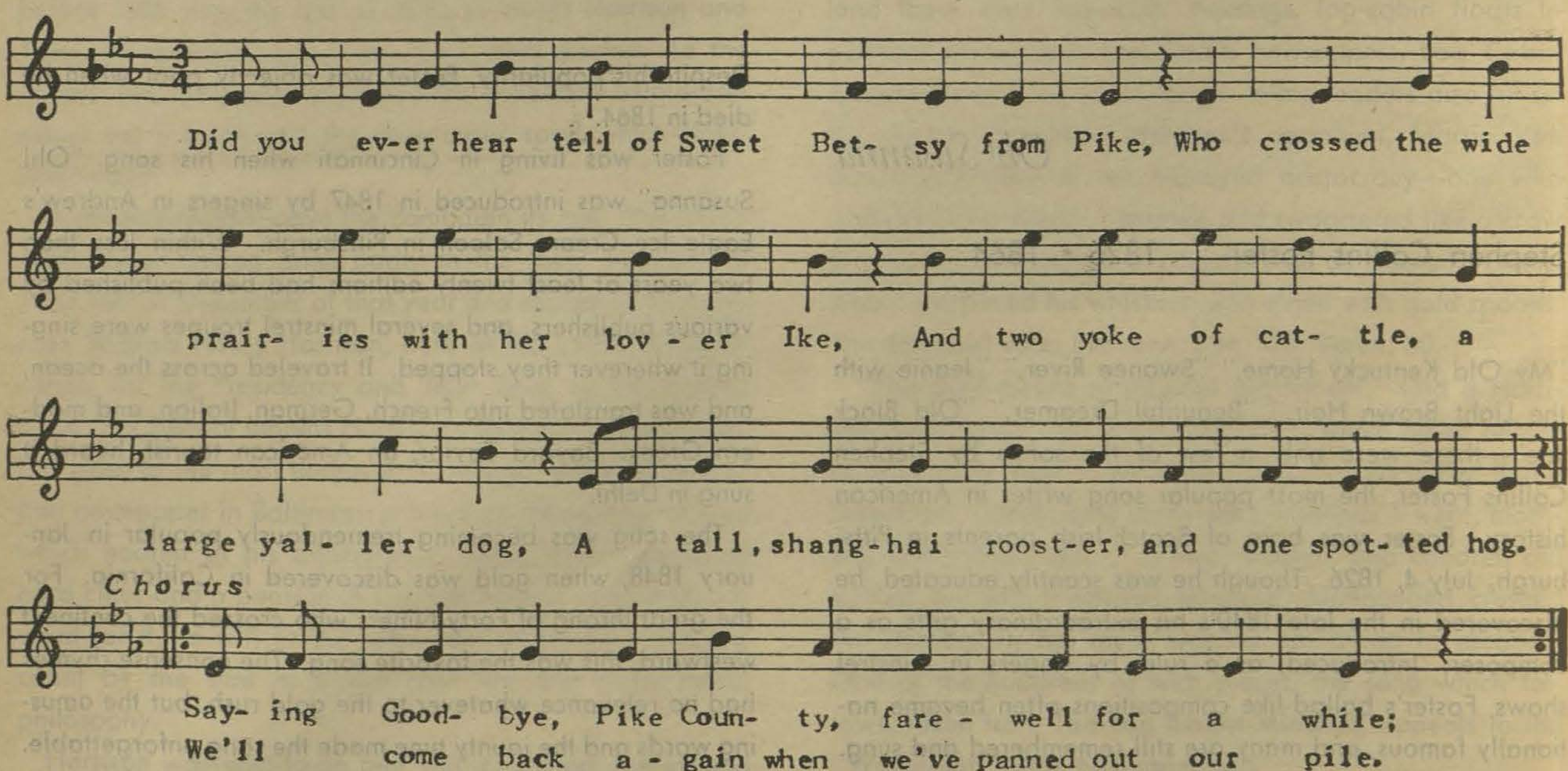
I jumped aboard de telegraph,
And trabbelled down de ribber,
De 'lectric fluid magnified,
And killed five hundred nigger.
De bullgine bust, de horse run off,
I really thought I'd die,
I shut my eyes to hold my breath,
Susanna, don't you cry.

I had a dream de odder night,
When eb'ry ting was still;
I thought I saw Susanna,
A-coming down de hill.
The buckwheat cake war in her mouth,
The tear was in her eye,
Says I, I'm coming from de South,
Susanna, don't you cry.

I soon will be in New Orleans,
And den I'll look all round,
And when I find Susanna,
I'll fall upon the ground.
But if I do not find her,
Dis darkie'll surely die,
And when I'm dead and buried,
Susanna, don't you cry.

1847·1848

Sweet Betsy from Pike



Pike County, Missouri, was the birthplace of many of the earliest emigrants to cross the plains, and the type of emigrants from this county was peculiar enough so that Westerners soon were talking of "Pikes." In 1855 the California humorist Phoenix, describing a migrating train from Pike County, said: "Each family consists of a man in butternut-colored clothing driving the oxen; a wife in butternut-colored clothing riding in the wagon, holding a butternut baby, and seventeen butternut children running promiscuously about the establishment; all are barefoot, dusty, and smell unpleasantly." In time "Pike" became the term for similar specimens not only from Missouri but also from other Middle Western or Southern states. "The Pike," said Bayard Taylor, "is the Anglo-Saxon relapsed into semi-barbarism . . . long, lathy, sallow . . . he takes naturally to whisky . . . has the 'shakes' his life long at home . . . distrusts men in 'store clothes.' . . ." An anonymous singer, in the 1850's, invented the following account of the travels Westward of two such poor whites. The chorus is the same as in the first stanza except in the instances where changed choruses appear.

Did you ever hear tell of Sweet Betsy from Pike,
Who crossed the wide prairies with her lover Ike,
And two yoke of cattle, a large yaller dog,
A tall, shanghai rooster, and one spotted hog.

Chorus

Saying, "Good-bye, Pike County, farewell for a while;
We'll come back again when we've panned out our pile."

One evening quite early they camped on the Platte,
'Twas near by the road on a green shady flat;
Where Betsy, quite tired, lay down for repose,
While with wonder Ike gazed on his Pike County rose.

They soon reached the desert, where Betsy gave out,
And down on the sand she lay rolling about;
While Ike in great terror looked on in surprise,
Saying, "Betsy, get up, you'll get sand in your eyes."

Chorus

Saying, "Good-bye, Pike County, farewell for a while;
I'd go back tonight, if it was but a mile."

Sweet Betsy got up in a great deal of pain,
And declared she'd go back to Pike County again;
Then Ike heaved a sigh and they fondly embraced,
And she traveled around with his arm round her waist.

The Injuns came down in a wild yelling horde,
And Betsy was skeered they would scalp her adored;
Behind the front wagon wheel Betsy did crawl,
And there she fought Injuns with musket and ball.

The alkali desert was burning and bare,
And Isaac's soul shrank from the death that lurked there:
"Dear old Pike County, I'll go back to you."
Says Betsy, "You'll go by yourself if you do."

The wagon tipped over with a terrible crash,
And out on the prairie rolled all sorts of trash;
A few baby clothes done up with great care
Looked rather suspicious; but 'twas all on the square.

The shanghai ran off and the cattle all died,
The last piece of bacon that morning was fried;
Poor Ike got discouraged, and Betsy got mad,
The dog wagged his tail and looked wonderfully sad.

They swam the wide rivers and crossed the tall peaks,
And camped on the prairie for weeks upon weeks.
Starvation and cholera and hard work and slaughter.
They reached California spite of hell and high water.

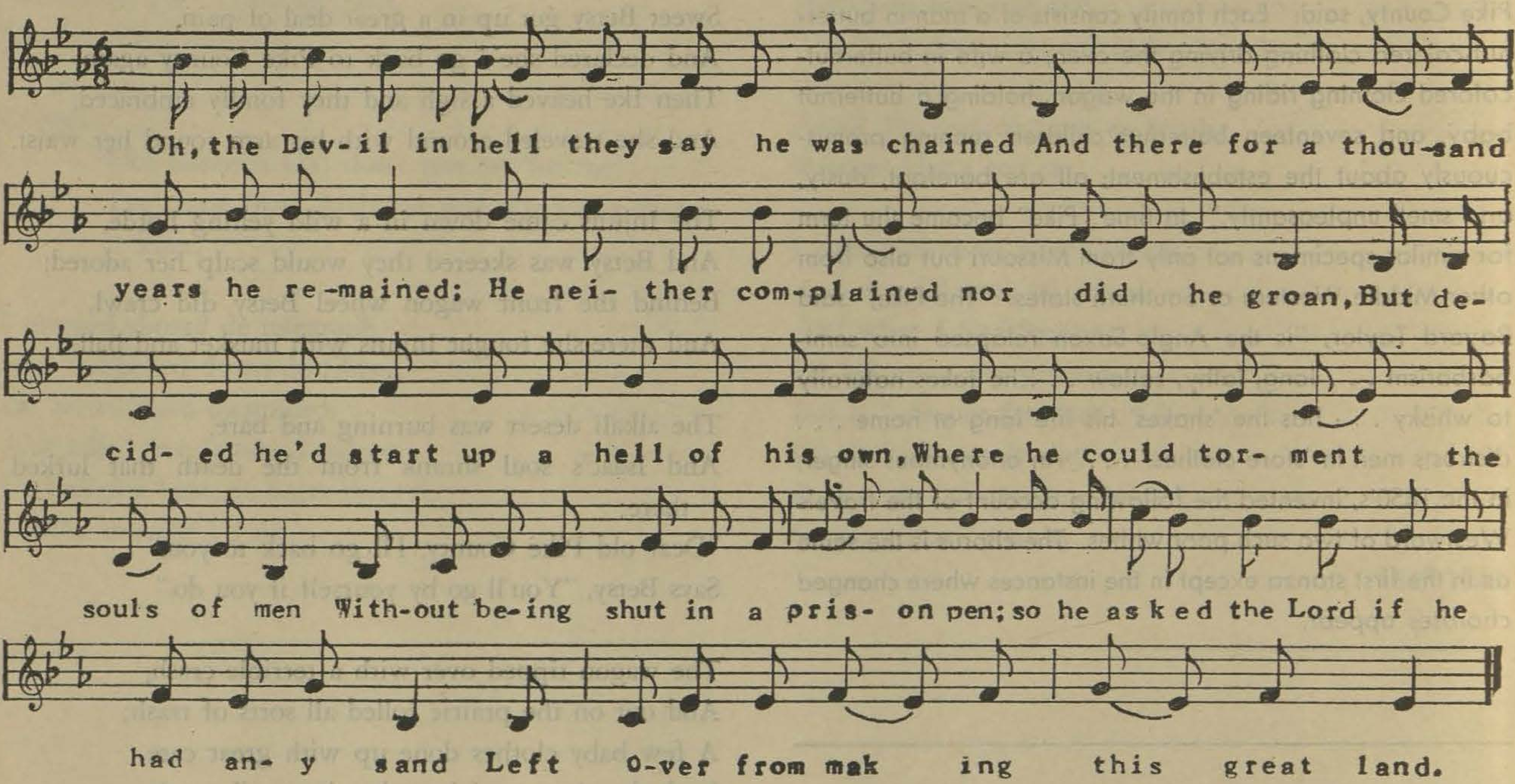
Long Ike and sweet Betsy got married of course,
But Ike getting jealous obtained a divorce;
And Betsy well satisfied, said with a shout:
"Good-bye, you big lummox, I'm glad you backed out!"

Chorus

Saying, "Good-bye, dear Isaac, farewell for a while,
But come back in time to replenish my pile."

1855?

Hell in Texas



The year gold was discovered in California, Texas was ceded by Mexico to the United States. The great stretch of territory thus secured had several climates, some of which were fairly distressing. In "Hell in Texas," a ballad composer told in rollicking words a fanciful story of the way Texas got some of its least attractive features.

Oh, the Devil in hell they say he was chained,
And there for a thousand years he remained;
He neither complained nor did he groan,
But decided he'd start up a hell of his own,
Where he could torment the souls of men
Without being shut in a prison pen;
So he asked the Lord if He had any sand
Left over from making this great land.

The Lord He said, "Yes, I have plenty on hand,
But it's away down south on the Rio Grande,
And, to tell you the truth, the stuff is so poor
I doubt if 'twill do for hell any more."
The Devil went down and looked over the truck,
And he said if it came as a gift he was stuck,
For when he'd examined it carefully and well
He decided the place was too dry for a Hell.

But the Lord just to get the stuff off His hands
He promised the Devil He'd water the land,
For he had some old water that was of no use,
A regular bog hole that stunk like the deuce.
So the grant it was made and the deed it was given;
The Lord He returned to His place up in heaven.
The Devil soon saw he had everything needed
To make up a hell and so he proceeded.

He scattered tarantulas over the roads,
Put thorns on the cactus and horns on the toads,
He sprinkled the sands with millions of ants
So the man that sits down must wear soles on his pants.

He lengthened the horns of the Texas steer,
And added an inch to the jack rabbit's ear;
He put water puppies in all of the lakes,
And under the rocks he put rattlesnakes.

He hung thorns and brambles on all of the trees,
He mixed up the dust with jiggers and fleas;
The rattlesnake bites you, the scorpion stings,
The mosquito delights you by buzzing his wings.
The heat in the summer's a hundred and ten,
Too hot for the Devil and too hot for men;
And all who remained in that climate soon bore
Cuts, bites, stings, and scratches, and blisters galore.

He quickened the buck of the bronco steed,
And poisoned the feet of the centipede;
The wild boar roams in the black chaparral;
It's a hell of a place that we've got for a hell.
He planted red pepper beside of the brooks;
The Mexicans use them in all that they cook.
Just dine with a Greaser and then you will shout,
"I've hell on the inside as well as the out!"

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